



# *This is a game about revenge.*

It is designed to emulate the tropes of English revenge tragedies from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Knowing something about this sort of drama is helpful but not necessary.

Anywhere from four to six people can play, and a game should last between two and four hours.

You will need to sort the various cards prior to play. For your first game, you'll also need to print and cut them. No other materials are necessary beyond bloody-mindedness and a desire to have a good time.

All the pieces have been provided to create a violent, sacrilegious disaster. All that remains is the will to explore lust, hatred, greed and murder at their most cruel and depraved. You and your friends will find your own way, and it is going to be fantastic.

## Preparing to Play

Setting up the game should take no more than fifteen minutes.

### ✠ Sort the cards.

Put each type of card in its own pile - Character, Ancillary, Location, Fate, and Resolution. Make sure the cards for your chosen tale are face up. Resolution cards are universal.

### ✠ Choose your cast.

Once you know how many people will be playing, lay out the appropriate Character cards for everyone to see. It is important to use the correct cards, based on number of players, because the small

and large casts are quite different and incompatible. Put the cast you won't be using aside.

### ✠ Choose a character.

There are five characters (One character is omitted from each small cast), plus Revenge. Revenge is the literal embodiment of vengeance, a malicious spirit, and has no particular agenda beyond promoting his namesake to the best of his ability. He serves as a gadfly, instigator, and narrator - invisible to the characters but in every scene from the player's perspective. Sadly, Revenge is not available if you have four players. If you have five players and one wishes to play Revenge, use the small cast (otherwise use the large cast and omit Revenge). If you have six players, someone must play Revenge, using the large cast.

Have one player read the name and title of each character, and choose based on this cursory description. It's much more fun if you don't know everyone's secrets the first time you play. If you are facilitating, don't choose the monarch.

### ✠ Read your character's descriptive paragraph aloud.

Make sure that everyone is on the same page about who is who. The bullet points related to your character's opinions of others, as well as the actions they have taken and questions they have, do not need to be shared. Understand that what your character "knows" may be a tissue of lies and wishful thinking.

### ✠ Find out who you will be Guide for.

The person playing Revenge, if any, is not part of the Guide rotation. They should step away for a moment. Everyone else, look to your

*This hand shall hale them down to deepest hell, where none but furies, bugs and tortures dwell. - Revenge, The Spanish Tragedy*

left - this player's character is your special responsibility. You will be their Guide. Your job is to lead them tenderly into black desolation.

✘ Choose an Ancillary card and a Location card from among those available.

Each Ancillary card has two characters on it. These are minor characters to be introduced to the game when appropriate - either, both, or neither may make an appearance. A player should look for opportunities to introduce his particular Ancillaries in interesting ways, and do the same for all the Ancillaries more generally - they are a shared resource. Characters not on cards in play should remain beyond the reach of the session. There are six Locations, and, like the colorful Ancillaries, only those in play will be featured in the session. Locations are intended to evoke the atmosphere of the city and her surroundings. Don't feel bound by the suggestions if your inspiration takes you elsewhere, but never feel obligated to be clever.

If you've played the same cast once already, drawing Ancillary and Location cards randomly will help keep the game fresh.

A person playing Revenge does not draw any cards. They should take the opportunity to read every character's information in detail, including all the secrets and questions, while the other players choose cards. Revenge knows all.

✘ Randomly draw a Fate card.

The Fates are a catalog of perfidy, mendacity, turpitude, and horror. Each Fate card has two options on it. One or the other is eventually chosen and applied, as Guide, to the character of the player on their left. Deciding which fate to pursue need not occur immediately - sometimes waiting a few scenes to see how a character is developing can be instructive. Just to be clear - your card is to be used in your capacity as Guide, and the awfulness on it is destined for another player's character. Although secrecy isn't necessary, you may find it more enjoyable to keep fates secret as long as possible. Carefully, methodically working toward a horrible fate to be suddenly revealed at the perfect moment is a wonderful gift for your friend.

If you've played the same cast once already, deliberately choosing a fate card will help keep the game fresh.

✘ Organize the Resolution cards into a pile.

You will be drawing these whenever conflicts arise. Put used cards aside and reshuffle them all when the stack is exhausted, or nearly so. If a card has some condition on it that can't be immediately met, feel free to keep it in front of you until you can work it into the game. Perhaps a vengeful ghost will appear a few scenes down the line.

✘ Put unused Fate, Location and Ancillary cards aside.

They won't be used in play.



*Cowardly dogs bark loudest. - Brachiano, The White Devil*

## Roles

Each player has two different roles during the game.

### ✧ You are Guide to the player on your left.

As Guide, your job is twofold. First, and most importantly, you must strongly promote the fate you have chosen for the primary character of the player you are Guiding. Second, it is also your job is to blend locations and characters to create memorable scenes that advance the plot, with the player on your left - and their character - at the center of the action.

### ✧ You are the primary advocate of the Character you have chosen.

Most of the time, you will describe this character's actions, thoughts, and feelings. You do not "own" the character, however, and should be receptive to the suggestions of others. Your Guide might even tell you what to do occasionally, and it is all to the good.

The game is best played with very limited character monogamy - this means that, when appropriate, you should feel free to describe what another player's character is thinking and feeling. This is particularly true in your role as Guide. It's always a good idea to check in with the player, but don't be shy about making statements about characters other than your own. There is absolutely no implied ownership of Ancillaries.



## The Flow of Play

The game is played in consecutive scenes. During most of the game each player, in rotation, gets a scene. When it is time for your scene, the group has a chance to focus in some way on your character. Your Guide will help! On other player's turns, you will do the same for them.

### ✧ Start the game.

If Revenge is in the mix, let him begin with a brief monologue introducing the characters, with a segue into the opening scene. If no one is playing Revenge, allow the player of the highest-ranking character to frame the opening scene.

### ✧ When it is your turn, select a general setting for a scene by choosing a Location card.

Your choices are limited to those chosen at the beginning of the game. You can also request particular people or places you'd like to appear to the Event Guide, but they are just that - requests. Your Guide may have other ideas, driving toward some mysterious fate.

### ✧ Your Guide, the player on your right, will then set the scene and push things in a particular direction.

The Guide's job is to introduce both a specific location and an associated sense memory, using the suggestions on the card back as inspiration. They should follow the lead established by the character's previous actions - use the location as a way to say something about their character's mood, behavior, or state of mind. Locations can, and should, be repeated. Think of it like a stage play - sets are limited, so make them iconic, monolithic, characters themselves. Populate the scene with Ancillaries and Characters and, working with the player and the Fate Guide, set a general agenda.

Beyond scene framing, the Guide's job is to drive your character toward some tragic event or outcome. They know best. Remember

*Die, life! Fly, soul! Tongue, curse thy fill, and die! - Barabas, The Jew of Malta*

that character monogamy is not complete, and your Guide may be jumping in to help you along - work with them and revel in it!

As guide you have a pair of memorable moments, actions, or images on your card. It may be that one is immediately obvious - work toward that. It may be that the opposite one gains traction as the game progresses. That's totally fine - after all, the card is secret! Simply switch them in your mind and start working toward the new fate. If, at the beginning of the game, neither fate grabs you, wait a few scenes and one will probably emerge as the more interesting.

It's worth noting that sometimes a character will elude their fate entirely! Take heart - whatever alternate fate befalls them will surely be equally wretched.

✘ **Play out the scene as it has been established, using phrases to heighten.**

Revenge, if present, should do his best to inject discord and suspicion at every opportunity. Players should be guided by their character's backgrounds, and especially their questions. Do your best to answer all three questions before your character meets a terrible end.

The phrases, described below, are tools any player can use to wring the most excitement out of every scene. Use them unreservedly. Find out how they work and which ones work best for your group.

Players should be active! If you are Revenge, get up and move around. Whisper in people's ears. Comment on their choices and suggest more satisfying alternatives.

✘ **When a scene is resolved, move on.**

Despite the best efforts of Revenge, not every scene will contain a conflict. This is good! Let conflicts arise naturally, and edit scenes judiciously. Move on to the next player and their scene.

✘ **The first time a character's fate is resolved, become flexible about the turn order.**

Once the first character has been removed from play, the game has entered a final spiral of bloody revenge, injustice and madness. While the scene structure already indicated may still work well, it is also possible that each player will know exactly what to do in each of his roles, and scenes can be framed flexibly until the bitter end. Quite often all the characters will congregate for a final orgy of violence, and there is no need to follow the scene-order rules at this point. Let the Guides push hard and continue to use Resolution cards where it is appropriate.



*Come, let's devise how we may add more shame to the black scandal of his hated name.*  
- Frederik, *The Tragedy of Dr. Faustus*

✧ If your character is removed from play, help Revenge.

Get up, move around, whisper in people's ears. Advocate for your character's position and seek to bend the will of the remaining player's characters to your own desires. Become a chorus of evil mischief and poisonous discontent. You are still a Guide, of course, and have other responsibilities.

✧ When every character is imprisoned, insane, or dead, the game ends.

Death, of course, comes in many forms - murder, self murder, accident, or some dubious combination thereof. Imprisonment and madness are simpler, although malleable - it is entirely possible to return from either over the course of a session. Having been crazy is not enough to end the game, though. It takes commitment, if you will pardon the dreadful pun.



## The Phrases

You'll use some specific phrases to help shape scenes in this game. It is important to remember that any player may use any of these phrases at any time. If someone is playing the character of Revenge, they should be particularly enthusiastic about using phrases to wring out additional detail, refine scenes, and drive toward juicy conflicts.

These phrases are important tools to use during the game. They should be used as instruction to make sure the story flows, that dramatic tension increases appropriately, and that everyone can vividly imagine the fiction. A phrase should be received accordingly; nobody is perfect, acting on an interjected phrase is an act of courtesy and faith. If someone throws you a phrase you don't agree with immediately, try it out anyway - if things don't work out, the group will tell you.

The phrases follow:

✧ More details!

...tells the player to provide more description. This is what makes settings and characters more real - little things like the dirt under someone's fingernails, the frozen reeds by the canal's edge, the scuffed leather of the guard's grieves. "More details!" allows you to drill down into your friend's creative bedrock.

✧ Try a different way!

...tells the player that something feels jarring. Perhaps a scene is drifting into bad comedy, or going in circles. Rewind and try again. You're doing everyone a favor by serving as quality control, making sure that uninspiring stuff doesn't enter the fiction you're sharing. And you're giving the other player a chance to really shine, instead of having to stick to the half-baked thing they just produced. Don't be afraid of "Try A Different Way!"

*Now my revenge is perfect. Sink, thou main cause of my undoing. The last part of my life hath done me best service. - Bosola, The Duchess of Malfi*

### ✧ I'd like to throw something in!

...tells the player that you want to narrate a short interlude or follow-up sequence. Make sure you don't steal the scene - this is just for a sentence or two, but it should be very welcome. "I'd like to throw something in!" can form a game's connective tissue, telegraphing future scenes and ideas.

### ✧ That might not be quite so easy!

...tells the player you see a clear conflict in the scene. When this happens, call it out at once. Clarify what the character is trying to do, then ask the person whose scene it is to select someone else to draw a Resolution card and interpret it. Anyone can be chosen. Once the outcome has been revealed, the scene can continue to its logical conclusion. Set the card aside until all have been used, then reshuffle. "That might not be quite so easy!" is the engine of strife and action throughout the game.

### ✧ I need to clarify something!

...tells the player or group there's something you've forgotten or something you need help understanding. This is good for complex intrigues where you're not sure who's doing what to who, for example. It can happen. "I need to clarify something!" gives you permission to stop the action to ensure clarity of vision.

Every group will find its own ways to use the phrases - some will carry more weight than others, and that's fine. Renaming them to suit your local culture of play is also fine, of course. You may find that you don't use certain phrases at all, and if this happens, consider making an effort to try them out the next time you play. They are all there for a reason and they can all be useful in their own way.



## Credits

This role-playing game was designed by Jason Morningstar. Much of the underlying structure comes from Matthijs Holter's excellent Archipelago II.

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*Can you weep fate from its determin'd purpose? So soon may you weep me. - Deflores,  
, The Changeling*

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# LORENZO

A Dotard

You are Doge of Venice, the most powerful man in the Republic. You are an aging military hero, a consummate politician, and a pragmatic student of Machiavelli. You have done terrible things in the name of Venice, but all that is behind you – these days, you bask in the light of your young wife Bianca and your beautiful, headstrong daughter Lucia. They are practically sisters, having been raised together. You have a mind to marry Lucia off to the young Dalmatian Captain of Guards, Stefano. What a match they would be! It is a time of peace and great happiness within the Palazzo Ducale.

LARGE CAST

## As Lorenzo, YOU FEEL

...love for your wife Bianca, simple and honest – the past is the past.

...admiration for Stefano and his vigor and loyalty as an aide-de-camp.

...filial love for your daughter Lucia, who you would see married well – to Stefano.

...respect toward your ancient “house-priest”, Cardinal Zago, who sees all and is perfectly discrete.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

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SMALL CAST

## As Lorenzo, YOU FEEL

...love for your wife Bianca, simple and honest – the past is the past.

...admiration for Stefano and his vigor and loyalty as an aide-de-camp.

...respect toward your ancient “house-priest”, Cardinal Zago, who sees all and is perfectly discrete.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

# LORENZO

The Venetian Tragedy



LARGE CAST

## As Lorenzo, YOU KNOW

...that Stefano murdered a diplomat from Ravenna recently - a man courting your daughter Lucia. Apparently he is quite fond of your little girl - and hot-headed! **When will you announce the wedding?**

...that someone inside the Palazzo has stolen certain critical papers related to the defense of the Dalmatian forts. **What terrible punishment will you announce, and how will you find the culprit?**

...that there is a core of darkness to your final years - you see a terrible past whenever you look upon Bianca or Stefano, for they are brother and sister, and you murdered their parents eighteen years ago. It weighs on you heavily. **How will you tell them?**

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The Venetian Tragedy



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# BIANCA

A Wanton

You are the Doge's young wife. Your noble parents were killed in the Great Flood, and you were taken in as an act of compassion by the Doge, Lorenzo. In time Lorenzo's love changed from paternal to romantic, and when you reached your majority the two of you were wed. In truth he is a kind man and although the difference in age is great, you have had no complaints - what 18-year-old could dream of the riches you now possess? But now there is a new officer in the Doge's guard, the dashing Stefano, and he has overthrown your heart. He's been promised to the Doge's daughter - at least in her tiny mind - and she'll stop at nothing to have him. To compound all these agonies, Stefano has made you pregnant. What will you do?

LARGE CAST

## As Bianca, YOU FEEL

...boundless, endless, perfect love for the gallant Stefano.

...indifferent gratitude to your husband, who has given you everything a woman could want, and been repaid with infidelity.

...friendship toward the busybody Cardinal Zago. You've known him your whole life and confide in him sometimes.

...hatred toward Lucia, the Doge's daughter, your step-daughter and would-be wife of your beloved.

### YOU GUIDE

the character on your left.

# BIANCA

A Wanton

You are the Doge's young wife. Your noble parents were killed in the Great Flood, and you were taken in as an act of "compassion" by the Doge, Lorenzo. In time Lorenzo's love changed from paternal to romantic, and when you reached your majority the two of you were wed, much against your will. He is a wicked man and the difference in age is great. You have sworn to humiliate him and have worked certain intrigues to that end. But now there is a new officer in the Palace Guard, the dashing Stefano, and he has overthrown your heart. To compound all these agonies, Stefano has made you pregnant. What will you do?

SMALL CAST

## As Bianca, YOU FEEL

...boundless, endless, perfect love for the gallant Stefano.

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### YOU GUIDE

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# BIANCA

The Venetian Tragedy



LARGE CAST

## As Bianca, YOU KNOW

You watched as Lucia carefully removed some documents from the Doge's private study. Who will you tell, and what will the consequences be?

You know for a certain fact that Stefano is the father of the child growing in your womb. No one even knows you are with child except the ineffectual Zago. Who else will you confide in?

You know that if your husband were dead, you could marry Stefano. How far will you go to be with the man you love?

# BIANCA

The Venetian Tragedy



SMALL CAST

## As Bianca, YOU KNOW

... that Stefano murdered a diplomat from Ravenna recently - a man courting your daughter Lucia. Apparently he is quite fond of your little girl - and hot-headed! When will you announce the wedding?

... that someone inside the Palazzo has stolen certain critical papers related to the defense of the Dalmatian forts. What terrible punishment will you announce, and how will you find the culprit?

... that there is a core of darkness to your final years - you see a terrible past whenever you look upon Bianca or Stefano, for they are brother and sister, and you murdered their parents eighteen years ago. It weighs on you heavily. How will you tell them?

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# STEFANO

A Fool

**You are Captain of the Doge's guard.** Your parents were slain by a masked assassin when you were a child. Through the kindness of relatives, you were taken in by a noble family in distant Dalmatia, and have returned to Venice to seek your fortune in the prime of your youth, serving the same man who took pity on you as an infant. Things have been very promising, and the Doge likes you – as does his daughter, Lucia. You do him a grave disservice now, though, for you have fallen in love with his beautiful young wife, Bianca – and she loves you.

LARGE CAST

## As Stefano, YOU FEEL

...adoration for Bianca. She is your sun and moon.

...pity toward the loathsome Lucia, who will stop at nothing to possess you.

...respect and admiration for the old Doge, who you feel guilty about cuckolding.

...brotherly warmth for Zago. What's not to like about a world-wise and generally jolly old Cardinal?

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

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SMALL CAST

## As Stefano, YOU FEEL

...adoration for Bianca. She is your sun and moon.

...love for the Doge, and guilt about cuckolding him - he is like a father to you.

...hatred toward Zago, the impotent and meddling Cardinal.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

# STEFANO

The Venetian Tragedy



LARGE CAST

## As Stefano, YOU KNOW

...that Zago, the mild-mannered cardinal, killed a diplomat from Ravenna. You saw it happen. **How will you discover his motive?**

...that the Doge has made Bianca, your beloved, pregnant. **What will you do when Bianca tells you - and what will you do if she doesn't?**

...that if the Doge were to pass away - and he is old - you could marry Bianca. **Do you possess the courage to ... speed along this process?**

# STEFANO

The Venetian Tragedy



SMALL CAST

## As Stefano, YOU KNOW

...that Zago, the "mild-mannered cardinal", brutally murdered a diplomat from Ravenna. You saw it happen. **How will you discover his motive?**

...that The Doge has made Bianca pregnant. **Will this be the cause of your star-crossed parting?**

...that if the Doge were to pass away - and he is old - you could marry Bianca. **Do you possess the courage to ... speed along this process?**

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# ZAGO

A Dotard

A **Cardinal**, you are the representative of the Patriarch of Venice to the Doge. You have lived in the Palazzo Ducale for years. You are a black-hearted man drenched in the unpardonable sins of lust and murder. You are desperately in love with Lucia, sweet Lucia. Innocent, winsome Lucia, daughter of your friend and spiritual charge, the Doge. You are her silent, unrequited slave - but were your ardor to come to her father's (or the Patriarch's) attention, you would be cast into the dungeon in a moment. And that is a one-way trip across the Bridge of Sighs. As would be the discovery of your vicious murder of her suitor, a noble diplomat.

LARGE CAST

## As Zago, YOU FEEL

...fondness for Bianca in a melancholy, paternal way. She sometimes confides in you, and you have known her since she was small.

...distaste for Stefano, the impulsive and ignorant Captain of the Guard, who only stirs up trouble.

...sinful devotion for your true love, Lucia, which you would shout from the rooftops if it wouldn't get you killed. Your soul is already forfeit.

...loyalty unto death to the Doge Lorenzo. His downfall would surely be your own.

**YOU GUIDE**  
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SMALL CAST

## As Zago, YOU FEEL

...desperate love for Bianca. She sometimes confides in you, and pray that trust blossoms into affection.

...dislike for Stefano, the impulsive and ignorant Captain of the Guard, who only stirs up trouble.

...loyalty unto death to the Doge Lorenzo. His downfall would surely be your own.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

# ZAGO

The Venetian Tragedy



LARGE CAST

## As Zago, YOU KNOW

...that in a fit of insane jealousy, you murdered a diplomat from Ravenna who was courting Lucia. No one knows. It felt good. **When will you confess your crime - and to whom?**

...that both Bianca and Stefano are orphans because of Lorenzo, who killed their various parents himself. **How will you tell them - and avoid ruining the Doge or yourself?**

...that Bianca is pregnant, and that she is hiding the fact from her husband the Doge. **How will you aid her, and what will you discover by aiding her?**

# ZAGO

The Venetian Tragedy



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# LUCIA

A Traitor

You are a peerless teenage beauty and the daughter of the most powerful man in the Republic. All your days, you have played second fiddle to the hideous monster Bianca, who came into your life at a tender age and absorbed all of your father's attention. He raised her, she was his favorite, and now - shudder - they are married. She is your mother, and she is also a slut - you know for a fact that she is unfaithful. Like you, she is captivated by the gallant Stafano, and unlike you she has brazenly seduced him. There will be a reckoning.

LARGE CAST

## As Lucia, YOU FEEL

...**hatred for Bianca** hotter than the fires of a million blazing Peloponnesian suns.

...**love Stefano** with a fierce, protective urgency that has no match.

...**love your father Lorenzo**, but as a father - not a leader appointed for life.

...**fondness for Cardinal Zago**, who is like a favorite uncle. You have known him all your life.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

# REVENGE

A Terror



ANY CAST

# REVENGE

A Terror

You are the living embodiment of revenge. You are not a character in the story, instead you are the story. Your job is to lurk around the edges, comment on the unfolding action, and spur all the characters toward ... you.

How can you **prompt reluctant parties to indelicate action**? What threats and pleadings will **force imprudent revelations**? What whispered promises will **spur desperate measures**? At what point will mocking commentary **goad a stalwart Christian into bloody madness**?

**YOU GUIDE**  
all - and none.

# LUCIA

The Venetian Tragedy



LARGE CAST

## As Lucia, YOU KNOW

...you have stolen certain documents related to the defense of the Dalmatian forts from the Palazzo Ducale. Certain dark-aspected gentlemen, who have promised to knock your father down a peg or two, wait for them - **will you betray your homeland to humiliate your father?**

...that Bianca, the unholy slut, is pregnant. The child is surely not your father's. **Who will you share this information with?**

...Stefano loves you, because he murdered a man for you - an earnest suitor from Revenna. Why, other than passionate jealousy, would he do such a thing? **How will you let him know you understand and approve?**

# CHEAT SHEET

The Phrases

## More details!

...tells the player to provide more description.

## Try a different way!

...tells the player that something feels jarring. Don't be afraid to "Try a different way!"

## I'd like to throw something in!

...tells the player that you want to narrate a short interlude or follow-up sequence.

## I need to clarify something!

...tells the player or group there's something you've forgotten or something you need help understanding.

## That might not be quite so easy!

...tells the player you see a clear conflict in the scene. When this happens, call it out at once. Clarify what the character is trying to do, then ask the person whose scene it is to select someone else to draw a Resolution card and interpret it. Set the card aside until all have been used, then reshuffle.

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Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

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Back of card

# YES, AND

...success includes even more than expected. Perhaps even a bit too much...

## RESOLUTION



# YES, BUT

...some cruel, unrelated disaster befalls the character or someone they care deeply about.

## RESOLUTION



# YES, BUT

...the consequences of the success are unwholesome and unexpected.

## RESOLUTION



# YES, BUT

...only if they go mad in the process.

## RESOLUTION



Front of card

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Front of card

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Back of card

# YES, BUT

...an Ancillary is de-  
stroyed, by accident or  
design.

## RESOLUTION



# NO, BUT

...the failure attracts  
new sympathy or alli-  
ance.

## RESOLUTION



# YES, BUT

...only if a terrible se-  
cret is revealed.

## RESOLUTION



# ONLY WITH HELP

..from someone not  
currently in the scene.

## RESOLUTION



Front of card

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Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

**NO,  
AND**

...a dreadful ghost - or  
the spirit of Revenge -  
comes calling.

RESOLUTION



**NO,  
BUT**

... Something unrelated  
occurs that will benefit  
them.

RESOLUTION



**YES,  
BUT**

...there's a detail that  
doesn't go as planned -  
a detail that will return  
to haunt them...

RESOLUTION



**NO,  
AND**

... something unrelat-  
ed also goes wrong in  
some tragic way.

RESOLUTION



Front of card

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Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

**A Heart Needlessly Broken by Ignorance and Lies**

*or*

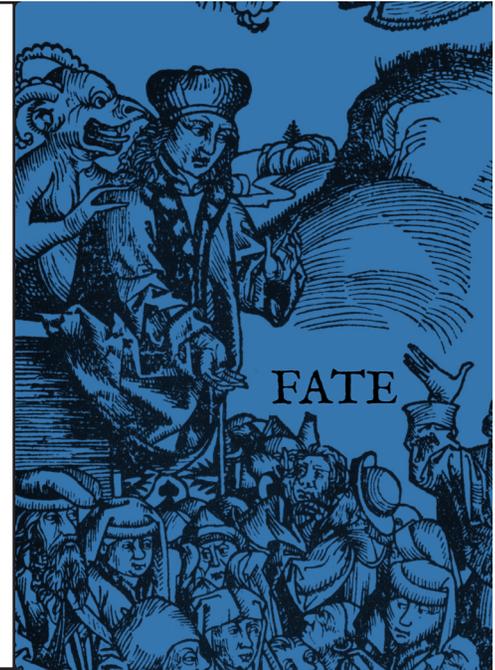
**A Dead Messenger is Dragged from the water, His Pockets Full Of Secrets**



**A Lover's Still-Beating Heart is Revealed**

*or*

**A Guilty Soul Foolishly Cries Out for Forgiveness**



**In A Hidden Chamber Beneath the cobblestones, Awful Justice**

*or*

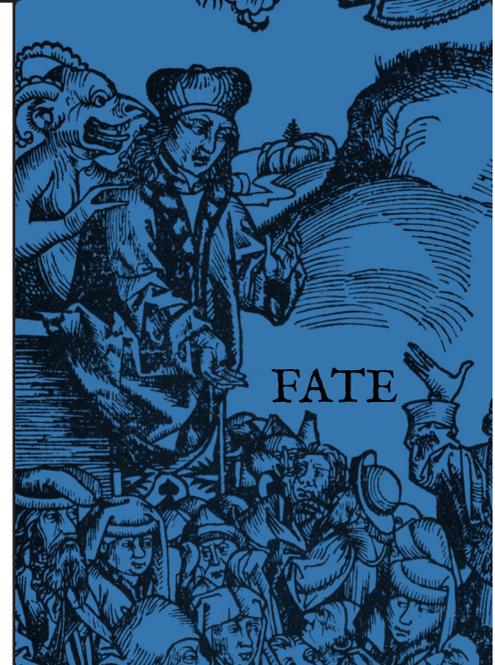
**Bloody Murder and Frantic, Rutting Congress - In Either Order**



**A Pact With Unholy Forces is Concluded, but Not as Planned**

*or*

**Guilt and Shame Lead to Self-Mutilation**



Front of card

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Back of card

Front of card

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Back of card

**Suspicion and Terror  
Prompt an Unholy Al-  
liance**

*or*

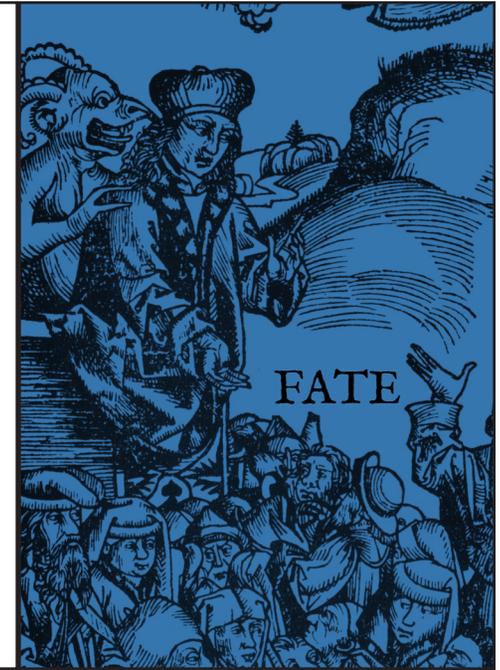
**A Crime, So Black and  
Foul That Angels Weep,  
is Perpetrated**



**A Sudden Death, by  
Shock or a Broken  
Heart**

*or*

**In a Sacred Place, Des-  
ecration and Blasphemy**



**A Savage Punishment,  
Excessive and Shocking**

*or*

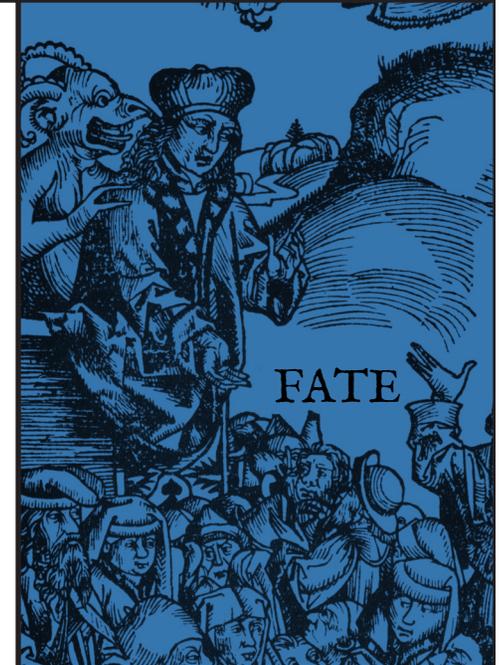
**An Evil Secret is Sunk  
or Buried Forever**



**The simple truth bears  
the fruit of madness**

*or*

**A careful disguise  
grants access to the in-  
ner sanctum**



Front of card

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Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

# A GHOST

... swearing a chilling  
oath

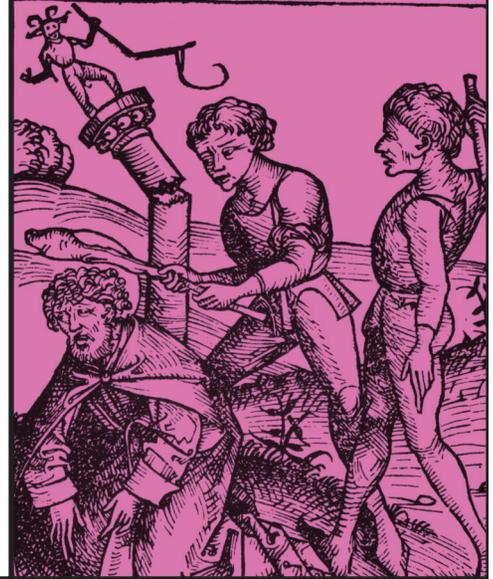
## ANCILLARY



# FOOTMEN of the GUARD

... with an unhappy duty  
to discharge

## ANCILLARY



# A HOUND

... enormous and slaver-  
ing, raised on the flesh  
of men

## ANCILLARY



# CAULKER, COXSWAIN and CARPENTER

... merry and full of  
trouble

## ANCILLARY



Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

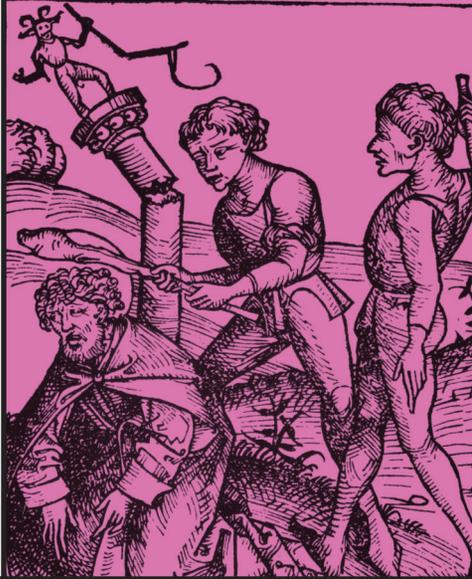
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Back of card

# A PRISONER

... freed from durance to confront his tormentor

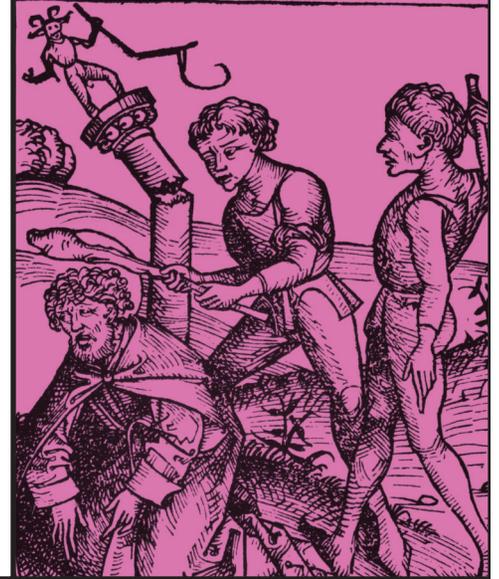
## ANCILLARY



# A SURGEON

... with a trunk full of potions

## ANCILLARY



# A MESSENGER

... Bearing grim tidings

## ANCILLARY



# THE PATRI-ARCH OF VENICE and RETINUE

... come to root out sin

## ANCILLARY



Front of card

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Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

ANCILLARY



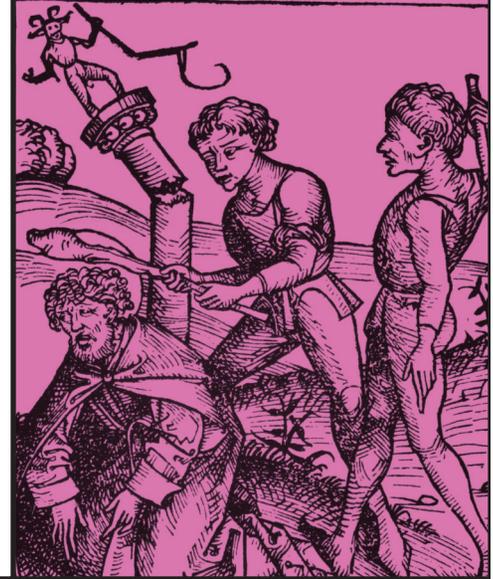
A  
DOXY

... too clever by half

GENTLE-  
MEN OF  
VENICE

... who wait with an un-  
welcome petition

ANCILLARY



ANCILLARY



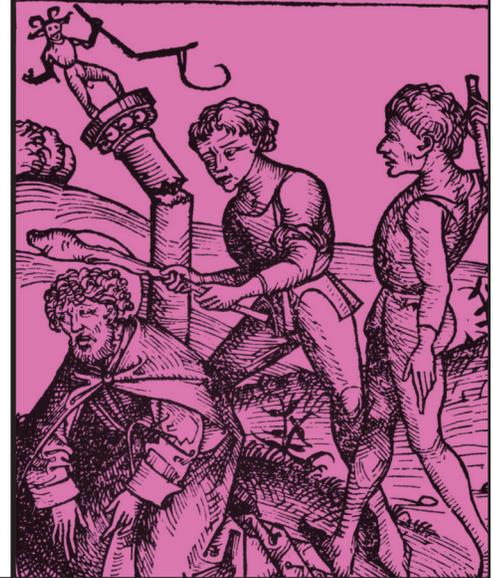
A  
LADY

... of Dorsoduro, cousin  
to one and confidante to  
another

THE DUKE  
OF  
RAVENNA

...following his diplomat  
with urgent business

ANCILLARY



Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

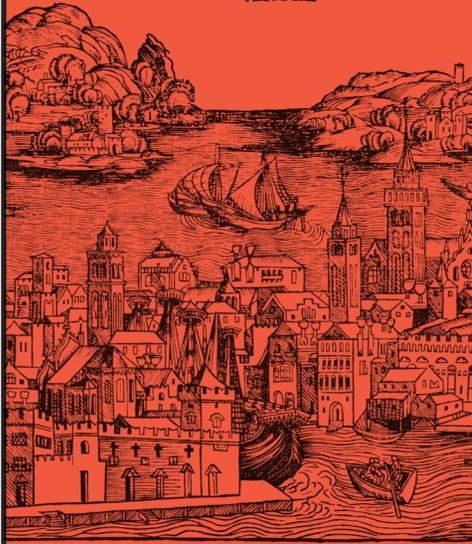
Front of card

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Back of card

## LOCATON

VENECE



### PALAZZO DUCALE

#### The Doge's Palace (Private)

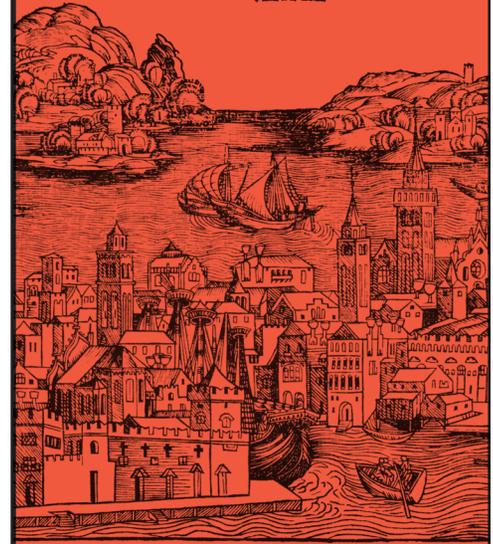
The Doge's map room and office, cluttered with the debris of governance, holding many secrets.

The Doge's apartments, richly appointed with the tools of state - and a few more practical ones.

A bedroom with a balcony overlooking the lagoon, the linen crisp and white, the flowers from Asia Minor.

## LOCATON

VENECE



### CANEREGGIO

#### The Filthy Underbelly

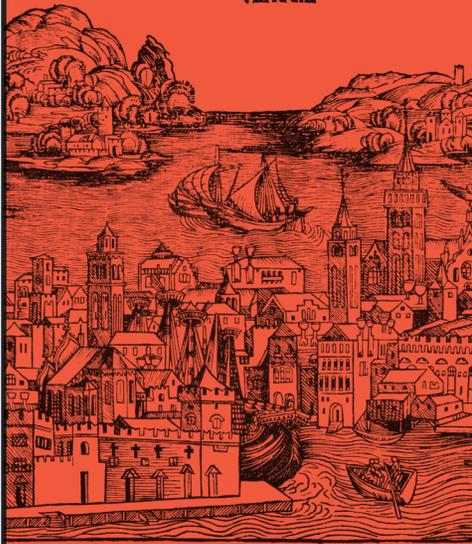
The Canereggio ghetto, cramped, squalid, and full of desperate Jews.

A featureless, leather-walled interrogation chamber of the Council of Ten. There is a drain in the stone floor.

A bustling market along a cramped side canal, filled with rich and poor alike, some masked for Carnivale.

## LOCATON

VENECE



### PALAZZO DUCALE

#### The Doge's Palace (Public)

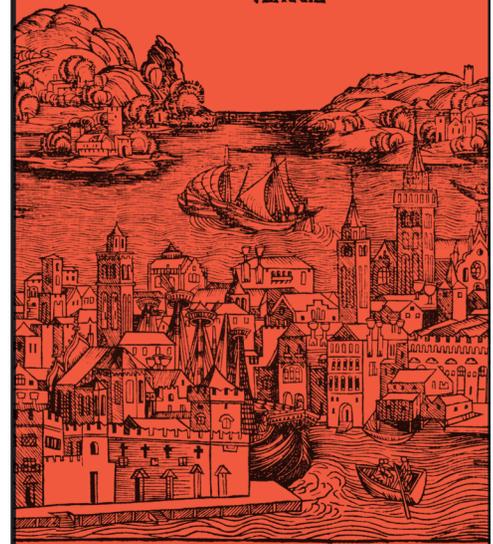
The white marble Bridge of Sighs, recently finished, connecting the Palace with the prison.

The Scala d'Oro, Golden Stairs, opulent and lavish, where private business is often conducted.

Hall of the Grand Council, magnificent and imposing, ending in the Doge's platform.

## LOCATON

VENECE



### LAGUNA VENEZIANA

#### The Ventian lagoon

The wind-swept ruins of a convent on Isola di San Secondo, a deserted island in the Venetian lagoon.

The remote island of Torcello, in the ancient cathedral, beneath the Byzantine mosaic of the Last Judgment

Aboard a Venetian ship tied to the Custom House wharf in the bacino di San Marco.

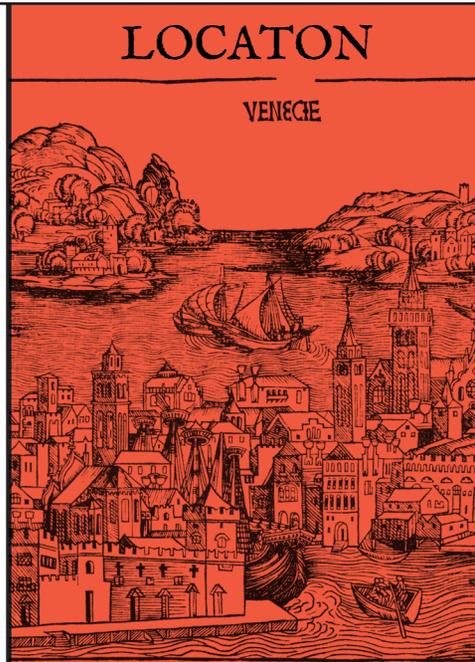
## PIAZZA SAN MARCO

### The Heart of Venice

**Basilica San Marco**, amid the dust and reliquies and stolen Byzantine treasures.

**Piombi, the Doge's dismal prison.** The lead roofs let in chilling ocean breezes and foul miasmas.

**Beneath the lion of Saint Mark** at water's edge. No one walking here is unobserved.



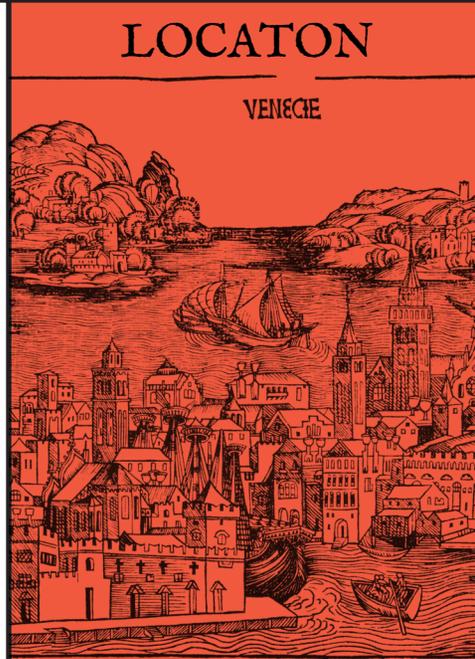
## CANALE GRANDE

### The Grand Canal

**Palazzo Malipiero's private garden**, gracefully abutting the Canal amid a leafy and discrete pergola.

**Pont de la tette, the Bridge of Tits** to Carampane di Rialto, teeming with whores.

**Aboard a luxuriously-appointed gondola**, velvet drapes providing privacy as necessary.



## CHEAT SHEET

### What to Do, and When to Do It

#### PREP

- Take a seat and sort the cards. Choose a tale, cast, and characters.
- Read your character's description aloud and determine who is Guide for whom.
- Choose an Ancillary and Location card. Revenge does not draw any cards.
- Draw a Fate card for the player you Guide.
- Organize the Resolution cards into a pile. Put all unused cards aside.

#### GUIDES AND ADVOCACY

- You are Guide to the player on your left.
- You are the primary advocate of the Character you have chosen.

#### FLOW OF PLAY

- Start the game. Revenge or the highest ranking character goes first.
- On your turn, choose a Location card.

- Your Guide will then set the scene and push hard toward your character's fate.
- Play out the scene as it has been established, using phrases to heighten. Revenge, if present, should inject discord.

#### PHRASES AND RESOLUTION

- The phrases are tools any player can use at any time. Use them unreservedly.
- When a scene is resolved, move on. Not every scene will have a conflict.

#### TOWARD A CONCLUSION

- The first time a character's fate is resolved and they are imprisoned, insane, or dead, become flexible about the turn order.
- If your character is removed from play, help Revenge.
- When every character is imprisoned, insane, or dead, the game ends.

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## CHEAT SHEET

### The Phrases

#### More details!

...tells the player to provide more description.

#### Do it differently!

...tells the player that something feels jarring. Don't be afraid of "Do it differently!"

#### I'd like to throw something in!

...tells the player that you want to narrate a short interlude or follow-up sequence.

#### I need to clarify something!

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Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

# JAGOMIR

A Satyr

You are the Duke of Moravia and the Queen's semi-secret lover. Although you are her vassal, the two of you would be wed if she could bear you an heir. She cannot, so a marriage was arranged to a healthy young lady of Parma, whose company you eagerly await in the bedchamber. The Queen is jealous, of course, but a man of your stamina can satisfy more than one woman, can he not? More troubling are the obscure machinations of that damned Saracen doctor, Mahmoud. Gentle Susanna's brother, Marolo, seems to have eyes for the Queen, and might make an able replacement for you, if she cannot bear to share.

LARGE CAST

## As Jagomir, YOU FEEL

...the affection of an old, comfortable lover for the Queen, although relations are currently strained.

...deep distrust toward Mahmoud, who is a useless charlatan too deep in the Queen's good graces.

...pleasure at the thought of marrying young, beautiful, virginal Susanna.

...admiration for Marolo, the knight of Parma sent to protect Susanna, even as he scorns you. Callow youth!

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

# JAGOMIR

A Satyr

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SMALL CAST

## As Jagomir, YOU FEEL

...the affection of an old, comfortable lover for the Queen, although relations are currently strained.

...deep distrust toward Mahmoud, who is a useless charlatan too deep in the Queen's good graces.

...pleasure at the thought of marrying young, beautiful, virginal Susanna.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

# JAGOMIR

The Devil of Prague



LARGE CAST

## As Jagomir, YOU KNOW

...the exquisite Susanna is to be yours, and yet she is repulsed by you. How will you change her attitude toward you?

...that Mahmoud's quackeries have harmed your beloved Beatrice-Elizabeth - is it ignorance, or is it slow poisoning? What will you do about it?

...there is more to the relationship between Marolo and Susanna than "brother and sister". How will you find out the truth?

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The Devil of Prague



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...you have the pox, and need treatment. You must speak to Mahmoud about it or you will die, but how will you ensure his silence?

Front of card

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Back of card

Front of card

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Back of card

# MAHMOUD

A Devil

You are physician to Queen Beatrice. Your skill and compassion have sustained her for many years, from the miscarriage that left her barren to the death of the King in battle, which left her bereft. You are a trusted advisor, always ready with wise words and a strong dram of healthful physic. (THE REST IS SECRET!) You were brought back from the crusades a slave. Now reliant on your potions to ease her pain, the Queen trusts your counsel above all and is *your* slave. You want more, though. A score of years ago you whisked the Queens twins away, telling her she had birthed a monster. Those children have returned, and you will marry one and see the other slain, making you King of Bohemia - a fitting revenge for a lifetime of slavery. The crown will rest lightly upon your mendacious brow.

LARGE CAST

## As Mahmoud, YOU FEEL

...contempt for the stupid Queen wrapped around your finger. She isn't as barren as she thinks she is, but soon she will be dead.

...a mutual distrust with Jagomír, Duke of Moravia, who knows far too much of your business.

...nothing at all toward the beautiful Susanna, who will be your bride by whatever means are necessary.

...irritation at the handsome, doomed Marolo, an obstacle to your plans that must be removed - preferably by his own mother.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

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**YOU GUIDE**  
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# MAHMOUD

The Devil of Prague



LARGE CAST

## As Mahmoud, YOU KNOW

...the children of the Queen have returned - a secret best kept until the right moment. How will you reveal this information, and to whom?

...the Duke's inconstant heart has been overthrown by Susanna. How can you make him hate and reject her?

...that timing is everything! How can you use your knowledge of the past and present to force a marriage between yourself and Susanna?

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Front of card

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Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

# BEATRICE

A Dupe

You are the widowed Queen of Bohemia, Beatrice-Alžběta. Yours has been a life of suffering. Many years ago you gave birth to your only child, a monster that your closest advisor and friend, the Saracenphysician Dr. Mahmoud, spirited away before you could even lay eyes upon it. Soon after your husband, the King, was killed in battle. The only respite from your misery has been your tender lover, Duke Jagomír of Moravia. But now, from distant Parma, comes the beastly woman-child he is to marry to cement a political alliance, and her devilishly handsome brother...

LARGE CAST

## As Beatrice, YOU FEEL

...trust and respect for Mahmoud, who, while technically a slave, is your loyal advisor in matters physical and political.

...love for dear, sweet Jagomír. Were you not barren the two of you would be wed.

...hatred for the simpering Italian harridan Susanna, who is not worthy of marriage to your Jagomír.

...Susanna's aide and protector, the dashing Marolo, is charming and exciting.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

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**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

# BEATRICE

The Devil of Prague



LARGE CAST

## As Beatrice, YOU KNOW

...Mahmoud has hinted at a powerful, secret treatment that could make you young and beautiful again. What would you sacrifice to have this treatment?

...the gallant knight Marolo is half your age and, frankly, twice the man the Duke is. Your heart comes alive in his presence. How will you let him know you welcome his advances?

...Susanna is a great beauty. Were she no longer so, the Duke would no longer lust after her. How will you despoil and destroy your rival?

# BEATRICE

The Devil of Prague



SMALL CAST

## As Beatrice, YOU KNOW

...Mahmoud has hinted at a powerful, secret treatment that could make you young and beautiful again. What would you sacrifice to have this treatment?

...Duke Jagomír owes you his rank and position - what will you ask of him in return?

...Susanna is a great beauty. Were she no longer so, the Duke would no longer lust after her. How will you despoil and destroy your rival?

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

# SUSANNA

A Lamb

You are a lady of Parma, set to become Duke Jagomir's wife shortly. You and dear Marolo have not had an easy life. You were born twins and found in Parma as infants, foundlings of high station as evidenced by your only possession - a signet ring of the Bohemian nobility. The Duke of Parma raised you as his own, and now that kind man has sent you to cement an alliance between his lands and those of Moravia. Although Prague is strange and her people in many ways terrible, you must repay the Duke of Parma, your father in all but blood, with courage and honor. Your brother Marolo, a dashing knight, is by your side and will shield you from danger.

LARGE CAST

## As Susanna, YOU FEEL

...Queen Beatrice makes you uneasy - she seems an aging monster who weirdly dotes on your husband-to-be and looks upon you with naked hatred.

...fear toward Dr. Mahmoud, who has a whiff of the infernal about him.

...your future husband, the Duke Jagomir, a poor match - too old, too lustful and too strange.

...deep filial devotion for your brother Marolo.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

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...your future husband, the Duke Jagomir, a poor match - too old, too lustful and too strange.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

# SUSANNA

The Devil of Prague



LARGE CAST

## As Susanna, YOU KNOW

...your brother Marolo has set out to seduce the Queen, a dubious and un-Christian endeavor. How will you put an end to his foolishness?

...you must show your Bohemian signet ring to someone - but who, and why?

...your solemn duty is to marry the Duke and serve the Queen. How will you overcome your fear and distrust toward them - and who can help you?

# SUSANNA

The Devil of Prague



SMALL CAST

## As Susanna, YOU KNOW

...you are a noble lady at the mercy of a foreign court. How far will you go to protect your honor?

...you must show your Bohemian signet ring to someone - but who, and why?

...your solemn duty is to marry the Duke and serve the Queen. How will you overcome your fear and distrust toward them - and who can help you?

# MAROLO

A Viper

You are a knight of Parma and the brother to the erstwhile bride-to-be, Susanna. She has kept up a brave face about this whole sordid affair, but you do not like it - her marrying a randy old goat of a minor Duke in the provincial backwaters of central Europe was not the fate you had imagined together as children in the court of Parma. A pair of orphans taken in by that grand Duke to raise as his own - a civilized man, not like these dirty people of Prague. You've got a plan, though, to retain your honor and become King of Bohemia. It isn't Italy, but it will slake your thirst for power - for now.

LARGE CAST

## As Marolo, YOU FEEL

...contempt for the vain, stupid Queen. You fully intend to seduce your way to her throne.

...unease at her key advisor, the simpering Saracen doctor Mahmoud, who is both strange and menacing.

...hatred for Duke Jagomir, who is a terrible match for your innocent sister Susanna.

...love for your dear, innocent sister Susanna. You would do anything to protect her.

**YOU GUIDE**  
the character on your left.

# REVENGE

A Terror



ANY CAST

# REVENGE

A Terror

You are the living embodiment of revenge. You are not a character in the story, instead you are the story. Your job is to lurk around the edges, comment on the unfolding action, and spur all the characters toward ... you.

How can you prompt reluctant parties to indelicate action? What threats and pleadings will force imprudent revelations? What whispered promises will spur desperate measures? At what point will mocking commentary goad a stalwart Christian into bloody madness?

**YOU GUIDE**  
all - and none.

# MAROLO

The Devil of Prague



LARGE CAST

## As Marolo, YOU KNOW

...as you are ambitious but penniless, you plan to usurp the throne of Bohemia and Moravia by marrying the wretched old Queen. But first you must seduce her. **How on Earth will you make her fall in love with you?**

...that the Queen utterly hates your sister Susanna for some reason, and you fear for her safety. **How will you protect Susanna?**

...that you have the pox, and need treatment. You must speak to Dr. Mahmoud about it or you will die, **but how will you ensure his silence?**

# CHEAT SHEET

The Phrases

## More details!

...tells the player to provide more description.

## Try a different way!

...tells the player that something feels jarring. Don't be afraid to "Try a different way!"

## I'd like to throw something in!

...tells the player that you want to narrate a short interlude or follow-up sequence.

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...tells the player you see a clear conflict in the scene. When this happens, call it out at once. Clarify what the character is trying to do, then ask the person whose scene it is to select someone else to draw a Resolution card and interpret it. Set the card aside until all have been used, then reshuffle.

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Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

# YES, AND

...success includes even more than expected. Perhaps even a bit too much...

## RESOLUTION



# YES, BUT

...some cruel, unrelated disaster befalls the character or someone they care deeply about.

## RESOLUTION



# YES, BUT

...the consequences of the success are unwholesome and unexpected.

## RESOLUTION



# YES, BUT

...only if they go mad in the process.

## RESOLUTION



Front of card

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Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

# YES, BUT

...only if they are im-  
prisoned immediately  
afterward.

## RESOLUTION



# NO, BUT

...the failure attracts  
new sympathy or alli-  
ance.

## RESOLUTION



# YES, BUT

...only if a terrible se-  
cret is revealed.

## RESOLUTION



# ONLY WITH HELP

..from someone not  
currently in the scene.

## RESOLUTION



Front of card

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Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

# NO, AND

...a dreadful ghost - or  
the spirit of Revenge -  
comes calling.

## RESOLUTION



# NO, BUT

... Something unrelated  
occurs that will benefit  
them.

## RESOLUTION



# YES, BUT

...there's a detail that  
doesn't go as planned -  
a detail that will return  
to haunt them...

## RESOLUTION



# NO, AND

... something unrelat-  
ed also goes wrong in  
some tragic way.

## RESOLUTION



Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

**An Overhead Conversation,  
Tragically Misunderstood**

*or*

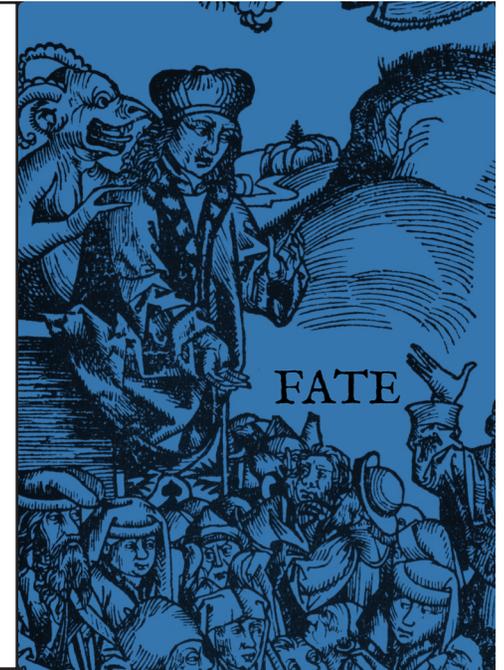
**A Vial of Poison and  
a Vial of Vinegar are  
Switched**



**A Poor Witness is Si-  
lenced Forever**

*or*

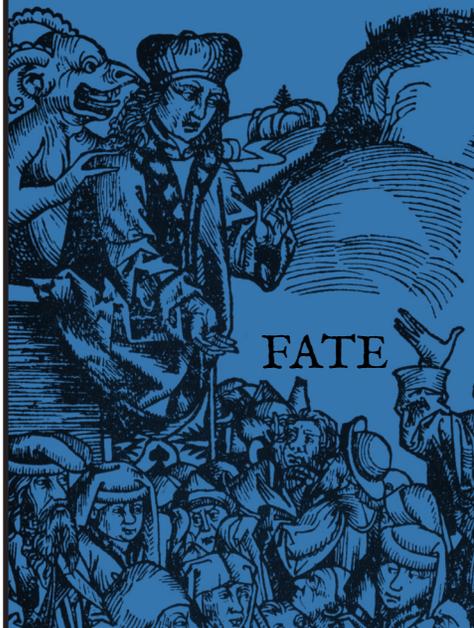
**Chastity Abandoned,  
Two Become an Inaus-  
picious One**



**A Dreadful Curse is  
Visited Upon a Deserv-  
ing Victim**

*or*

**A Lovingly-Prepared  
Meal of Bitter Revenge**



**A Beautiful Inlaid Box  
Appears, Containing  
Horror**

*or*

**A Confession is Ob-  
tained Under Devilish  
Torture**



Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

**Bitter Tears, Helpless  
Against Inexorable Fate  
Long Foretold**

*or*

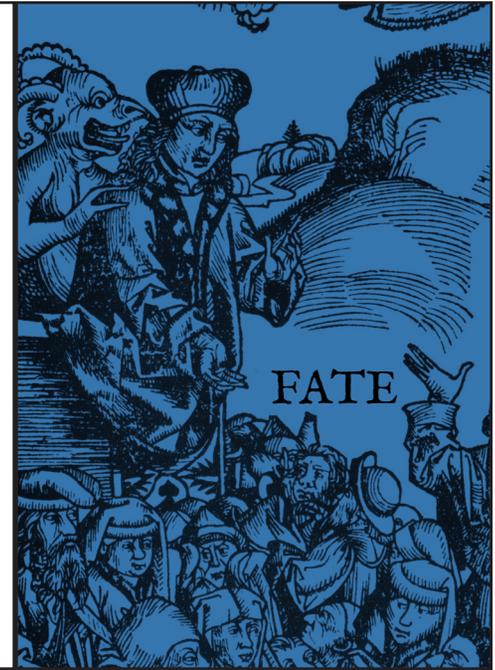
**A Long-Savored Bit  
of Revenge Finds the  
Wrong Target**



**Mistaken Identity Leads  
to Disaster**

*or*

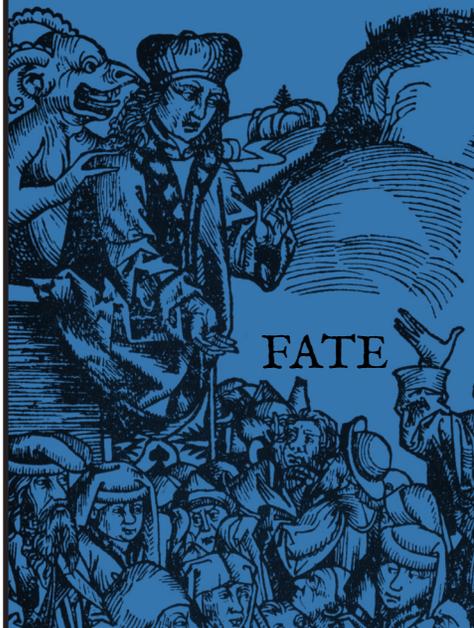
**Unbridled Debauchery  
and Infamy Wake the  
Very Stones**



**A Murdered Child is  
offered up to impotent  
justice**

*or*

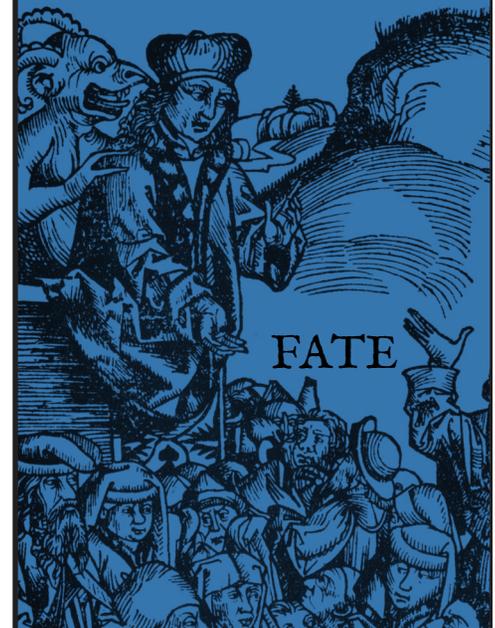
**A clever forgery drips  
with deadly lies**



**Raving madness, or cal-  
culated artifice?**

*or*

**Shame leads to self-  
murder**



Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

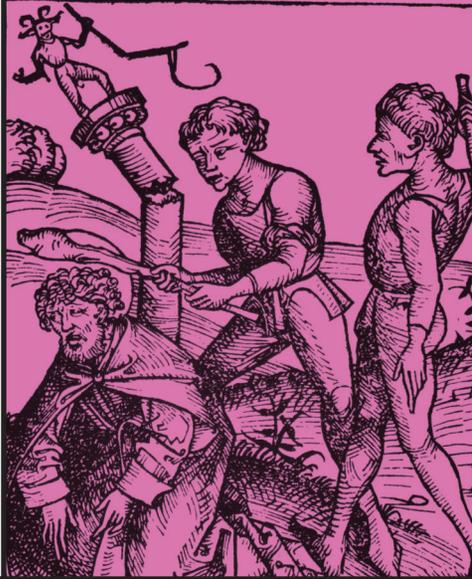
Fold here & glue

Back of card

# A CAPTAIN

... guarding Pražský  
Hrad in service of his  
Queen

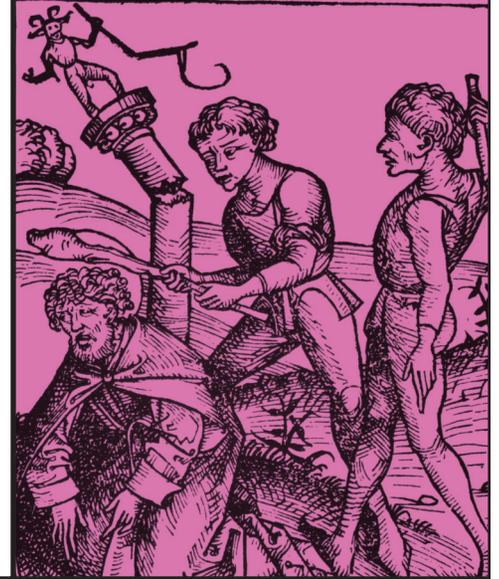
## ANCILLARY



# MUDLARKS

... sifting for coin be-  
neath the Charles bridge

## ANCILLARY



# A MAIDEN

... dressed as a soldier,  
her intentions inscru-  
table

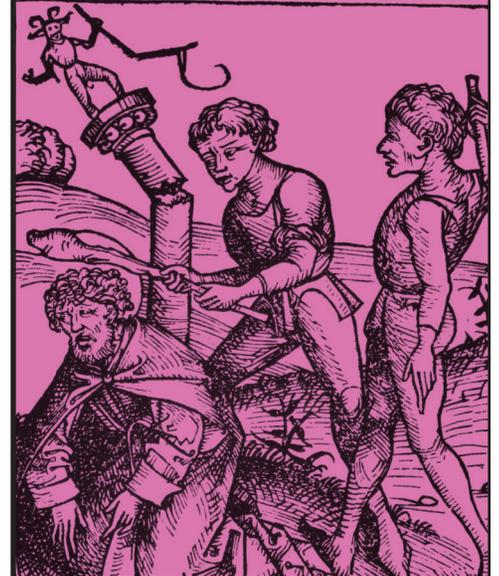
## ANCILLARY



# A DOMINICAN FRIAR

... no holier than the  
company he keeps

## ANCILLARY



Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

# A BEGGAR

... who has overheard  
something dreadful

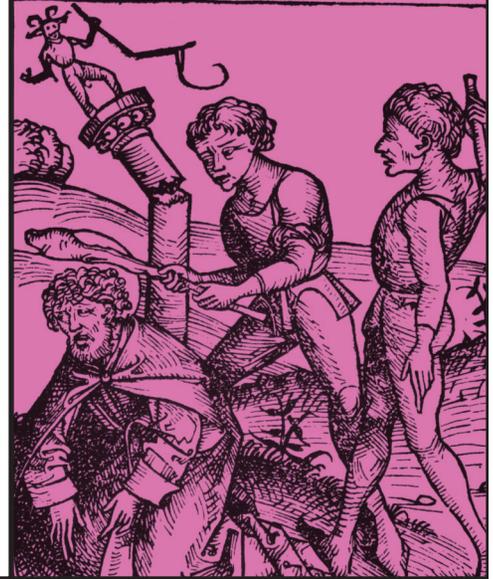
## ANCILLARY



# A MIDWIFE

... ancient and full of  
memories

## ANCILLARY



# GUILDSMEN OF PRAGUE

... boiling over with mad  
heresy

## ANCILLARY



# PLAYERS

... in gay raiment, purses  
full and countenances  
uncertain

## ANCILLARY



Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

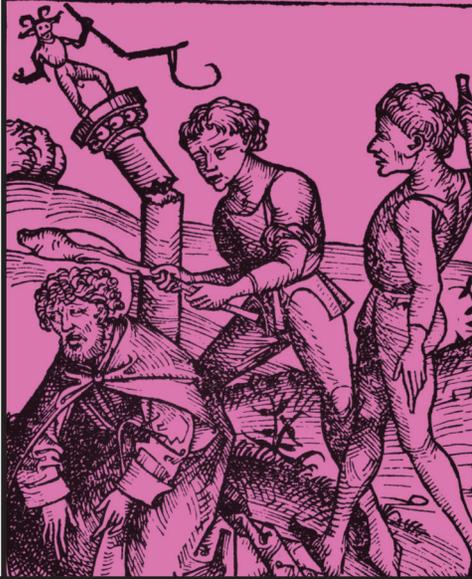
Fold here & glue

Back of card

A  
GANG OF  
MURDERERS

... drunk and bold

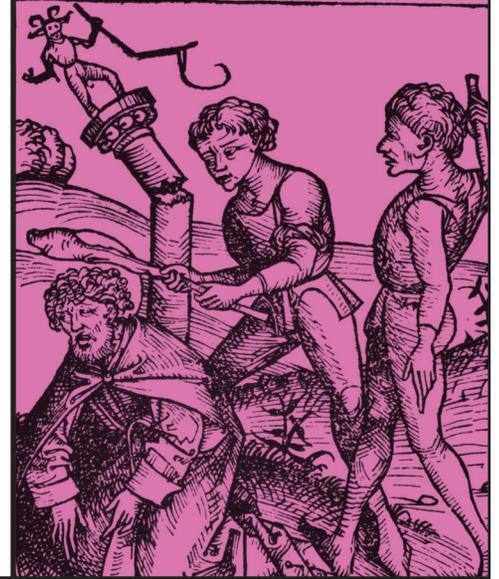
ANCILLARY



A  
MAGISTRATE

... corrupted by a bag of  
coins

ANCILLARY



A  
DEMON

... freed as long as a  
black taper burns and  
bent on revenge

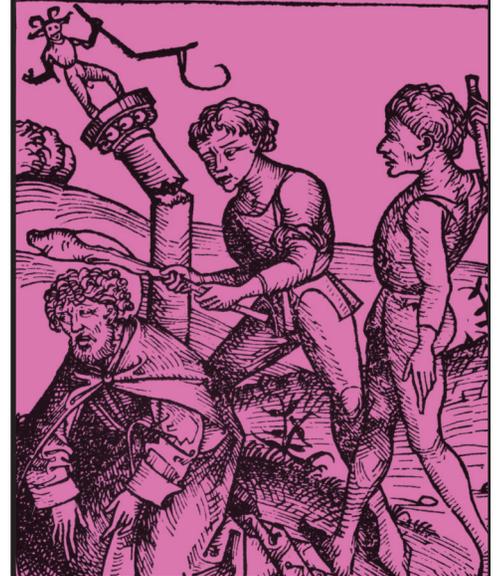
ANCILLARY



A  
SILENT  
OWL

... yellow eyes filled with  
judgment and portent

ANCILLARY



Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

Front of card

Fold here & glue

Back of card

# PRAŽSKÝ HRAD

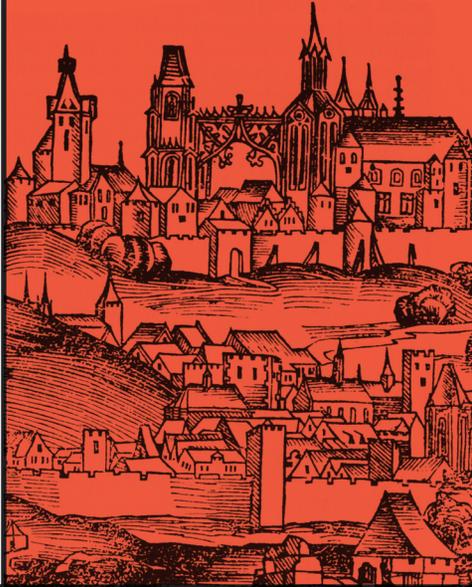
## The Castle (Public)

Enormous, vaulted Vladislav hall, with a table that seats fifty

St. Vitus' Cathedral, resonant with the hallowed dead

The royal gardens, spacious, silent and discrete

# LOCATON



# PRAŽSKÝ HRAD

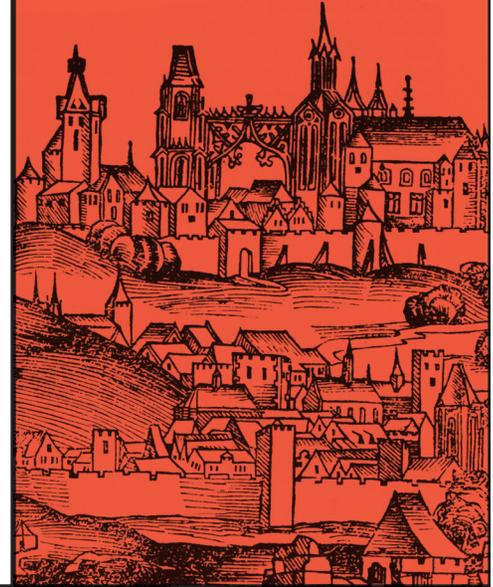
## The Castle (Private)

The royal kitchens, among roaring fires and boiling cauldrons

Atop the battlements, with a commanding view of the Vltava and Prague

An evil-smelling torture chamber buried deep within the castle dungeon

# LOCATON



# PRAŽSKÝ HRAD

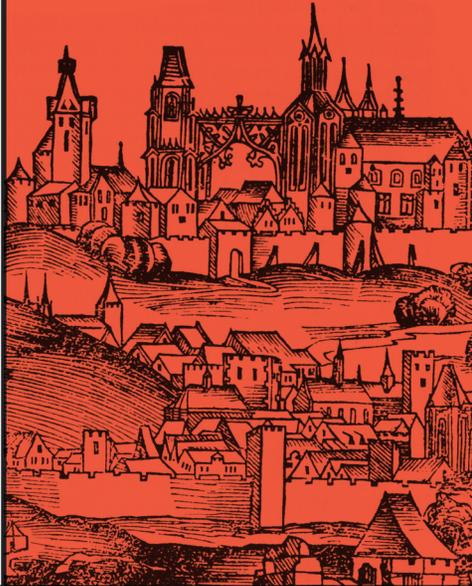
## The Castle (Domestic)

Bed chambers opening onto the royal gardens

The top floor of the Doctor's tower, protected by a massive Arabian lock

The royal library, filled with stacks of curious tomes

# LOCATON



# NOVÉ MĚSTO

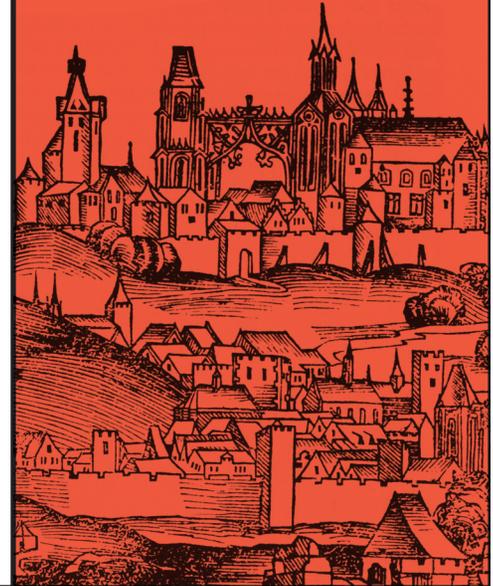
## The New Town

The hay and straw market, coursing with activity legal and illegal.

A secret chamber within St. John's gate.

The opulent home of a merchant prince.

# LOCATON



## STARÉ MĚSTO

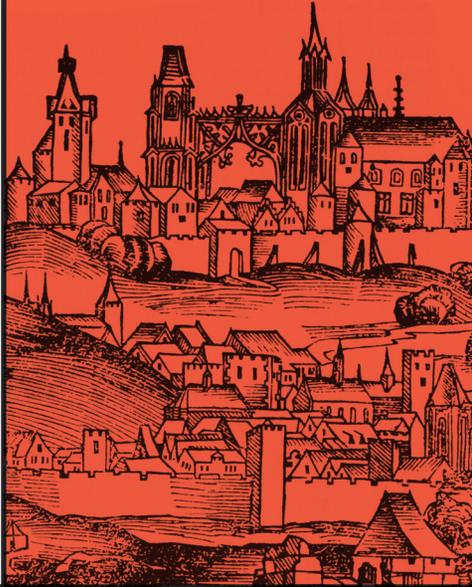
### The Old Town

Beneath the astronomical clock  
in Old Town square

The old Jewish quarter of Josefov,  
cramped and mysterious

A sparse, well-kept garret overlooking  
Týn cathedral

## LOCATON



## CHEAT SHEET

What to Do, and When to Do It

### PREP

- Take a seat and sort the cards. Choose a tale, cast, and characters.
- Read your character's description aloud and determine who is Guide for whom.
- Choose an Ancillary and Location card. Revenge does not draw any cards.
- Draw a Fate card for the player you Guide.
- Organize the Resolution cards into a pile. Put all unused cards aside.

### GUIDES AND ADVOCACY

- You are Guide to the player on your left.
- You are the primary advocate of the Character you have chosen.

### FLOW OF PLAY

- Start the game. Revenge or the highest ranking character goes first.
- On your turn, choose a Location card.

- Your Guide will then set the scene and push hard toward your character's fate.
- Play out the scene as it has been established, using phrases to heighten. Revenge, if present, should inject discord.

### PHRASES AND RESOLUTION

- The phrases are tools any player can use at any time. Use them unreservedly.
- When a scene is resolved, move on. Not every scene will have a conflict.

### TOWARD A CONCLUSION

- The first time a character's fate is resolved and they are imprisoned, insane, or dead, become flexible about the turn order.
- If your character is removed from play, help Revenge.
- When every character is imprisoned, insane, or dead, the game ends.

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## ALONG THE VLTAVA

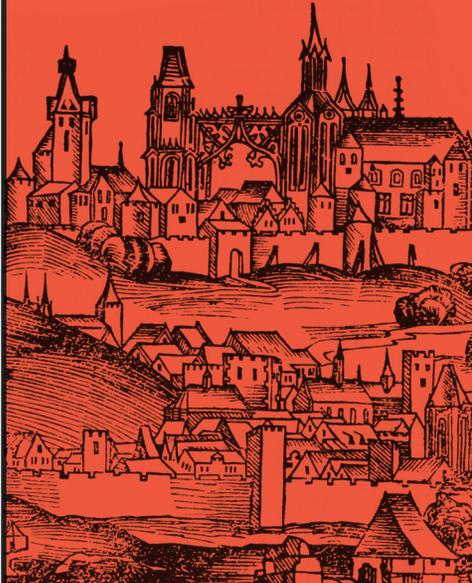
### River, slow and black

On the Charles bridge's graceful span,  
anonymous in the fog

The crumbling ruins of Vyšehrad castle,  
high on a promontory

On the Vltava's filthy banks,  
among the squatters, lunatics  
and criminals

## LOCATON



## CHEAT SHEET

The Phrases

### More details!

...tells the player to provide more description.

### Do it differently!

...tells the player that something feels jarring. Don't be afraid of "Do it differently!"

### I'd like to throw something in!

...tells the player that you want to narrate a short interlude or follow-up sequence.

### I need to clarify something!

...tells the player or group there's something you've forgotten or something you need help understanding.

### That might not be quite so easy!

...tells the player you see a clear conflict in the scene. When this happens, call it out at once. Clarify what the character is trying to do, then ask the person whose scene it is to select someone else to draw a Resolution card and interpret it. Set the card aside until all have been used, then reshuffle.

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