

# Magical University Adventures

*Short Scenarios/Missions for the Magical University GURPS Campaign by Pythagoras*

## Introduction

This is a collection of short missions for the Glantri Magical University Setting. While they are not detailed, there is usually enough material on the website (<http://gurps.hardpoints.de>) and on the web in general to fill in the gaps. Each mission gives all required references.

## Trivial Missions

These missions are relatively low risk. These are the kinds of missions the PCs get before they have gained adequate magical skills and a decent reputation.

### Halfling Hunt

**Patron:** Master di Vendi, who comes up to the PCs himself.

**Objective:** The PCs are ordered to recover a halfling that has escaped from the laboratory of a master of the Great School. The master warns the PCs that the halfling might still be under the effect of a spell that blocks magical attacks.

**Reward:** Magical abjuration secrets worth 5 character points. 150 ducats.

**Resources:** Halfling rogues are described in the Creature Catalogue.



## Background Information

The halfling, a young thief called Wilbur Bellybottom, is half-crazy from terror. Having been captured while stealing from di Vendi near the border to Ethengar, Wilbur was brought back to Glantri to test the magical properties of his kind. While no real harm has been done, the halfling has been subjected to all kinds of protective spells that were tested extensively with powerful magical attacks.

### What the PCs know about Halflings

Roll Expert Skill (Halflings) for all PCs (at -5 if not available). Alternatives are History-3, Geography-3, Savoir-Faire-3, or Carousing-5. Check against the margin of success.

MoS 0-2: Halflings look like chubby human children but have hairy legs.

MoS 2-3: Halflings are creatures dominated by their desire for food. They are also good thieves.

MoS 4+: Halflings are stealthy, have more luck than other races, and are often experts at throwing stones and other grenade-like weapons. They are also quite valuable to Glantrian mages, fetching prices from 2000 ducats and up.

### Current Whereabouts

The halfling has disguised as a street urchin and is hiding from officials. He is hiding in the poorer quarters, in the basement of a semi-ruin that is home to several beggars. However, he has tried to get into contact with the Fellowship of the Pouch to arrange being smuggled from the city. Wilbur tries to make contact in front of the "Golden Gondola", a shabby meeting place for all kinds of low-life criminals.

If the PCs do not manage to get this info by listening around (Streetwise-1), somebody will eventually come up to them and give them the info in return for "a favour".

#### Catching a Halfling

Several tactics are good for catching a halfling. First of all, if the general location of the halfling is known, it is possible to lure it into a trap with large amounts of good food. Halflings are obsessed with food and if the PCs manage to spread the news or to make the food widely visible, they will be able to lure Wilbur out of hiding (but maybe tons of other beggars as well).

Another way to get Wilbur's attention is to spread the rumour that the PCs offer smuggling services or are otherwise able to help the halfling. This requires some skill rolls and holds the risk of attracting the wrath of the Fellowship of the Pouch.

#### The End?

Once the PCs catch Bellybottom, he will beg them to not return him to di Vendi. If the PCs are not completely cold-hearted, they will not hand the halfling over, possibly ending up with a halfling ally.

#### *Cleaning up the Basement*

**Patron:** Master di Vendi

**Objective:** The PCs are ordered to clean up a basement. While this mission is basically just time-consuming, there are one or two complications that the PCs will encounter as described below.

**Reward:** 30 ducats per hour. The work will take a total of 48h, divided between all that take part in the "mission".

**Resources:** The Creature Catalogue should come in handy.

#### The Spider Web

After about 4 hours of serious work, the PCs will discover a huge spider web. To

finish their job, they will have to cut it; but as soon as they touch it, a small monstrous spider (poisonous) will jump upon them, leading to a small brawl.

#### Additional Rewards

A Search-3 or Observation-4 reveals a McMortal Bone Dart Wand that the master will give to the PCs as a gift.

#### *The Eggs of the Dragonbird*

**Patron:** Master de Malinbois

**Objective:** Find the nest of a Dragonbird and steal at least 4 eggs.

**Reward:** A total of 4 x 5 points of magical knowledge, each in a different field and limited to the first 2 abilities.

**Resources:** Creature Catalogue, NPCs of Ill Repute

#### Initial Research

First of all, a nest of a Dragonbird has to be found. Research will reveal the following, depending on the number of successes:

0-1: Dragonbirds are distant relatives of the dragons. They are winged reptiles that live in the forest and breathe acid clouds.

2-4: Dragonbirds love to eat purple grubs, a special creature that only lives in the in blood willow trees.

5+: The acid breath of the Dragonbird is actually a myth that arose from the fact that the creature looks almost like a miniature dragon.

If the PCs fail the roll or feel they need more knowledge, they can talk to a monster hunter, who asks 50 ducats for the complete information. For an additional 50 ducats, a monster hunter will guide the PCs to a place where dragonbirds are known to nest.

#### The Dragonbird

The dragonbird uses the stats of a Dragon Lizard, Green but also has flight at normal speed. A somewhat shy creature, the bird is nevertheless a

## Great School - Black Board

Need people to clean up my basement. Will pay 30 ducats per hour it takes. Also, might give away old stuff.

inquiries at the Chair of Abjuration.

Looking for reliable Students who will take part in magical experiment. Little Time required, pays 300, 600 in case of injury or death.

Inquiries at The Chair of Air Magic

Looking for young attractive students who will work as stewards during an exclusive bait-biased source. Pays 150 ducats for the night  
Chairman, Master of Necromancy.

Need bold students willing to risk their lives, recovering the eggs of a dragonbird. Risks involve wildlife and possibly bandits.

Sign up at the Chair of Dracology.

Somebody has stolen my skull of Hamun Rasht. Will pay 2000 dc to those who can recover the rare item for me. Pay extra is name of culprit is revealed!!

Bring skull to chair of necromancy.

fearless fighter when it comes to defending its nest.

#### Other Students

There are other students (Loic Fond-De-Chaussure and Lady Yasmin) looking for the eggs and they are unwilling to share the price. The PCs will meet these students during the briefing and they will do their best to sabotage the PCs efforts if possible. Also, they will simply try to be faster. Most notably their actions will be:

- Steal books in the library, giving the PCs a penalty equal to the margin of success the opponents achieved on their research roll.
- If they are ahead of the PCs, they will hire people to distract the PCs, e.g., by blocking the road with cattle etc.
- If the PCs are ahead, the other students will try to catch up as fast as they can, probably arriving when the PCs are at the nest.

However, the other students will not resort to violence or pay others to harm the PCs. While assassination is not uncommon in Glantri, the principalities are not a slaughterhouse.

#### Finding the Nest

If the PCs know nothing about the nesting habits, they will have a hard time, spending days wandering through the forest and possibly getting a terrible cold (HT+3 check, -1 on all actions due to aching), before stumbling on a dragonbird feeding on grubs by pure chance.

If the PCs look for blood willow trees (requiring appropriate skills such as Naturalist, Botany, Gardening-2 etc. or plant/animal empathy to ask one's way around) or have a professional guide, they will progress faster and spot a bird feeding. They can observe it using stealth and follow it to its nearby nest, which is on the top of an ancient twisted

tree. Climbing up there is easy (+3) but then there might be competing students and also the orc hunters.

#### Orc Hunters

Unfortunately for the PCs, two orc hunters are also looking for the eggs, a delicacy their tribal boss desires. Fortunately, he send the biggest idiots of the clan on this mission.

**Bonehead** is a tall and skinny orc with a constant drool. He is a standard orc warrior from the Creature Collection but is also Gullible. He speaks accented Thyatian from his time as a gladiator in Glantri.

**Stinker** smells bad, even for an orc. While he is cleverer than his companion, he is quite old and extremely nearsighted. It is quite possible that he might not identify the PCs as non-orcs if they are not within 2 meters.

The PCs can either attack these two fools while they try to climb the tree or use some form of deceit to get the two away from the eggs. However, while it is easy to fool Bonehead, Stinker will eventually realize what is going on and he *does* have bad temper as any orc!

If the other students were ahead of the PCs, it is quite possible that the orcs have captured them. The PCs can free them but while they will be celebrated as heroes, their opponents will feel like fools.

#### *The Boots of Speed*

**Patron:** Hung Low

**Objective:** Wear newly created magical boots for 2 weeks to test their properties.

**Reward:** 300 dc, 600 dc if anybody is killed or gets a major injury (and they will!)

#### The Boots as Intended

The Boots of Speed are intended to allow extremely fast movement. After a turn of moving at full speed, the PC using the boots may accelerate by 1,

moving at full speed+1. Each turn, one may accelerate or decelerate by 1. There is no theoretical upper limit for the boots.

#### The Bugs

The problem is that, once 3x basic speed is reached, the boots will no longer decelerate, leading either to a horrible crash (2d crushing) or a fall (1d+2 crushing) once a DX check is failed. Even then the boots will continue to move, kicking anybody trying to take them off.

#### *The Skull of Hamun Rasht*

The master will be surprised when the PCs show up and tell them that he had somebody with more skill in mind. He is unwilling to help the PCs with information of any kind.

# Great School - Black Board

**Need man**  
my  
Since I currently experience some minor problems with the undead at my tower, I would need students who can spare 2 weeks to take a look at what is happening.

Please talk to McCallous at the Chair of Necromancy

**Need capable student who will take care of high-ranking Alphatian guests. Will pay in magic!**

Velasquez

**I need students with some knowledge of alchemy and social interaction, who can take care of a problem I am experiencing with what might be a Ehtengarian saboteur at my laboratory. Will pay in alchemical components.**

**Inquire at the chair of Dracology**

*I need reliable and discrete students, who can take care of a specific business here in the city involving blackmail and an ancient curse.*

Kamparov

*Somebody has stolen my skull of Hamun Rasht. Will pay 2000 dc to those who can recover the rare item for me. Pay extra is name of culprit is revealed!!*

*Bring skull to chair of necromancy.*

*I am selling genuine magical maps to interested parties. Very low price - but if you find anything, I want 10%.*

Henry Porter, TA

## Low-Powered Missions

After the PCs have managed to convince their superiors that they are not totally incapable of reaching mission goals, they are given more interesting tasks. The PCs should not be allowed to take all of the missions, as they overlap quite a bit but will also become aware that just because they did not take a specific mission, this does not mean that the plot into that direction is frozen in place.

### Overall Plot

To give the GM a better view on what is happening, it is important to describe the different stakeholders in the low-powered mission first.

#### The Alphantian Visitors

After some very strenuous negotiations, Alphantia has sent a small company of ambassadors to the Great School to initiate an exchange of knowledge. Velasquez, the Master of Illusionism has initiated this exchange in the hope of stealing magical knowledge from his visitors.

The Alphantians on the other hand are well aware of this and are willing to leak enough knowledge to stay on the master's good side. Their motivation is that they have found ancient scrolls hinting at a great magical treasure that

was stolen by the Flaems during their exodus and that they want to return to Alphantia. They have made contact with a cell of renegade Ethengarian clerics that have been in Glantri for quite a while in order to stage a fake abduction in return for some magical favours.

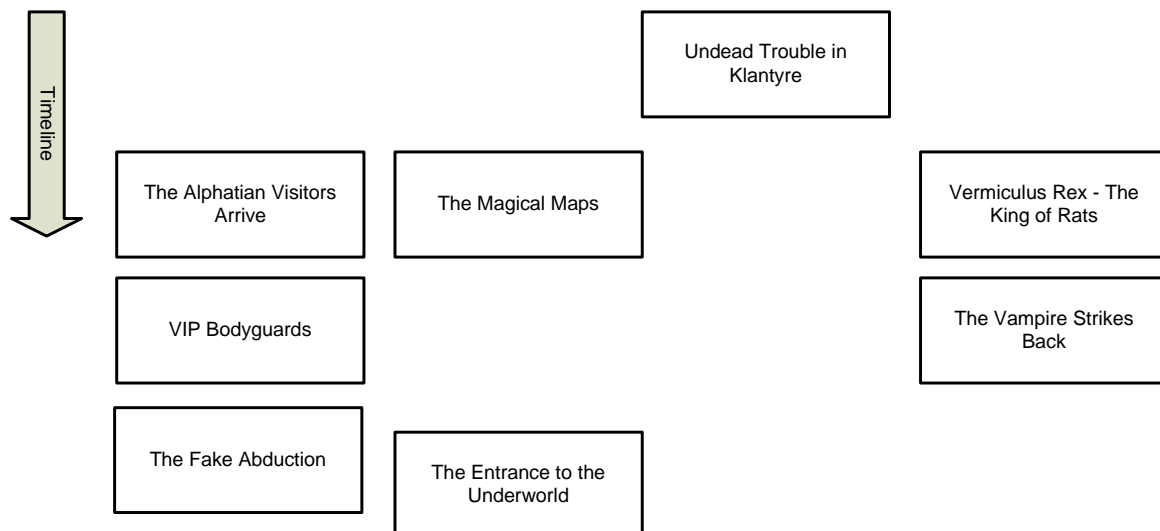
#### The Cult of Alphaks

15 years ago, Prince Morphail put a spy supported by a small cult of Alphaks into the Great School of Magic to keep an eye on its masters. When they became aware of Kamparov's actions against the vampires last year, they started to harass him with the intention of driving him away from the school. Klamkarin, the spy and chief cultist, has hated Alphantia for ages and when he heard of the Ambassadors, he decided to act against them as well.

#### The Thousand Fists of the Khan

The Thousand Fists of the Khan is an organization of Clerics trying to bring down the Glantrian magocracy because of its enmity towards clerics. When the Alphantians become aware of these partisans, they will try to use them for their purposes - after all the Alphantians treat Clerics as nobles as well.

However, the clerics also have an agenda of their own; they have stolen the Skull of Hamun Rasht and are now



looking for the scroll needed to use it and will do anything to get it.

#### The People's Spellcaster Company

Dedicated to empowering the masses with magical powers, the PSC tries to steal magical items to help its cause. They are aware of the rich magical treasures of the Alphantian visitors and will try to get their hands on them. They are also interested in the Skull of Hamun Rasht but have little opportunity to get it unless the PCs decide to help them.

#### Undead Trouble in Klantyre

**Patron:** Master McCallous

**Objective:** Find out why the undead pawns keep disappearing at the Tower of Ash.

**Reward:** 200 ducats for expenses and a total of 4 x 10 points of magical knowledge, each in a different field and limited to the first 2 abilities in the case of success.

**Resources:** Creature Catalogue, the Cave Tiles from the pirate section of the GURPS Hardpoint.

**Outcome without the PCs:** Lady Yasmin Virayana accepts the quest and gains the favour of McCallous.

#### Job Description

The majordomo of the tower of Master McCallous is in need of capable adventurers to solve a problem with the undead minions of the tower.

#### Summary

Myrm, a prospector of rare magical ingredients in the nearby Colossus Mountains, has stumbled upon a camp of Ethengarian saboteurs and stole a gem from the Skull of Hamun Rasht he found there. However, this triggered a trap and infected him with a disease that has left him delirious and dying. Originally, the saboteurs planned to act slowly against the tower of McCallous in order to steal certain scrolls to be able

to use the skull for their purposes. They wanted to scout the location and then use magic to enter but now they feel they have to act quickly and have raised a beacon to attract all nearby undead. They feel that with enough undead they will be able to attack the tower and take by force that which they could not get by stealth.

#### The Majordomo's Tale

##### *The Tower of Ash*

The Tower of Ash is a tall blackened spike built on the slopes of a mountain, whose base is littered with rotting skulls. Diseased black birds flock around and pick at corpses dangling from the main gate. There is an eerie silence and the stench of rotting flesh and mould. The guards of the tower wear black plate mail with closed helmets that is slightly rusty in spots and they do not talk.

##### *Sean Fidhe*

Sean, the majordomo of the tower, is a hunchback wearing dirty black robes. He has a hideous face full of warts and the odious habit of wiping his nose on his sleeve, apparently for years! He is an obsessive accountant with impressive mental capabilities but terrible manners. Nevertheless, he is happy to see the PCs; the loss of the skeletons is upsetting him terribly.

##### *What Sean Knows*

Two weeks ago, 3 skeletons sent to collect the tribute of the remote Clandyke farm in the mountains did not return. Sean sent 3 more to investigate, but these did not return either.

Also, the village of Ashdire has reported strange attacks by undead creatures and is close to rebellion against their lord, whom they feel is responsible for them.

##### Initial Investigation



### *Ashdire*

The village of Ashdire is a small mountain community of sheperds and mountaineers. The proud clansmen are extremely agitated and close to rebellion, displaying little tolerance for any envoys of the Lord.

The people of Ashdire know the following of the mysterious events. 3 weeks ago, Myrm returned from the mountains with a haunted look on his face and a beautiful red gem in his hand. He fell into a heavy fever and has started to grow strange mould on his face, coming from his mouth.

Two weeks ago, the graveyard was disturbed by ghouls coming from the valley. The militia was able to chase the graverobbers away but four days later, more ghouls were passing by the city at night, also coming from the valley. The militia again managed to defeat them but lost 2 men in the effort.

- **Lad McAshdire:** The chieftain of the village is a fat, kilt-wearing highlander with a huge red beard displaying his last 4 meals. The chieftain is a capable swordsman and very temperamental. However, those who are not cowed by him and share his love for food and drink will quickly earn his friendship.
- **Brother Quamish:** Quamish is a mountain mystic, trained in the art of healing. He is a silent and dispassionate person and willing to talk to anybody.
- **Myrm McAshdire:** The old tribesman is a well-known mountaineer who is currently very ill with a strange fungal infection. His face is covered with a yellowish mould. Myrm is in delirium, rambling about a skull in the mountains that looks at him with red eyes.

### *The Clandyke Farm*

Leod McAshdire, his wife, and two sons run the Clandyke farm. They are afraid

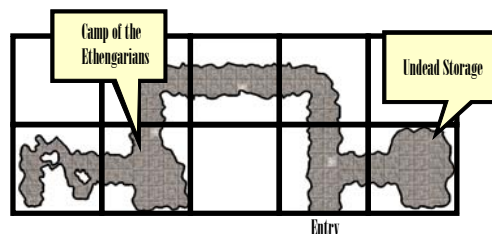
of retribution by their Lord and are willing to cooperate with the PCs. Leod knows little about what happened but can tell the PCs that the skeletons passed by his farm and went further into the mountains.

### *Finding the Mountain Camp*

- If skeletons are sent to the Clandyke farm, they will also be summoned to the Burial Site and can easily be followed there.
- Alternatively, the PCs might want to wait for some ghouls and just follow them.
- Divination magic will reveal a strong pull of necromantic energy pointing to the left side of the glacier.

### *The Camp of the Ethengarians*

You should use the Pirate Cave Tiles to build up the camp of the Ethengarians (see map below). Here, the PCs will do battle with as many undead as you want to throw at them, only to discover an abandoned camp that leaves some clues pointing towards Ethengar. The beacon attracting the unded is a magical diagram that cen be easily destroyed. The PCs might try to follow the trail of the Ethengarians, but will have a hard time reaching them.



## The Magical Maps

**Patron:** None, the PCs are on their own.

**Objective:** Find the treasure pointed to by the map.

**Reward:** A magical vial from the early ages of Glantri that can lead to a great treasure (i.e., it starts to glow when the treasure is nearby).

**Resources:** The Creature Collection should come in handy, also use the "Magical Map" handout to give to the players.

### Synopsis

The PCs are given an ancient map that requires some historical and arts knowledge to decipher. This map leads them to the burial mound of an ancient Flaemish noble where the compass can be found. Their quest is made more difficult by paranoid villagers out hunting goblins.

### The Map

The map will make little sense in the beginning but some research will quickly put the PCs on their way.

**The poem:** the poem on the letter can be identified with a *Poetry roll*. Success grants the info that it is the translation of an ancient Flaemish poem that describes their exodus from Alphatia (and means that the PCs have access to the full text) Three or more successes will reveal the name of the author, King Ivar Flamehammer, an early Flaemish ruler and powerful fire mage. A *History roll* at -2 can reveal that Ivar was one of the leaders of the exodus, when the fire worshippers of Alphatia were expelled by the followers of Air after a civil war.

**The first drawing:** This roll gets a +1 if the PCs have determined the identity of Ivar. A *History - 2 roll* or a *Theology roll* reveals that the picture is ancient Flaemish art. 5 successes are needed to know that the picture shows **Alphaks** as a burning ox under attack by Ivar. Alphaks is an evil demon-deity that was

once revered in Alphatia but caused the downfall of the early empire and is now seen as a mortal enemy.

If the PCs do not get this information, they can try to accumulate the 5 required successes required this information with *Research rolls*, where each attempt takes a day and only 5 level of failure are allowed before the research fails.

**The second drawing:** Roll *History-6* (or *history* if the first drawing was identified successfully) to determine that the three cats refer to the 3 burial mounds in the hills near the tower of High Sonden.

### Opposing Forces

**The Alphatians** will be very suspicious when the PCs start asking questions about Alphatian history or seem to develop an interest into that direction (such as carrying book with revealing titles etc.) While they will not act against the PCs, they will try to feed them false information in a very careful way, especially Darion of Ar.

If the **Cultists of Alphaks** find out about the PCs involvement (which happens if the PCs ask the Alphatian questions around one of the many servants in the school that take money from almost everybody in return for information), they will help them out in a somewhat suspicious but anonymous way, e.g., sending them a letter that explains a detail that they have yet been missing. Their goal is to have the PCs find the treasure rather than the Alphatians, preferably leading to violence between the two parties and an embarrassment for the Alphatians. However, note that the cultists are fanatical terrorists rather than intellectuals and if one of their plots does not work, they are likely to lash out in frustration.

### Burial Mounds - The Hamlet of Gerdjen

There are three burial mounds to be looked at near the hamlet of Gerdjen and

there is little evidence which one is the one of King Flamehammer without entering them. However, the problem is that the locals do not look too kindly on graverobbers and will grab their pitchforks as soon as they get evidence of any disturbance of their forefathers.

Also, there is currently trouble with goblin raiders and thus militia patrols the area.

The players can choose between three mounds. One has sunken into the ground because it was built on a wet and instable spot. The second resides under a small sheppard's hut and is thus not easy to access. The third is somewhere off in the hills but the locals claim that it is haunted by the ghost of an ancient king.

#### Mound #1 - The Assassin Vine

Show the PCs the picture of the depression on the handout sheet. The crude statue once stood there to guard the mound but is now fallen over. If the PCs plan to take a look around, the one doing the search roll will suddenly stumble upon a *large Assassin Vine*, unless he makes a *Naturalist-2* roll (+2 with *Plant Empathy* which reveals a feeling of hunger). Killing this monster will take some effort but should not be a problem due to its immobile nature.

Entering the mound requires some physical effort and will be interpreted by locals unless the PCs manage to distract their attention (for example by planting false goblin evidence).

**Inside the mound**, there is the grave of an ancient king but *Archaeology+2*, *Connoisseur-1* or *History-1* will quickly reveal that this cannot be the King Flamehammer, because the burial objects found in the grave include an Elven blade and Elves have only settled the area several decades after the death of King Flamehammer.

If the PCs want to loot the place, they will find about 100 lbs. of ceremonial bronze objects in various stages of decomposition (worth about 1500

ducats) as well as the largely unharmed elven blade, a broadsword engraved with runes that read "Scourge of Demonkind". It is of fine quality and deals an additional d6 of corrosion damage against Outsiders (Evil, Chaos).

#### Burial Mound #2 - the Hut

This grave is difficult to access and even if entry is gained, the traces left will most likely arouse the suspicion of the locals who are most likely not too happy about the PCs presence anyway.

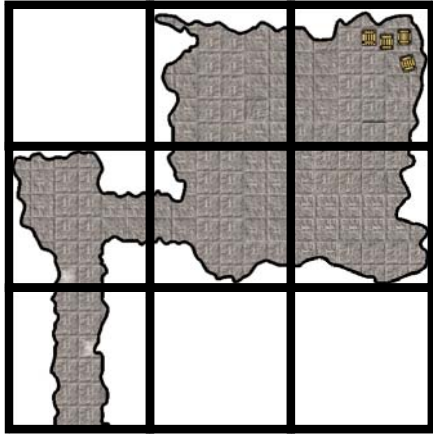
**The shepherd**, Thys, is an old, grumpy loner who dislikes any non-Flaem, in particular elves and has some weird theories about their eating habits (-2 on all reaction checks, -4 for non-Flaems).

Some options for removing the shepherd are stealing sheep at night to make him search for them or faking goblin tracks, sending him back to the hamlet to get help (which gives the PCs 6 hours).

**Inside of the mound** is an empty grave, plundered long ago. The bones are strewn about and only a single copper coin remains, depicting a griffon.

#### Burial Mound #3 - The Haunted Grave

Superstition keeps the locals away from this place and thus any raid there will at least not be interfered with by the villagers. However, the assumption that the place is haunted is not correct. Rather, the goblin raiders have set up camp here and their leader, a goblin sneak, uses his basic illusion magic knowledge to scare away potential interlopers. The goblins have dug a hole into the large mound and have set up camp inside (see map below).



Burial Mound #3

There are three goblins guarding the entry chamber and five more resting in the main chamber, including the illusionist sneak. The chamber contains several burial goods, one of them a sundial made of gold. There are also the goods plundered from the villagers (200 lbs. of stuff worth ca. 500 ducats). If the PCs return the goods to the village, they will be given a reward of 200 ducats. The grave also contains a strange vial that the PCs will not be able to figure out now but that will come in handy at later stages.

#### *The Alphatian Visitors Arrive*

**Patron:** Velasquez

**Objective:** Guard and watch the Alphatian guests.

**Reward:** 10 points in magical knowledge for each character.

**Resources:** [NPCsOfIllRepute.pdf](#)

**If the PCs do not accept or complete this mission:** The Alphatians might make contact with the PCs in the context of many of the other missions. Nevertheless, other students, possibly rivals of the PCs will accept this mission.

#### *Adventure Seed*

The PCs will show the Alphatians around and will get to know the three visitors. During the visit of a laboratory, there is a sudden explosion - actually

engineered by Mabion the Elf, in order to get the chance to steal some documents. If the PCs manage to look through the ruse, the Alphatians will offer apologies and refer to their diplomatic immunity.

## Vermiculus Rex - The King of Rats

**Patron:** Kamparov.

**Objective:** Find out who is sending threats to Kamparov and acts against him.

**Reward:** 15 points in magical knowledge for each character.

**Resources:** Creature Catalogue, a map of Kamparov's residence (e.g., the hunting lodge from Dungeon #92)

**If the PCs do not accept or complete this mission:** Kamparov will be wounded during an "accident", leading to acute paranoia among the master of the school. This in turn will make the Alphas nervous, possibly leading to false allegations.

### Summary

Vermiculus, one of the Cult of Alpha's henchmen, has been given order by his vampire master to harass Kamparov. He uses his underlings, several beggars and a Kuo-Toa mercenary, to increasingly harass Kamparov, eventually escalating to a fake accident.

### The Briefing

Kamparov is worried because his city residence has been broken in and he does not know how. The intruders left several water-stained letters in unknown handwriting that threaten Kamparov with death if he does not leave the city soon. The mage knows that the Boldavian nobles in the city hate him but does not want the PCs to take action against them. Rather, he wants the immediate culprits to be eliminated.

### Kamparov's City Residence

Kamparov has a small residence in the Merchant's Quarter on the upper floor of a store selling spices. The place is luxurious but relatively small. However, as the residence of a master of magic, it is well protected from intruders.

**Luxuries:** The residence has running water coming directly from the Plane of

## Lock Classification

Locks are classified by the following categories: (Mod/Success/Failure)

Mod is the modifier applied to the Lockpicking roll. Success is the total number of success margin needed. This need to be achieved in a single roll, rather for each second of work make one roll. The character can try as long as he wants, however, if the total margin of failure is equal to or exceeds "Failure", the lock is broken and can no longer be picked. Even a single point of failure means, that the attempt can be detected later on.

Water. A depressed and freezing Magma Mephit in a small steel cage provides heating in the winter and is put into the hippogriff stable in summer. The toilet waste is led directly into the canal.

**Security Measures:** The locks of the place are excellent, more likely breaking than opening up (-4/20/5). The windows are protected with bars and when the master is absent, a skeleton patrols the place attacking anybody who enters.

**Security Flaws:** A rat or similarly small creature can enter the residence by crawling up the waste pipe of the toilet. Also, one of the window bars is damaged a bit at a time by Vermiculus (Search-3/Observation-6 in the beginning, increasing to Search-1/Observation-3 just before the events in "The Accident").

### Escalation Levels

The cultists of Alphaks will slowly escalate their action against Kamparov. Not only are the less hardcore members not ready yet for cold-blooded murder, Vermiculus also has to penetrate the security measures of the residence first.

### Signs of Doom

Currently, Vermiculus is sending his trained rat into the house on nights

where Kamparov is away to place disgusting items into the house. These include animal parts such as eyeballs or tongues as well as crudely carved wooden dolls. Four beggars take turns watching the house in pairs and will inform Vermiculus, who hides nearby, when the place is empty. If they are unsure, one of them will knock, pretending to beg for food. This stage will last for about a week and consists of 4 occurrences.

At this stage, the PCs can possibly capture the beggars or follow the rat (which will be difficult the first time around, though).

### *The Magical Drive-By Attack*

When Kamparov does not react, his house will be attacked on a night where he is actually at home. The attack will take the following form:

- Vermiculus will steal any available gondola, by chance the personal boat of a Krondaharian noble. The gondola is dark red with a Japanese style crane crest.
- Immediately afterwards, he will pick up 2 beggars and drive by the residence of Kamparov. He will fire his Bone Dart Wand at a window and order the elemental powering the Gondola to beat it.

The PCs can go down to the ground level in 3 rounds and try to take a gondola (Kamparov's is also elemental-powered). There will be a chase scene, which is complicated by Glib attacking the bottom of the PCs' gondola to slow them down (he needs to inflict 10 hp against homogenous (DR 1) to make it sink). If the PCs manage to capture Vermiculus, the adventure ends here - the wererat is too scared of his master to talk during interrogation.

### *The Accident*

When everything else has failed, Vermiculus will break into the

## Gondola Speeds

A normal gondola pushed by one man has a speed of 3 knots (= 6 km/h). A water elemental-powered gondola will be twice as fast. Heavier gondolas are correspondingly slower. The following table shows the movement values of the various gondolas.

Gondola	2
Elemental Gondola	4
Armoured Elem. Gond.	3

residence through the window he has (possibly loosened), together with Glib to surprise the mage at night. They will try to kill him in a way that looks like an accident but if they meet resistance, they will do what they have to. However, the two will flee when it looks like they will be killed, jumping down through the window (taking d6 falling damage) and swimming away through the night.

### The Cultists

The cultists are led by the wererat Vermiculus and consist of 5 beggars and a Kuo-Toan mercenary called Glib.

### *Vermiculus*

Vermiculus is a small skinny guy with a long pointy nose and dirty hair. He dresses in cheap and worn clothing, giving him the air of a worker. Few would suspect that this man is an accomplished killer and a wererat cultist of Alphaks.

The young lycantrophe has been a member of the Cult of Alphaks for quite some time. He is primitive and greedy (self-control 12 or less), resenting those better off than him. Profoundly unhappy with the lot in life, Vermiculus has given up on himself and only wants to cause as much harm to others as was caused to him.

**Equipment:** short sword, buckler, lockpicks, trained rat, bone dart wand

(Dam 2d-1 pi+, Acc 1, Range 75/450, RoF 1, Rcl 2).

**Stats:** Use the human warrior wererat but add the following skills (values given for the different forms): Climb 13/14/16, Lockpicking 13/14/8, Wand 13/14/8

### *Glib*

Glib is a withdrawn Kuo-Toa, who came to the surface world looking for adventure but who is genuinely puzzled by humanity and their balkanized politics. The fishman acts as a bodyguard for Vermiculus, lurking nearby in the water an erupting when his help is required.

### *The Beggars*

Vermiculus has recruited five beggars who are so disgusted by their lot that they will do anything for a bit of food. They willingly partake in the rites of the cult but do not know anybody in the hierarchy above Vermiculus. They have been told that Kamparov has to be harassed as an enemy of the cult but do not know of the plan to kill him. When it comes to "The Accident", they will be quite shocked and might flee.

**Equipment:** rags, clubs

**Stats:** The beggars are average humans with a HT of 8. Their important skills

are Observation 12, Search 12, and Fast-Talk 13.

### *Other Interest Groups*

Several other groups might become involved in the conflict between the Cult of Alphaks and the PCs, if they find out what is going on.

### *The Beggars' Court*

The Beggar's Court will not be happy if they find out about beggars that have joined a cult. If they find out about this, they might help the PCs with information and some manpower. However, the Court is very independent-minded and will not take kindly to anybody who tries to use them as cannon fodder.

### *The Alphatians*

While the Alphatians have their own agenda and try to keep a low profile, they *do* hate Alphaks. Thus, they will lend at least secret help to the PCs as soon as they find out about their problems. Their help depends on the situation but it will consist of small amounts of money (up to 300 ducats), information about Alphaks, or non-dangerous, insuspicious help.

Name	Attack	Damage	Parry/Ddge/Bkck	DR	Notes
Vermiculus (Human Form)	Shtswd 13	1d cut or 1d-2 imp	9/8/11	10, 2 vs. silver	
Vermiculus (Ratman Form)	Shtswd 14	1d-2 cut or 1d-3 imp	10/8/11	10, 2 vs. silver	* Filth Fever and possibly lycantrophy
	Claws or Bite 14	1d-4 cut*			
Vermiculus (Rat Form)	Claws or Bite	1d-4 cut*	10/8/11	10, 2 vs. silver	* Filth Fever and possibly lycantrophy SM-1
Glib	Pincer Staff 12*#	1d+3 cr	9U/8/NA	5	* reach 2 or 3 # weapon becomes unready due to ST