

Zlata Ruznikova Perenel, The Weaver

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You pass through a maze of narrow corridors, a slum or a rookery somewhere in the League - you are certainly inside a building. The maze is on multiple levels - rickety stairs connect the floors,. You can feel you are spiraling in toward a central point. You can hear voices on the other sides of walls - some caught in ecstasy, some weeping, some babbling or ranting or laughing. The smells of sex and despair are heady in the air.

You push at last through a bead curtain into a larger room hung with curtains and veils of red, black, midnight blue and translucent gossamer. In the middle, hidden among the veils, is a couch upon which reclines a man in his early 30s. He is naked apart from a pair of knee-length sleeping pants. His skin is alabaster pale, and there are dark rings about his eyes, but he reminds you suddenly of a marble statue in some foreign style.

He sucks fragrant narcotic smoke from a brass hookah, and it is clear he is in the grip of some potent drug. His words are halting, distracted, self-referential. To your surprise, he claims to hail from Necropolis, and believes he is in Sarvos "studying" the ways of Night magic with a naga of great age, whose family had lived in Sarvos since those earliest days, when his Highborn forebears came first to the welcoming shores of the Bay of Catazaar.

He calls her simply "Empty One", and each night as the sun sinks beneath the eastern horizon he hastens with ... a companion? ... to her chambers, eager as a young lover, to kneel in the scented dark on soft carpets woven with intricate mandalas, and listen to her speak of distant vistas, and of the subtle majesty of the Realm of Night.

His mysterious mentor speaks to him of the world of dreams, and how it might be reached, and of the Wine of Somnus that is the gateway to wonder. From the Empty One he learnt to invoke the feathered serpent that guides the traveller's steps to that place of mystery, and how to hear her gentle voice on the wind. He learnt of the Father of Bats, who is a patron of sorts to magicians and wizards, and how to petition him for lore and power. He learnt also of the machinations of those bodiless spirits who live in the whispered word and the midnight confidence, who feed on scandal; and of the importance of sharing hidden lore only sparingly lest their jealousy undo all subtle designs.

Nights of true wonder, to hear him speak of them, nights where he would partake of the Wine of Somnus that his veiled mentor poured with soft-scaled hands into goblets of pale ambergelt, seasoned with herbs and spices, bitter and sweet at the same time. After a single mouthful, the wine would drag him down, down, into the arms of the black abyss, and the revelations would begin.

In contrast he speaks distantly of the bland undifferentiated days, and how tedious they seemed in contrast to the nights of phantasmagoric wonder during which he explored surreal landscapes and wondrous jungles of the mind.

Throughout, you find your eyelids becoming heavier, and begin to experience phantasmagoric moments of your own as the heady smoke infiltrates your lungs. It is hard to stay focused, the urge to lose yourself in these narcotic dreams grows and grows and you risk being overwhelmed.

Without warning though, he breaks off - your drug addled companion - and looks past your shoulder. He says excitedly "she is coming!"

But when you turn to look, there is nobody visible, just a disturbance of the curtains as if someone unseen moves among them, and a cold breeze that brings with it a sharp awakening and the discovery that you have left a window open.

Effect:

Until the start of the next Profound Decisions Empire event you can perform the rituals Missive for Sadogua, The Chamber of Delights, Clear Counsel of the Ever-Flowing River, and Sift the Dreamscapes Sand as if you had mastered them; if you have already mastered one of these rituals, you may perform them as if you have one additional rank of Night magic. You should keep this vision and show it to a referee if you perform this ritual.

Roleplaying effect: You feel a strong desire to indulge in mind-altering substances. Potions, and narcotics, are deeply appealing to you especially herbal preparations you have never tasted before. If you will encounter "Blackened Key" or "Ocean's Caress" you will feel a very strong urge to consume a dose.

(5097.2) Marzanna Verchernyaya Zorya

You walk along a wide path between orange trees, under a night sky. It is an orchard, but one that has been overrun by nature. Tall grass grows beneath the trees, ivy coils around their trunks and branches, and there is a sense of emptiness. Through the trees, you occasionally see the ruin of a large stone structure – a palace, or a grand villa. Moths flutter among the trees, which are hung with delicate glass lanterns in which candles flicker.

It is unseasonably warm, and the atmosphere is heavy. In the west, heavy clouds are gathering and streaming across the sky, but they seem impossibly distant.

A pleasant, tropical night – such as one might enjoy on the islands of Feroz, or Madrugá. Even the storm clouds gathering in the west do nothing to disturb the sensation of a warm stroll through a slightly unkept garden.

The trees fall away, and you find yourself walking through a formal garden, likewise overgrown and gone to seed. It is scattered with occasional statues of naked men and women engaged in athletic or warlike pursuits – one hurls a javelin. Another raises a sword and shield. They tower over you – each is at least three times the size of a person. They are of smooth white marble. The gardens are subdivided with walls, overgrown with ivy. Now and then you catch sight of brightly jeweled lizard, no larger than your hand, sapphire and emerald in colour, scuttling along the walls or over the statues with the grace and speed of a spider on old brick. Moths flicker and dance around the heads of the statues. A jewelled lizard snaps out its frog-like tongue, catching one of the moths, and disappears down the back of the statue, crunching its tiny morsel in ridged jaws.

Once, through an archway, you fancy you see movement. A long, low scaled-beast with a snapping tail and long, toothsome jaws – an alligator or a crocodile you fancy. Its yellow eyes glitter in the shadows but it is gone before you can do much more than notice it.

Then you become aware of the sound of waves breaking on a shore nearby, and ahead of you the ground falls away to reveal a cliff above a sea beneath a breathtaking night sky full of shimmering multicoloured stars.

Standing on the cliff is a nut-brown figure wearing a white toga over a deep purple tunic. A fist-sized moth rests on the palm of his hand – he is engaged in an animated discussion with it, but as he notices your approach, the moth flaps away on great white wings. In a strange twist of perception it appears to be come larger as it flies away, rather than smaller. The woman – or possibly a man there is uncertainty there – has a pleasant speaking voice, beckons you forward, sweeps their arm wide to take in the sea, pointing out many small islands. “The skerries of dream,” he says proudly. You are not conversing in Imperial tongue. “Each a jewel of inspiration, magic, secret, mystery, transformation. The palace of the God of Dreams. Are they not wondrous?”

It seems this person is an Asavean of high birth, and a practised explorer of the Dreamscape. Perhaps surprisingly, they seem to recognise you. They continue a conversation you do not seem to recall the first part of – they even share a joke with you that makes no sense, because you lack all context.

Unaware of your confusion, they talk enthusiastically about their boat, and about exploring the sunken palaces in the shallow, warm waters of the bay. They have found many wonders – encountered many strange creatures – but unfortunately when you awaken all you will remember is an odd wistful sense of yearning, to see what they have seen and know what they have learned... whatever it was. Only one memory sticks – a half sunken library full of scrolls of lore, and of an odd keeper in a cowled robe.

They are pleasant company, and at some point you remember sharing a tart, sweet orange with them... and then you wake up, your lips still tasting of that luscious fruit from the shores of Dream.

Effect: Until the start of the next Profound Decisions Empire event you can perform the ritual "Verdant Bounty of the Twilight Bounty" as if you had mastered it; if you have already mastered this ritual, you may perform it as if you had one additional rank of Night magic. You should keep this vision and show it to a referee if you perform this ritual. This effect is an enchantment.

Roleplaying effect: You experience a roleplaying effect. A sense of wistfulness for dreams, that makes the mundane world seem pale and uninteresting. You find it easy to “tune out” other people talking to you, focusing on memories of vivid dreams both magical and “normal”. This lasts as long as the enchantment remains.