## HIGH STAKES

Written by

Steve Conard & Steve Schwarzstein

The Roleplayers

Tonja DePass, Jamison Stone, Sarah Moore Mark Meer

Based on, THE RED OPERA: Last Days of the Warlock By Satine Phoenix and Jamison Stone

Actoroke & Apotheosis Studios GEN CON 2021 NARRATOR (V.O.)

In the heart of the Shadelands, beneath an Eldritch-colored Aurora, the split city of Yon'Cath bustles in the night. A city of Warlocks led by the Accursed King and protected by none other than Fayte herself. Many, like our reluctant heroes, travel to the Shadelands in search of powerful Patrons, to study the arcane arts and to find peaceful refuge.

1

EXT. YON'CATH - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

TITLE CARD: YON'CATH: THE WARLOCK CITY

A towering city forest of black spires rakes the sky-impossible to tell where Yonder ends and Cathrach began.

The air sizzles arcane.

Imps, sprites, fairies, and familiars all abound, roaming the perpetually damp stone of glowing city streets, which reflect the ever-present Aurora streaking across the night sky.

Evening bells toll: Dong! Dong! Dong!

EXT. HOLE IN THE WALL - NIGHT

Two adventuring souls dart into a dive bar.

VERITAS (male, Dragonborn), tall, dark, donning a thick leather jacket brimming weapons and a bandolier strapped over his shoulder. His scales dance with iridescent rim lighting.

And CACIA (Female, Half-elf), 5'2", slim, dark jet black hair, dressed in a purple and black robe, with dexterity of a ninja warrior and elegance of a fashion runway model.

INT. HOLE IN THE WALL - LATER

Red and silver accents flicker against black velvet walls as these two sit at a bar.

Cacia pounds her drink... shudders... squints.

1

2	CACIA Whoa. Two bartenders? I like it. Twice as many drinks For me	2
3	VERITAS You know what they say about pigs who drink too much?	3
4	CACIA No. What?	4
	Veritas reaches over and takes Cacia's mug.	
5	VERITAS They get slaughtered, pig! (sees her now empty mug)	5
6	Refill! And if you've got something that makes me see <u>four</u> bartenders, I'll take it.	6
	Cacia yanks the mug back, indicates for the bartender.	
7	CACIA Hey! Drink meister? Refill! Just for me.	7
	The Bartender, TILERIK SHALGREN, (middle-age human, male) approaches.	
8	TILERIK This place can be a little hard on newcomers. Though If you need somewhere to stay for the night	8
9	(waves to their luggage) We have a back room.	9
10	CACIA (sarcastic) Oh. Wow. A back room. That sounds <u>great</u> . Do we have to pay extra for the cockroaches or are they included?	10
11	TILERIK Better than sleeping out on the streets, Missy. That I can assure you.	11
12	VERITAS (to Cacia) Where's your manners?	12

13	CACIA (to Tilerik) Is the room safe?	13
	Tilerik Jingles 10-lbs of keys hanging from his waist.	
14	TILERIK Of course. For a silver. Even safer for two.	14
	Our heroes reluctantly hand over coins.	
15	TILERIK (CONT'D) Tilerik Shalgren. I recognize adventurers when they set foot in my bar. As a young fool, thought I, too, was immortal, seeking fortune and fame. That was until well, let's just say I'm still inclined to help your kind, within reason.	15
16	CACIA You can start by telling us what was in that drink.	16
17	TILERIK  Just spiced wine. A little  cardamom, orange peels	17
18	CACIA Real good.	18
19	TILERIK Cinnamon mélange.	19
20	CACIA Ohhh, and fancy.	20
21	TILERIK And something secret	21
22	CACIA Really? What's that?	22
23	TILERIK (whispering) Catsup and mayonnaise.	23
24	CACIA Really? Ugg.	24

25	TILERIK No! Idiot. It's a secret family recipe Like I'd tell you.	25
	BANG!	
	All eyes shift	
	A dashing, golden haired PIRATE stumbles into the tavern	•
	DOMADRED, (male, human), long blonde hair and striking iceberg blue eyes is dressed as one would expect a brazen pirate ship captain should look, as if he wanted everyone indeed know he was a pirate.	to
	He staggers, then doubles over in excruciating pain, pulls off his tricorne hat and wipes his sweaty brow.	3
26	DOMADRED Grrr	26
	The pirate props himself against the wall and winces. He shakes his head, attention engrossed on an OBJECT in hand.	,
27	TILERIK Sir, you okay?	27
	The buccaneer holds up a GOLDEN COMPASS, clocks the room a points it directly at Cacia and Veritas.	ind
28	DOMADRED I'm looking for adventurers, I, I. I, need your help. (re: compass)	28
29	This was given to me by the Mother of Mirrors. Originally owned by Fayte the Governess of Yon'Cath.	29
	Domadred takes a much needed load off, drops into a seat reto Cacia. The bartender hands him a mug of ale.	next
30	DOMADRED (CONT'D) My compass companion says you two are adventurers, yes?	30
	Cacia points at the compass.	
31	CACIA It can tell all that? Let me see!	31
32	DOMADRED See, as in look? Yes.	32

33	VERITAS What about 'see', as in hold? Yes?	33
	·	
34	DOMADRED <u>No.</u>	34
	Cacia and Veritas groan 'awe', but both lean in for a just the same. Domadred then yanks the compass away.	gander
35	DOMADRED (CONT'D) Ah, ah, ah. That's enough! Now, I have a proposition. There's this lich. I need to kill him.	35
36	CACIA Look no further, we'll do it!	36
	VERITAS	
37	Shut-up. (to Domadred)	37
38	Don't mind her. Too much cinnamon mélange if you know what I mean. Tell us more.	38
39	DOMADRED Not just a lich. A MAD DEMONIC LICH.	39
	Cacia rubs her fingers together.	
40	CACIA And the compensation for this mad endeavor?	40
41	DOMADRED Two-hundred gold is innit for the two of ya.	41
42	CACIA And the compass?	42
43	DOMADRED You wish. Its one-of-a-kind. I'm sure we can work something out.	43
44	CACIA Dragon biscuits, I will not work something out. I want that compass!	44
	Veritas leans in toward Cacia.	
	VERITAS	
45	You can buy your own damn compass.	45

	CACTA	
46	CACIA NO! I want the fancy magic one.	46
47	DOMADRED Tell you what. If I hold your hand and hold the compass in my other hand. That's like holding it, right? Does that work for you?	47
	Cacia stares dumbfounded for a beat.	
48	CACIA Yeah, it works if you're a total idiot. Even if I do see two of	48
49	you, I'm not <u>that</u> stupid.	49
50	DOMADRED Time is of the essence. This mad, mad, mad, mad, mad demonic lich? His name is Mord Albtraum. He cursed me.	50
51	CACIA What did he call you? Can't be that bad. Sticks and stones, right?	51
52	DOMADRED No! He didn't curse <u>at</u> me, he put a curse <u>on</u> me.	52
53	CACIA Oh. My mistake.	53
	Domadred is overcome for a moment by a shadow of pain.	
54	DOMADRED What happened was Recently a valued member of my crew was kidnapped. We, of course, were driven to save him. And we did except one tiny, itty bitty thing	54
55	VERITAS  If it's so itty, bitty, why do you need us?	55
56	DOMADRED (heavy sigh, exhale) Okay, it wasn't itty, bitty. It wasn't itty, bitty at all. How can I say this?	56

57	VERITAS You can just say it.	57
58	DOMADRED We killed their whole damn coven, all right? There!	58
Не	starts banging his fist against the table.	
59	CACIA But you got your crewman back. That's good, right?	59
60	DOMADRED (still banging fist) No. It's horrible!	60
61	<pre>(stops banging fist) In the process me, my crew, my ship - all cursed! This compass? It says I have two days left to live. I we really need your help.</pre>	61
62	CACIA Wow. Okay, well, so that sounds rather important. So, I have a list of demands.	62
63	DOMADRED  Demands?	63
64	CACIA Yeah. A list of demands. First, the cash. Like, no duh. We'll take it. Second the compass.	64
65	DOMADRED We already went through that.	65
66	CACIA The compass! Want it. And your hat.	66
67	DOMADRED I like my hat. Thank you. You know	67
68	CACIA I. Would. Like. Your. Hat.	68

7.0	CACIA	7.0
70	I think that curse affected his hearing.	70
71	VERITAS Will you give the pirate a break? He's about to die.	71
72	CACIA Don't you see? We have leverage? On a freaking pirate? How cool is that?	72
73	VERITAS  (to Cacia)  Look, he's gonna kick the bucket in two days. We just bide our time a little, mosey around this here tavern, say then grab the hat, compass off his cold, dead, corpse!	73
74	DOMADRED Ummm If we kill the lich, I WONT DIE. Not sure you quite understand how all this works.	74
75	VERITAS (to Cacia)  If he manages to live, I'll buy you a cute tricorne.	75
76	CACIA I can buy my own damn hat with my own damn stolen money.	76
Veri	tas puts his hand out to shake.	
77	VERITAS What can we say, pirate? You had us at mad lich!	77
The	bartender Tilerik approaches.	
78	TILERIK  Did I hear someone say something about a mad lich?	78
79	DOMADRED Yes. Mad demonic vampire lich to be precise. Are you familiar with him?	79

80	TILERIK Oh, unfortunately, I am. Took my one true love. Clarissa. Imprisoned her in his foul manor. I would join you on this mission if you would have me. He is a filthy, wretched thing that must be destroyed.	80
81	DOMADRED Look. Everyone. This needs to happen tonight.	81
82	<pre>(conceding) And should we survive, I will surrender to you my hat. Okay?</pre>	82
Cacia sm	niles broadly.	
83	CACIA Deal!	83
84	VERITAS Something tells me we're gonna need more than just your enthusiasm to defeat a	84
85	(counts monster templates) Mad. Demonic. Vampire. Lich.	85
86	DOMADRED I have a trick up my sleeve.	86
87	CACIA A magic trick, I hope.	87
88	DOMADRED An artifact of perilous power versus the undead. And hopefully vampires. (jerks thumb)	88
89	We need to pick it up across town.	89
90	TILERIK You retrieve the perilous artifact. I'll meet you at Albtraum Manor upon the Witching Hour.	90

# EXT. THE BLACK SPAN BRIDGE - NIGHT

Domadred leads Cacia and Veritas over the Black Span Bridge, one of three primary bridges linking the two sides of the city.

The tent-clogged causeway buzzes with townsfolk shopping for exotic wares and culinary delights.

Domadred darts between a salts vendor and an incense vendor and over the bridge railing.

Cacia and Veritas follow on ropes, over and down.

#### INNER LEDGE OF THE UNDER BRIDGE

Black, shadow, and dreary dread seem to be the flavor of the evening. Dark brooding buildings with haunted windows and satin black doors hide secrets contained within.

Vertitas elbows Cacia and nods at dark shambling forms moving beneath the bridge along the ledge.

91 Your kinda place. 91

CACIA

92 Why are we going here again? 92

Domadred advances toward a small windowless shop with "Magpie's Curio" carved thickly on the door.

#### DOMADRED

Herein lies a rare trinket says an acquaintance of mine who deals in really old things. An artifact of perilous power that can help us. How? I'm not really quite sure.

Domadred raps three times on the door, opens and enters.

INT. MAGPIE'S CURIO - MAIN SHOP - CONTINUOUS

A BIRD BELL on the door, <CHIRPS> advertising new visitors.

Magpie's Curio's caters to the bizarre and the weird -- Floor to ceiling packed with eccentric artifacts from various realms, collections of offbeat trinkets and alien statues.

MAGPIE, (female, Half-orc), the proprietor of Magpie Curio sits gliding smoothly in an old wicker rocking chair at the rear of the shop.

Most of her severe wrinkled features are hidden behind an ornate rose-encrusted shawl. The covering held tightly on by a druidic crown of horns.

#### MAGPIE

93

93

95	MAGPIE (CONT'D) What can I interest you in?	95
96	DOMADRED  (conspiratorially)  We are on a quest to slay the mad  lich, Mord. I heard you have an  artifact for just such a task.	96
	BLURRING MOTION! Magpie is up and in Domadred's grill in a instant SNIFFING.	an
97	MAGPIE Who are you? And why would I give you one of my precious artifacts?	97
	Domadred smiles, blue eyes twinkling. His bardic charm turned to eleven.	
98	DOMADRED I am Domadred Steele, ship captain from Thalassocracy from the Western Isles. Mord Albtraum is hated the world over and I'm sure the same is true here in Yon'Cath. If I'm successful in my quest, his death will be a good thing for your city.	98
	A momentary wince of <i>cursed pain</i> courses through Domadred. He leans on a GHOST TABLE for support, but it's insubstant properties can't support him.	ial
	He falls, hat flies releasing a flood of golden locks. He rolls fluidly, grabs his hat, pops back up and repositions it.	
99	MAGPIE A ship captain, ay? You got the hat, but not the legs it seems.	99
100	DOMADRED  Seems I left my land legs on the 1 ship.	00
	Domadred starts to laugh at his own ineptitude. Magpie air laughing.	nt
101 102	(air quotes)	01 02

Her voice WHEEZES like a multi-centenarian, lifelong smoker.

103	DOMADRED I have much gold. Perhaps that will suffice.	103
104	MAGPIE (scoffs) Much gold?	104
	Domadred whips out a tiny black satin bag.	
105	DOMADRED  My wee bag of holding. Never leave home without it.	105
	From that small bag, he yanks forth a HUGE SACK OF CO	INS.
106	CACIA/VERITAS Whoa! Dragon Hoard.	106
	Domadred rattles the bag of booty underscoring its size girth.	zeable
107	MAGPIE Oh, you'll be wanting a much different kind of shop on this premises. Walk this way.	107
	Magpie leads our little troop behind the desk and throbeaded curtain, then up dark, rickety narrow -	ough a
	STAIRS	
	They finally emerge in a	
	SMALL ARMORY	
	Cacia's thievish eyes dart back and forth, the possible endless amid the soft glimmer of a thousand valuable to	
	Magpie makes her way to a back counter and picks up a small gem-covered chest.	dusty
108	MAGPIE (CONT'D) This, this is what you're looking for. I call it a Soul Stake. My friends and I forged it when we were young.	108
109	CACIA That must've been a long time ago.	109
	Cacia laughs to herself. Veritas belts her in the gut	<b>.</b>

110	CACIA (CONT'D) What? She's old as dirt?	110
111	VERITAS Shush	111
	Magpie opens the chest, revealing a VAMPIRE SLAYING STAKE gilded in silver and gold.	,
112	MAGPIE The heart of this stake is a mechanical Horcrux to capture a vampire's Soul.	112
	It emits tiny streaks of SUNLIGHT along its smooth sides.	
113	MAGPIE (CONT'D) You must place the stake in sun for one hour each week to keep the captured soul within. Failure to do so would be bad.	113
	She extends the stake to Domadred but just as he reaches it, she quickly nabs it back.	for
114	MAGPIE (CONT'D) That'll be twelve-thousand gold. And a favor. A minor favor.	114
	She unravels a prehensile scroll that shifts as if alive.	
115	MAGPIE (CONT'D) Sign, Pirate Captain. Oh. One thing. You wouldn't happen to know anyone in the legal profession, would you?	115
116	DOMADRED No.	116
110	She thrusts the document in his face.	110
117	MAGPIE Excellent. Sign on the dotted line, if you would?	117
	Domadred quickly surveys the parchment. Satisfied, he si with a flourish: Captain Domadred Steele.	.gns
118	DOMADRED Thank you, Magpie. It will be a pleasure and an honor to pay in full.	118

He dumps the bag, unleashing a torrent of gold coins onto the counter. You never saw an centenarian move so fast as Magpie, who overturns a trash bin to collect the stream of gold as it tumbles forth.

Magpie quietly MUMBLES, counting.

119	MAGPIE (starts to raise hand) That's enough. Well, maybe a little more. (raises hand, with	119
120	finality) Okay. That should about do it.	120
	Payment collected, Magpie hands over the pirate the STAK	Ε.
121	MAGPIE (CONT'D) Alright. You can go now. Bye-eee.	121
122	CACIA Hold on. Do you have any knowledge of this Mord?	122
123	DOMADRED Advice to give us an advantage over him?	123
124	MAGPIE You've got the stake? Do I have to do the job myself?	124
125	DOMADRED How does it work? This particular one.	125
	MAGPIE (adapted)	
126	(sighs) Fine. (bored)	126
127	Shank him with the stake in the chest. Heart is best. You're gonna wanna hold it stationary for about, ehh, eighteen-seconds.	127
128	VERITAS Eighteen seconds? That's a long time.	128
129	CACIA And exact. What if we hold it seventeen?	129

130	MAGPIE Ah, ah, ah! Eighteen seconds! No less! About three rounds.	130
131	(shrugs) At that point it will suck the soul out of Mord and into the horcrux.	131
	The group stands there, not much else to say.	
132	DOMADRED Alright, then. Well, nice to meet you	132
	Magpie let's loose a HELLISH ORC GROWL, then an equally l smoker's cough in their general direction.	oud.
133	MAGPIE Go! Now!	133
134	CACIA Leaving	134
	The group is outta there like Vladamir.	
	EXT. ALBTRAUM MANOR - NIGHT	
135	NARRATOR (V.O.) It's the Witching Hour. Our would- be band of vampire slayers approach Albtraum Manor.	135
	The Victorian villa sits tall and narrow, recently update a small cathedral, its rooftop lies covered in pickets of wrought iron spears.	
	A 15-ft intricate iron fence surrounds the building.	
	ROSE GARDENS	

136

Tilerik steps out of the shadows wielding a massive Maul, the moon aurora glistening off the meaty weapon.

> TILERIK It's been a while since I've had 136 the honor of wielding Sunset in battle.

Domadred pulls up sharply, wincing from the painful curse he still endures.

137	DOMADRED You are doing a great and noble deed. By slaying Mord, you will free Yon'Cath from a true menace.	137
138	CACIA I have a question, my pirate friend. Your curse, is not, you know, contagious? If it is (searches pockets/satchel)	138
139	Where is my mask	139
140	DOMADRED I certainly hope not. The pain and suffering is pretty horrible.	140
141	CACIA  Damn, must have left it back at the tavern. Mask probably wouldn't do anything, anyway.	141
142	VERITAS No. No. Masks save lives. It's a fact.	142
	Cacia sighs in defeat.	
143	DOMADRED Look, we've got this stake, it's going to be awesome.	143
144	TILERIK Okay. What's the plan?	144
145	DOMADRED Frontal assault.	145
146	CACIA Go through the front door and announce ourselves? You really do work on a ship.	146
147	DOMADRED Then what?	147
	The four scan the estate for possibilities.	
148	CACIA See those small windows? <u>That's</u> our entry.	148
149	DOMADRED You're the rogue.	149

Cacia scrambles nimbly over the fence. The others follow, but not so nimbly, ripping clothing and lacerating skin and scales while making a terrible racket.

CACIA

150 Gods. You're gonna wake the dead.

150

GRRRRR... glowing YELLOW EYES move close.

A GIANT SIX-LEGGED PANTHER WITH TENTACLES slinks out of the shadows, HISSING, revealing a gruesome set of teeth.

CACIA (CONT'D)

(whispers to allies)

Everyone should get ready to stab some Cthulhu kitty.

151

The DISPLACER BEAST lunges.

Cacia brandishes her BOOMERANG, flings it.

Whip-whip. It smacks the cat flush in the eye.

Veritas charges the Beast, casting Branding Smite and attacking striking it in the neck.

Domadred attacks, impacting with his sword.

The beast attacks Domadred landing squid-tentacle spikes to the face. Aw, nasty!

CACIA (CONT'D)

Looks like I'm gonna get that hat sooner than we thought.

152

153

Veritas ducks the creature's foray

152

153

Cacia sneak attacks from behind causing the beast to HOWL.

Domadred stumbles into a post, driving the spikes further into his face. HE HOWLS!

Veritas pushes the action, striking the beast savagely again and casts Tasha's Caustic Brew.

The Displacer Beast recoils, its flesh and bone melting into a liquid, stewy wax.

Undeterred from spike in face, Domadred somehow presses on and casts *Vicious Mockery*.

DOMADRED

You just had to go the mean route, beastie. We could been friends.
(MORE)

DOMADRED (CONT'D)

Buddies. Pals. Give you back rubs. Get you tripping on catnip. But noooo... what do you do? Attack my friends. Shame. Shame on you, pussy cat.

The beast WHIMPERS and attempts to slink away.

154	TILERIK OMG. You shamed the creature. 154
155	VERITAS And it's working. Nice. 155
	Cacia finishes the cat with a sneak attack coup de grace, an over the top chop to its remaining good eye.
	The creature falls dead.
156	CACIA Dead kitties aren't much fun. 156
157	DOMADRED That could be a title for a song. 157
158	CACIA I know. 158
	AT THE SAME TIME ABOVE
	A dark form appears at a window backlit by dancing light.
	Cacia and Domadred jump behind the displacer beast corpse. Veritas turtles in place, hiding beneath his dark scales.
	A number of figures (human?) move toward the window for a moment, then retreat.
	Cacia and Domadred peek up from behind the beast. Veritas unturtles.
159	DOMADRED Stick to the plan. 159

Cacia climbs to the upper window, followed by Domadred, Veritas and finally Tilerik and slide quietly inside.

## INT. ALBTRAUM MANOR - CONTINUOUS

Boring nondescript bedroom. Nothing to see here! They move to the door and exit to the --

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They see stairs leading up to the left and down to the right.

160	VERITAS I vote down.	160
161	DOMADRED Why?	161
162	VERITAS Where would you put cargo in a boat that should not be in the sun?	162
163	DOMADRED In the cargo hold.	163
164	VERITAS Bingo, cap'n. Down.	164
	Something catches Cacia's eye. She swivels	
165	CACIA Shit!	165
	SIX VAMPIRES stand before the stairs, arms-crossed.	
166	CACIA (CONT'D) Where is your boss?	166
167	VAMPIRE SQUAD LIEUTENANT Ah boys, how convenient. Dinner's come to us for a change.	167

The VAMPIRE SQUAD surge.

The sound of running feet shakes the floor above sending dust falling from the ceiling.

OUR HEROES RETREAT BACK INTO --

### A BEDROOM

- Cacia finds a dumbwaiter elevator empty and scurries down.
- Domadred follows, casts Feather Fall and jumps headfirst.
- Veritas feeling much too large for the narrow shaft, casts Feather Fall and jumps headlong out the wind spraying glass.
- Tilerik goes the dumbwaiter route and plummets--

172

#### EXT. ALBTRAUM MANOR - CONTINUOUS

WIDE - the vampire conclave comes alive with hissing vampires. The sound of commotion, running and calls to action echo from every corner of the villa.

#### INT. ALBTRAUM MANOR - KITCHEN

Veritas enters the room from a ground floor window to find old decayed corpses stacked in the corner and human bones littering tables.

The Dragonborn sniffs, spots a stone stairway opposite himself, makes a bee-line for it and heads down.

#### DUMBWAITER CELLAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

No worse for wear Cacia, Domadred, and Tilerik brush off a few minor scratches and bruises from their hurried descent.

They gaze above at the rafters which THRUM with the sound of running feet. Then -

Veritas enters at a run, now FOLLOWED CLOSELY BY A GAGGLE OF VAMPIRES.

168	VARITAS They're coming!	168
169	TILERIK I'd say there already here!	169

Vampires scurry out of the dumbwaiter, giant, fanged cockroaches HISSING, hungry for blood.

Seeing that they are surrounded, Domadred casts, Motivation

	Speech.	<u>-</u>	
170		DOMADRED This reminds me of the time at sea, waves crashing across the bow, the stern, the mizen, the galley, the jib, tiller, waves all crashing, a giant squid wrapping its tentacles around the bow, the stern, the galley	170
171		VERITAS Ummm. What's your point?	171
		DOMADRED	

We can do this team!

172

The vampires surge like a wave upon the shore.

CACIA

Sorry friends, I'm gonna sit this one out.

With Supreme Sneak, Cacia steps into shadow avoiding the onrush.

The other three fall beneath the scratching, clawing, biting.

ON TILERIK -- Fending off vampires on all sides.

TILERIK

Damn it! I didn't want to have to 174 do this.

His eyes explode GREEN NIMBUS FIRE.

TILERIK (CONT'D)

Blurgh, the Blackhand. I call to 175 thee, my Patron.

TIME STOPS. No really. Like totally.

All the vampires FREEZE in the midst of what they were doing: Climbing, jumping, thrashing, biting.

Our heroes however, are not time frozen.

BLURGH (O.S.)

Ah, Tilerik, I see you've brought 176 friends.

BLURGH, (10-ft hulking grey half-orc) materializes, glowing emerald ember eyes, sharp-toothed grin and a viscous scar digging deep into the left of his face brow to jaw.

BLURGH (CONT'D)

(chuckles)

177 Alright. What do you need this 177 time?

TILERIK

(to companions)

This is my Patron. Request what 178 you need from him to get us out of this predicament. I shall pay your debt later.

Domadred bows.

179	DOMADRED Blurgh, we are surrounded by vampires. Rid us of these pesky bloodsuckers and I'll be forever grateful and proudly assist Tilerik in his debt payment to you. Love this bartender!	179
	Blurgh sighs, then closes his eyes for a beat, then a bea later his stomach rumbles, and a beat after that	t
180	DOMADRED (CONT'D) A patron's boon bestowed upon us all.	180
	Blurgh coughs up GREEN SMOKE again and then PUKES into ha GLOWING GREEN PEARL which he tosses to our pirate.	nd a
181	BLURGH When time resumes, crush this pearl and it will free you of this nuisance so that you may retain your blood, if just momentarily.	181
	MONTAGE OF BLURGH HANDING OUT REQUESTS	
	- He imbues Veritas' weapon with <i>Radiance</i> as Cacia looks with envy.	on
182	CACIA I'll take some of that. If you don't mind.	182
	- Blurgh, likewise, imbues Cacia's Boomerang with Radianc which soon drips green-goo-glow.	e,
183	BLURGH It's like the same but different. Radiance and Acid.	183
	Now Veritas looks on with envy.	
184	VERITAS Hey!	184
185	CACIA Sucks to be you.	185
186	BLURGH Now I'm going to sit back and enjoy the spectacle.	186

 $\mbox{\ensuremath{\mbox{He}}}$  SNAPS his fingers loudly and the crew are back in action.

The vampire horde eke out another millisecond of combat time before Domadred crushes the green pearl.

#### WHOOOOOOM!

A horizontal pulse of intense sunlight envelops the room reducing every vampire into white hot ash. Then SILENCE.

SILENCE fills the room, the ash slowly floating to the floor.

BASEMENT HALLS - MOMENTS LATER

Domadred leads the group, time is running short for him with each step.

DOMADRED

This way. I can feel him. 187

They pick up the pace, running headlong, down passage ways, past doors and into a large

#### SUBCHAMBER

Candles everywhere - the walls literally sweating in oil.

Dominating the center of the room -- TWO COFFINS

- The largest also the oldest, covered in many written dialects, primordial, sylvan, draconic and untold others.
- the smaller coffin newly constructed of blue sandstone and covered in fine silver lace.

**VERITAS** 

188 Which one? 188

Domadred approaches the smaller coffin.

DOMADRED

189 Baby vampire first, obviously. 189

They brace themselves while Veritas flips off the cover revealing NOTHING. Damn! No vampire baby or other.

Instead, however, they find a beautiful ONYX HANDLED RAPIER with inlaid rose designs.

CACIA

190 Treasure! I'm gonna touch it. 190

DOMADRED

(still bracing himself for

the worst)

191 Yeah, you do that. 191

Cacia pulls the fine blade from the scabbard and thorny vines wrap around her hand, piercing her skin.

	CACIA	
192	Ow!	192
	Despite the initial pain, Cacia is unable to let go.	
193	CACIA (CONT'D) It's not so bad once you get past the initial insufferable pain. And lookee, I got me a sword now.	193
194	VERITAS More like the sword has you.	194
	Blood drips down her wrist and arm.	
195	CACIA (euphoric) This is better than any damn compass or stupid hat.	195
196	DOMADRED You just move on to the next shiny object like it's nothing, don't you?	196
197	CACIA Eww. The other coffin.	197

Cacia moves to the large coffin. This time they all brace themselves for battle.

Cacia flips the larger coffin OPEN - ITS EMPTY. They look at each other, dumbfounded.

THEN LOUD DIABOLICAL LAUGHTER. But not from the coffins. The sound soon fills the air, emanating from a door.

The companions slink their way to the semi-closed entry and peer into an adjoining chamber.

## INT. BANQUET HALL - CONTINUOUS

A scene of both death and debauchery. Corpses, (some recent, others desiccated) piled high in the corners, others at near center where a black, gothic 15-ft table, illuminated by an elaborate crystal chandelier, rests.

Two vampires, a Lord and Lady, sit together at one end of the table surrounded by a smorgasbord of humanoid cadavers.

An army of servants stand at attention on the periphery, ready to respond to their master's demands.

The Lord, MORD ALBTRAUM, (Mad demonic lich vampire), dressed in blood soaked raiment's and black cloak, finishes off a cup of blood wine, then LAUGHS

The Lady of the Manor, CLARISSA, (female half-elf), dressed in a white velvet gown stained in splattered blood, finishes feasting on the exposed neck of a young man.

	She turns, her undead eyes falling upon Tilerik, who sheds a tear.
198	TILERIK Clarissa that's my Clarissa. 198
	She merely GIGGLES in return, blood dripping from her mouth. Then motions to a servant carrying a wine decanter.
199	CLARISSA Fill glasses for our guests. 199
200	SERVANT It's empty mistress. 200
201	CLARISSA Then we should refill it, shouldn't 201 we?
	SERVANT
202	Yes, mistress. 202
	She stands and shoves a corpse off the table, then pats the now vacant spot and motioning at the servant.
	The servant climbs onto the table slipping in blood and lies down.
	Clarissa turns to Tilerik.
0.00	CLARISSA
203	Would you like to do the honors? 203 (off his horror)
204	No? Okay. 204

She slits his throat with her index finger putting the decanter to his neck.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)

Right now has been a very good 205

year.

206	MORD Give me a hand, my dear.	206
	Clarissa tears off a hand and the servant SCREAMS. She French kisses him quiet and bites out his tongue.	
	Then hands the hand to Mord.	
	ON OUR COMPANIONS	
	Completely and utterly horrified.	
207	DOMADRED  Seems like your girl's chosen a  different path than you, my friend.	207
208	TILERIK She's been forced, surely.	208
209	DOMADRED I think she's gonners to the land of the deadites. All in, know what I mean?	209
210	TILERIK We can save her, can't we? I mean, we're saving you. There must be a way.	210
211	CACIA I say we kill the vile lich first, then worry about your girl later, kay?	211
	Domadred casts Tasha's Hideous Laughter on Clarissa, who suddenly doubles over in non-stop chuckles.	
212	DOMADRED She might die of laughter.	212
213	VERITAS (reassuring) Yeah. Yeah. Could happen.	213
	They all nod in agreement.	
	Mord looks up from his servant hand he's been feasting or	1 <b>.</b>
214	MORD Okay, it wasn't that funny. It's like the oldest joke known, 'give me a hand'.	214

	She topples over, writhing on the ground amongst the corpses, overcome by an extreme case of the cackles, chortles and chuckles. JUST THEN
	Mord stands and gets sideswiped in the face by a Boomerang.
	And Veritas pushes his glowing Radiance blade through the vampire's back and out his chest.
	MORD (CONT'D)
215	(grunts) What's this? A scratch? 215
216	(seeing the blade) No. No. More than a scratch. 216
	He sees our heroes attack.
217	MORD (CONT'D) Fools! You attempt to take the 217 life of one who does not live.
	- Cacia inflicts damage with her new rapier, her life force is renewed.
	But Mord retaliates.
218	MORD (CONT'D) Blight! Yes. GLORIOUS BLIGHT. 218
	Necromantic energy quickly washes over Cacia.
	Mord laughs, at her demise, then turns his ${\it GAZE}$ upon Veritas.
219	MORD (CONT'D) You are most talented Dragonborn. 219 Perhaps I will keep you with me forever. Would you like that?
220	VERITAS  After the seventh time I stabbed 220 you in the back, what do you think?
	Cacia pokes her head around Mord.
221	CACIA You have to tell him, no. 221
	Veritas didn't and soon falls under Mord's charm.
222	MORD DESTROY YOUR FRIENDS. Your former 222 friends. Past. Present. (MORE)

223

MORD (CONT'D)

Those who look at you funny, give you suspect, give you the stink eye behind your back. Go to town.

Domadred casts Dissonant Whispers at Mord.

DOMADRED

(whispering a discordant
 melody)

223

Oh lord, here I have come. I've already slain your apprentice and you shall follow suit. You are here in your stronghold however we have already killed so many of your brethren and you are next.

Whatever the desired affect might have been, Mord's Legendary Resistance negates it.

Domadred dramatically PLUNGES the horcux stake at Mord but shamefully MISSES spectacularly.

Mord SCOFFS and BACKHANDS Domadred, who reverses into a wall.

MORD

224

Take that, wretch, for daring to stake me.

224

Veritas, still under the elder vampire's charm, attacks Domadred.

**VERITAS** 

225

I'm... so... sorry.

225

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM.

The Rogue sneaks up behind Mord, striking him with her rapier, finally pushing it deep into his back, the sword now protruding through his chest.

Mord HOWLS in frustration, slowly inching his way off the blade. When in range, he struggles to bite Cacia.

MORD

226

The thirst takes precedence over all. Must quench this thirst.

226

Domadred gives it a second try - rears back, the stake up high, elbows out.

HE THRUSTS! The Horcrux stake hits Mord square in the chest.

Domadred follows up the strike with a SUGGESTION.

	DOMADRED
227	Mord, bring it in for a hug. 22 (pulls Mord close)
228	So we can really, really just get 22 it in there.
	MORD
229	(shrugs) I'm staked anyway, I might as well 22 get a hug out of it.
	Mord bear hugs Domadred. It's nice. Gentle. But he just can't resist the blood on the Pirate Captain's face.
	Mord licks it clean.
	Mord distracted, Veritas is able to shake off the charm.
	Following Magpie's instructions, Domadred continues to press the stake.
230	DOMADRED This will not kill you. Your soul 23 will be trapped and preserved. One day, I will release you. A beautiful redemption tale fulfilled.
	ON TILERIK AND CLARISSA
	He now has her tied up and, yet he's hugging her. Awwww. Why you ask? Because he loves her, silly. And even if your woman's a vampire, nothing can stop true love and those who want to love. Power of love, bitches. Power of
	But even after that wordy explanation of the sarcasm of love even confined, she's ravenously attempting to bite Tilerik.
221	TILERIK
231	I'm sorry. 23
	ON DOMADRED AND MORD
	DOMADRED  She seemed to be into it, I don't really know. This clearly isn't working out for you. Maybe we can try a different course of action.
	Mord realizes there is no possibility of escape.
	MORD

Now, let me ask, in this stake, is it like a genie's bottle?

(MORE)

Do I get a cushy little apartment, giant pillows and such?

DOMADRED

Magpie didn't exactly rate the 234 accommodations. How about, before you retire, we take my curse off

234

the table, yes?

Mord cracks a fang-filled grin.

MORD

235 Well, okay. Because it's you. 235

MOMENTS LATER

AT COUNT 18 - Just as Magpie predicted, the stake activates.

A conjured wind whips through the room, spins around Mord and VOOP! body and soul disappears in the stake.

The stake remains suspended in space for a beat--

Then FALLS.

Domadred catches the sizzling stake, bloody darn tootin' hot.

ON DOMADRED, color and health returns to his face as the curse is lifted.

DOMADRED

Yes. YES! 236

236

(to companions)

237 Thank you. From me and my fellow 237

crew. We owe all of you a debt of

gratitude.

Domadred and his companions gather close around Tilerik holding Clarissa's unconscious body.

TILERIK

238 We have to do something for my 238

Domadred stashes the stake and pulls out a DECK OF CARDS.

DOMADRED

239 I have here the Red Opera Deck of 239 Endless Possibilities.

He pulls a card and reveals it--

THE MOTHER OF MIRRORS.

240	DOMADRED (CONT'D) I call upon the Mother of Mirrors. 240
	The card floats up, shifting into three mirrors, representing three possible futures for Clarissa.
	<ol> <li>Clarissa lonely</li> <li>Clarissa with Tilerik</li> <li>Clarissa with Tilerik and our heroes</li> </ol>
241	VERITAS Clarissa can't choose for herself, 241 It lies upon us.
242	CACIA Well, I for one, am down for more 242 stabbing.
243	TILERIK Please, save her. 243
	Tilerik gently kisses Clarissa's forehead.
244	DOMADRED I agree. Save her, it is. 244
	Domadred takes the 3rd option hoping it's the wise choice.
	ECU ON CLARISSA - her eyes flutter open. She blinks and looks into Tilerik's loving face.
245	CLARISSA Tilerik. 245
	FADE OUT:
	FADE IN:
	INT. HORCRUX STAKE MANOR - POCKET APARTMENT - NOW

Horcrux Manor is miniscule by any reckoning with no exits. Simple furnishings give the place a vampire sense of home.

A coffin leans against the left wall, a short table in the middle, and a large stone fireplace dominates the right wall.

Mord Albtraum sits in a tall leather back chair next to the fire, his feet up, slowly sipping blood wine from a goblet.

Mord mutters quietly to himself.

The camera moves closer, so to better hear.

32.

MORD 246 Domadred Steel,

Domadred Steel, Cacia, Veritas, Tilerik Shalgren. Domadred Steel, Cacia, Veritas, Tilerik Shalgren... 246

ON FIREPLCE MANTLE

247

VOODOO DOLLS of the four companions sit on the mantle with pins sticking out of them.

MORD (O.S.) (CONT'D)

<Diabolical laughter>

247

FADE OUT: