

AUTHOR'S NOTES

This module was originally run as three unconnected adventures in my home campaigns in both Vaasa and Helsinki, with the three parts being run a total of five times. Of all the adventures I could have chosen to be part of this module, I selected these not only because of the common theme of the brides and the fact that each involved a small town as either the adventure location or the base from which to adventure, but because each adventure was seen as unusual by most of the participants.

There are lengthy NPC descriptions and detailed back story for each section of this module. At no point should this back story at all suggest any sort of script for players to follow, and there is no impetus to relay any of this background information to players who do not indicate a desire to hear it and whose characters never put themselves in a situation to learn it. It is here merely to better inform the referee of the forces that have brought everyone to the important point for game purposes – the introduction of the PCs into the situation. By knowing the history of the area and the different situations, the referee can better choose particular NPCs' reactions to the players' actions. The overall "story" of the adventure will only be known after the fact, and the referee should not encourage any particular resolution. It is solely the players' responsibility to consciously move towards resolutions that will be satisfying for them; the NPCs have their own agendas. Discovering what happens, for the referee and players both, is the entirety of what the game *is* and undue direction towards a specific goal subverts the very purpose of playing.

Just a note about the gypsies in this adventure. When I first moved to Finland, I noted the local "gypsy" population was not well thought-of by the public at large. Not having ever seen these people in the States, and thinking that Europe was supposed to be far more enlightened, I was fascinated by the whole thing. I decided to make the victims in an adventure gypsies, just to see what my Finnish players would do with that setup. But I don't know anything about the real-life culture, and the adventure is in no way social commentary or trying to teach a moral lesson about racism. I intentionally made the gypsies as "Hollywood" as possible, with any resemblance to any real-life ethnicity superficial, to keep that distance between real life and the fictional idea of gypsies. The 1941 version of *The Wolf Man* and the *Ultima* computer games were what influenced some of the characteristics of the gypsies in this adventure, combined with the kind of antics that traveling entertainers indulge in. I know this caricature depiction of gypsies has been ill-received in other games, and I thought a word of explanation about their appearance here would be in order.

I had a great time putting my groups through these situations and finding out what happens. I'd like to hear what happens when you run *No Dignity in Death*. Drop me a line at lotfp@lotfp.com and let me know.

I dedicate this work to Gary Gygax, Dave Arneson, John Eric Holmes, Tom Moldvay, Dave Cook, Steve Marsh, and Frank Mentzer – the chief architects of the house that my imagination has inhabited for over a quarter of a century.

James Edward Raggi IV
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Helsinki, Finland

A horrible crime has occurred the evening before the PCs arrive in town. The PCs will likely learn of the events at Pembrooktonshire's only inn, The Last Stop.

The locations of possible interest surrounding the murder are given first, followed by information about the people involved.

Locations

The Last Stop

The first building along the road into the village proper is the local inn and tavern. Run by Eddie Diggle and his wife Bertha (with their pre-teen children Tad and Dot helping out), The Last Stop usually does a modest business as a pub, not so much for providing rooms. Visitors aren't so common, and only so many husbands get locked/kicked out of their house at a time. However, with the Knight in town, the local crowd avoids this place because the Knight is frequently there and he isn't so fond of anyone partaking in the drink...Eddie will be very friendly with the PCs, and freely offer the following information:

- Wandering around town in combat gear is not considered proper.
- Visitors will be warned to tread lightly, as a great tragedy has happened the night before.
- Visitors should also be aware that a Knight of Science is in town, so they shouldn't behave in any way that attracts attention.

Eddie won't expand on any of this information unless the characters buy a round of drinks (5 copper for a mug of beer, 1.5 silver for a full meal, 10 gold for a bottle of good wine, 5 silver for a room for one person for one night). This is the story of the tragedy (and is what anyone would have witnessed, but likely Eddie will be the first to tell it):

For the wedding of Jessica Reuter and Armand Leroux, a special performance by a gypsy family was arranged by the father of the bride. Included were to be fortune telling, traditional gypsy music and dancing, a puppet show, as well as a "magic show" with parlor tricks and things like fire eating. The gypsy wagon train (three wagons, one the core family wagon with the mother, father, and three kids, one for the two cousins

and supplies, and one for the grandmother and supplies) arrived five days before the wedding.

The performance was exquisite, with the puppet show being the highlight of the evening, with the puppets being dressed up like the wedding party and telling the story of the groom slaying a dragon.

It all went sour when one of the gypsy men got quite drunk after his performance and thought it would be a great idea to make a pass at the bride in the presence of the groom and the bride's family. Another gypsy tried to break it up immediately but the offense was too great, and the bride kicked the offender low and the bride's father decked him, breaking his nose. He was dragged off by the rest of his clan screaming that the bride's family would learn what "Gypsy pride" meant and how gypsy men behave when "bitch *gaje*" rejects them. The father of the bride was screaming about not paying for the show and wanting the whole crew of gypsies locked up.

A couple of hours later, the bride was dead in the courtyard of her house, murdered with a knife wound in the back as well as a slashed throat. Her family ran to her aid when she first screamed but by the time they got outside, she was dead and someone was already running off with too great a lead to follow, and the hue and cry brought people to the scene of the crime, not in pursuit of the killer.

The footprints of the man running away were stained with blood, leading towards the gypsy camp.

The acting constable (for the real constable is out of town on holiday) ordered the gypsies' wagons searched, and what they found wasn't good. A pig had been slaughtered in ritual style, and in one wagon the puppet of the bride had been hacked apart with a machete, and the gypsy who had made

The Knights of Science is a fanatical religious order that began hundreds of years ago as an organized response to demonic and diabolical threats in the world. Knights are absolutely ruthless in their quest to eradicate extra-planar influence to the point where they have become overly authoritarian, paranoid, and brutal in their methods.

Knights of Science behave in a manner that lives up (down?) to every excessive tendency found in nobility and the self-righteous. They demand the finest accommodations, the finest food, and the services of most skilled craftsmen wherever they go, for both themselves and their retinue, and they expect to not even be asked for payment. Anyone inconvenienced by this had best not complain to the Knight. They will demand all 'sinful' behavior (drinking, women wearing revealing clothing, women speaking up in front of men, any sort of games or entertainment at any time other than festivals, not attending religious services, cursing, magic use, etc) cease in their presence and will not hesitate to make sinners feel the lash. They expect local authority to bow to their will (and commoners to literally bow to them) and they expect everyone to treat their words as law. They will behave as ruler, law enforcer, judge, and executioner as they see fit, and truly see themselves as better than the common man because they feel the common man has no inkling of the nature of the threats poised to corrupt and devour them. Even the most beneficent Knight is like a hurricane when he comes to town, disrupting lives and causing all to live in fear of him.

This is all tolerated because there is no question that the Knights will gladly, and without hesitation, sacrifice their own lives in order to save innocents from evil. Knights are quick to find evil where none exists, yes, but where there is actual evil, there are no allies more trustworthy, and fewer more effective, than a Knight of Science. They are incorruptible and uncompromising in their drive to eradicate extraplanar evil. Local rulers and clergy defer to the authority of the Knights not simply out of fear, but because at their core the Knights are nothing less than pure champions for the common, mortal man.

In game terms, Knights of Science are fighters of no less than fifth level. They must be Lawful, but depending on their methods and ruthlessness, may be aloofly good at best to cruelly evil at worst. They may not use any magic items (except those based on clerical magic) and will not tolerate any

magic use or items in their presence (again, save those used by clerics), but they may strike creatures normally only affected by magical weapons and receive a +4 on any save versus a magic effect (including clerical magic!). They *must* attack any supernatural creature if doing so would defend a helpless innocent (defined as a level zero human or halfling) or non-evil religious location.

Tiberius is in many ways representative of the worst excesses of the Knights. He will not cooperate with any investigation and will in fact view any investigation as an offense against his station as a Knight of Science and against the gods (trying to help devil worshippers... how dare they!) and work to make life miserable for any investigators, if he can't manage to find a convenient excuse to end their life altogether. In any interaction with anyone, Tucca will expect others to bow before him and speak with the utmost deference and humility. Failure to do so will result in Tucca taking the lash to them (d3 subdual damage to the offender). Resisting this will result in being put in the stocks (and not being released until Tucca leaves town), and actually taking up arms to resist Tucca's actions will result in Tucca and his retinue slaying the intruder on the spot.

Players may not enjoy having to bow down to the likes of Tucca, and may consider such requirements "unheroic" or not in the spirit of the game. But remember that for all intents and purposes, while not the murderer, Tucca is the villain of this scenario. He has cast summary judgment prematurely on not only the accused, but the accused's family, and will resist any attempt to bring the truth to light. The heroic thing to do is to save the family; not bowing down to nobility is all good and well, but the privilege of flexing, peacock preening, and acting like a rebellious badass are not requisites for heroism. Tucca most likely must be defeated in ways other than expressions of pride or martial force.

Tucca, when not sleeping, wears a set of ancient-styled bronze armor, carries a shield and battle axe, and has a heavy war horse and lance stabled in town. He is a sixth level fighter.

Faustus Germanicus

Faustus is the Knight's squire. He will act even more snobbish than the Knight himself, warning that anyone helping the gypsies would be seen to be in league with evil and that isn't such a good idea. He will dismiss the PCs as "unread beggars" and

there is even a slight possibility of being selected (Jessica and Armand's wedding took place beforehand because Armand was considered strange and there was no way he was going to be allowed into the games). After the sacrifice, there are often a great mass of weddings, as the surviving couples all wed, and it is customary for those couples that were hoping to be selected to also wait until after the entire celebration to wed.

It is true that every so often a selected man intentionally martyrs himself (and therefore his bride-to-be) immediately in the competition (and it is considered a very brave and honorable thing to do so!), the truth is the vast majority of the selected people merely want the honor and social benefits of being selected, but they don't want to actually *die*. The competition is usually quite fierce, with the best and brightest fighting for the easy life. However, when one falls, the woman that becomes the Spirit's Bride does not resist. It is the way of things. Cheating during the actual games is also strictly forbidden. Someone was caught attempting an unfair advantage once, and both he and his fiancée were put to death and their names and both families disgraced, and the games continued on until there was a fair winner.

THE COMPETITORS

Here are the couples whose heads are up for the chop:

Marcela Quedgely
Rupert Reginald Harnsworth

Prudence Nelthorpe
Nathaniel Gainsborough

Cassandra Ravensdale
Cuthbert Erasmus Fitzherbert

Lucretia St. John
Horatio Heathcote

Penelope Snow
Gilbert Marmaduke Charrington

Gunilla Ødegård
Edmund Fitzclarence Wyndham

All of them are from the more well-to-do families in town, and all are very physically beautiful and impressive. To determine the personalities of each

contestant (and this should only be done when it becomes important to know), roll on the following tables, once on column one and once on column two:

Male Competitor Personality		
1	Loud	Curious
2	Soft-Spoken	Indignant
3	Observant	Ambitious
4	Braggart	Laid-back
5	Rude	Philosophical
6	Courteous	Narrow-minded

Female Competitor Personality		
1	Distant	Ladylike
2	Graceful	Tomboy
3	Steeled	Cheerful
4	Easily Distressed	Despondent
5	Spoiled	Pious
6	Innocent	Skeptical

They are each aged d6+14.

THE GAMES

The games will go on for a maximum of seven days. Every day, roll a d20 for each contestant. If the roll is 20 or higher, then that person dies during the day's event, and the games are over. If a roll is over 15, add one to that competitor's future rolls. If a roll is 19, add two to that competitor's future rolls. All such modifiers are cumulative and represent injuries suffered each day, which make a fatal mistake more likely the following days. No magical healing is allowed to the competitors during the games.

Wagers and sponsorships are very common throughout the games, so the winners of the individual events will be well-set for their future lives... if they get to live them. Randomly roll to see which competitor wins each day.

Most of these events don't take so long. They will begin at noon each day, with the Mayor and the head priest each giving speeches and leading prayer before the contest itself begins. Before this time each of the competitors will be in seclusion, resting and preparing. After each event, while their wounds are being tended to, they will be honored at various feasts, gift-giving, and many speeches being given on their virtues and courage and about the Pembrooktonshire way of life. Do note that none of the competitor couples live together and

THE BATTLE OF THE BUMBLEBEE BANDIT BY EARNEST WILDE

unfortunately the struggle had caused her corset to come undone. “Oh, my modesty!” cried Lady Labreque, attempting gather her torn gown over her lady dumplings.

Her savior, her knight in shining armor looked at her intensely. “No need, milady. I will not blush if I inadvertently see thine womanly charms as thou gatherst yourself with dignity.”

Lady Labreque came close to swooning! “Oh, who art thou, dear sir, who hath saved me from a fate worse than death?”

“I am the Bumblebee Bandit!” said the man, waving his rapier in the air with one hand as he shook his trademark yellow and black cloak with the other in his signature way. “Champion of the poor, scourge of the evildoers, a man of justice that only evil need fear!”

The Bumblebee Bandit! Lady Labreque was beside herself! She’d heard tales of these, these *highwaymen* that took advantage of proper ladies without even asking their fathers’ permission beforehand!

“Oh, I willst not sin for you, Bumblebee Bandit!” The Lady felt her dander rising and a bead of sweat form on her brow. She panicked as she realized how unladylike she was acting!

“Oh, forgiveth me!” The Lady threw herself at the feet of the Bumblebee Bandit, Champion of the Poor and the Shadowy Fear that Lurks in the Hearts of All Evil Men! “Oh, I beg thee to forgive me for mine own unladylike behavior! I am a noblewoman of the house Labreque, yet young and unfamiliar with the ways of

the world and how rude that may make me! I didst not mean to be ungrateful! Please do not tell my father! The ladies at the riding club would never invite me to their tea parties again if they found out I behaved so!”

“Have no fear, my fair lady!” thundered the Bumblebee Bandit, Hero of All Who Would Call Themselves Free. “As I have saved you from disgrace and dishonor at the hands of these uncourteous toll-keepers, so shall I keep your honor and secrets safe from your riding club mistresses! Thou shalt be free to sip tea and eat crumpets at thine own leisure, forevermore!”

“Oh, a million and one thanks from the bottom of mine own heart, Bumblebee Bandit! You are surely the paladin of virtue, the paragon of manliness, the example of all those who seek to be admired in high society! I shall make an entry in mine diary tonight celebrating your wit and your charm and your kindness!” The Lady secretly hoped that this is one diary entry that would be spied upon and read!

“Enough talk, fair Lady Labreque! Let us not discuss such trivial matters, unfit for a noblewoman! Seeing your heaving bosom and your fair, flushed skin, white as the virgin snow on the tallest mountain peak yet as richly tan as the finest and most magnificent dunes of the greatest deserts of the East, I feel the time is ripe that you should no longer merely be a noble lady. Nay, let me show you how to be a noble *woman!*”

“Oh, yes, Bumblebee Bandit!” The Lady Labreque was overcome with thoughts so unlike a lady but so like a woman. “I will