

*Under a night sky, under the moon, rising from the black lake, out of the past to the now, a shape of wings and feathers and a long neck outstretched, but not a swan, eyes like lanterns, beams sweeping the shore, it rises, white feathers, wings spread, a terrible booming cry from the bird that is not a swan, and then it becomes fire, burning on the water (there is no reflection in the lake, this great bird of fire that is not a swan, it does not reflect in the mirror-smooth lake), and it cries again, that honking, blaring noise, and then the fire snuffs out and there is... scaffolding of wood and metal and nails, only, in the rough shape of a bird, a hollow thing now the feathers are burned away and the wind sighs as the planks and bars tumble down into the water, and there is the pitter-patter of tiny coins of all things, there were little coins inside the effigy, and their raindrop rhythm almost drowns the voice that whispers "a year for a year, and let there be guards upon the guards."*

*Your mouth is dry, instantly. The sky is dark, few stars, no moon. Lone and level sand stretches in all directions and there is no water here. You stand before a circle of fused black glass, ringing a circle of ash and dust. No fire has burned here; no heat. Across from you, there is a rustling and shifting and a man rises up from the ground just outside the ring. Hale, hearty, solid, in a robe of blue, with a face used to smiling but now sad. Water drips from him (the desert sand drinks it down thirstily, leaving no raindrop mark). You almost miss the other figure, also sad, a cloak of white feathers cascading from zir shoulders, limned in the dim light of the dawn that will not come here. Zie has a lyre at zir hip. They face each other, these two figures, ignoring you. Water starts to bubble in the heart of the ring of black glass, soaking up through the dust and sand, the cool spray of fresh water. Zie and he move, counterclockwise, both at the same speed, frowning at each other. Then, it erupts. A column of water up into the sky, churning and violent, sweeping the sand away and then, suddenly, it is not a column of water but the neck of a serpent an immense snake with rainbow feathers but its smooth iridescent scales shift and fire dances in its eyes and along its wings, and the rain begins to fall, rainbow rain from the skies, and zie and he are gone and it is just you, and this serpent of transfiguration, and the rain.*

*The Dry Patricians in Madrugá  
A potential solution to their blight*

*A circle of five flames before you under a black sky. Mountains encircle the horizon, reaching up towards the darkness. The flames move lazily, spinning in a circle. A diamond flame. An onyx flame. An emerald flame. A sapphire flame. A ruby flame. Moving around a still point. Entrancing. Then you become aware of the sound. The noise of sand flowing. Looking round you are in a circle of hourglasses. Hundreds, their sands flowing in unison, grains through the pinched glass neck. You are caught up suddenly with the certainty that you have to make sure the sand does not stop flowing. You desperately flip them over, fighting the inevitable. As each hourglass empties, the circle of flames moves faster and faster. You cannot do this alone, you have only one pair of hands, and then the last grain of sand falls through one of the hourglasses and it is too late. Each sandtimer explodes, soundlessly, showering you with sand and glass. With an ear-splitting roar the flames erupt upwards towards the sky, no longer flames but now scaled sinuous, muscular necks - diamond and onyx and emerald and sapphire and ruby - maws wide bellowing in triumphant fury at the sky.*

*You stumble through a stinking tunnel, sloshing through water. Your lantern is almost exhausted. There, up ahead, a dim light. You slow. Cautious. You are far from home. You sneak forward. The passage opens into a chamber, glittering with treasure. Loot. Jewelry of all kinds, polished coins, crowns and tiaras, necklaces. Beautiful. Valuable. Breathtaking. You sneak forward, and grab a handful of gold and silver rings, stuffing them into your pockets. An awful shrieking rings out around you, echoing from all the tunnels. You turn to flee, as waves of darkness wash into the chamber. The darkness is like thick black liquid, almost like liquid tar, but studded with hundreds and hundreds of tiny red eyes, bubbling and squealing. You run, the tunnel behind you filled with this horrible flood, and it is right on your heels as you reach a ladder and desperately climb, up, up, up. The shrieking mess of darkness seethes below you but does not follow you up into the streets (not yet). Triumphant, you pull one of the purloined rings from your pocket and slip it onto your finger before sauntering away along the red-flagged street.*

*You sink into the vision and you hear whispers. An animal moving near you, in the dark. The scene shifts and you see a disheveled Urizeni walking along a dusty path under a clear sky muttering to himself. You get flashes of visions: a night sky, a man dying to a land-shark, and a view of the pounding of blood. Alongside each vision, you see the Urizeni man flinch. Is it you causing this? Contrary to all conventional reason in these circumstances, the man pulls out a telescope and gazes up to the sky. You get a vision of an alleyway in an abandoned Freeborn city, bins and empty stalls surrounding you. You see a sign which reads "The finest fish in Torres!", and graffiti which reads "Dumon is coming." You're back to the man on the path, and then the alleyway. The scene shifts from one to the other increasingly rapidly as the man curls in on himself, screaming and clutching his head. With each glance at the city you see more and more graffiti: "He is coming" "By blood begun" and "By blood undone".*

*The vision fades. If you wish, you may roleplaying having a lingering headache.*

*A prophet visits Anvil to discuss the curse of a tulpa of the Three Sisters*

*You are aboard a ship, and it is cold. A chill wind brushes past you as the boat rocks and sways, but you don't seem to feel it. "I've never tried noodles," you hear yourself say. "What is this 'noodle' you speak of?" "Ye've never had them?!" The sailor presenting you with a bowl of the slimy things is aghast. "They're a highguard delicacy, my lord!" Something happens involving the noodles. You aren't sure what, but one way or another you find yourself falling off the edge of the ship in an incident that involved noodles, an iceberg, and the captain's hat. You sink into the icy water below and it hits you like a slap to the soul. In the murky frozen depths, you see something huge and golden approaching. It opens its mouth wide. The vision ends.*

*A herald of Callidus has been swallowed by a whale, corrupting it*

*While sat around a fire, a Freeborn finishes up his song and says, "Did I ever tell you the tale of the great cambion whale?" "No," you say as you take another swig of rum. "What happened?" The Freeborn, excited, adopts a dramatic pose: "I was exploring the sea of snow a few seasons ago, and it's bitter cold up there. There comes a call of 'someone overboard!' and so naturally I rush to the side of the ship to see if I could help the poor soul." You see it now, the ship, the man as he looks overboard. "It wasn't a person, but a whale! A great cambion whale with a spiralling golden horn, and as I looked over the side its horn came up out of the water and HOOKED THE SPECTACLES right from my nose!" He laughs and shrugs. "Well, I've been hoping to get those spectacles back but to this day, the cambion whale remains at large." The vision shifts and you see a humanoid figure wrapped in finery inside somewhere distinctly visceral. It has prominent cambion horns and labyrinthine markings across its face, and it smiles as it picks up a pair of spectacles and puts them on. "I could get used to this."*

*A herald of Callidus has been swallowed by a whale, corrupting it*

*In an abandoned alleyway in what is clearly a Freeborn city, a young woman stands. She wears a white veil, which bleeds to red as she appears to age into her mid-30s, and she tears of blood stain her face. With a wail, the veil bleeds to black and now she is an old woman. She stares at you directly, lifting her veil and in her eyes you see darkness. This is a woman who would cheerfully gut you and spit on your bleeding body. In her, you see the darkness in the hearts of all things. She splits into three people. All three people, each wearing masks. The lights go out. You feel hunted.*

*The Veil of the Three Sisters was used previously to lift Curse of Dumon. The Three Sisters have the curse, and true to their nature, are going to give it back.*

*You are in a busy Freeborn street. "Hey," a young woman gossips to her friend, "Have you heard about the Brass Coast General letting Kahraman be invaded for her own gain?" Her friend laughs, and the street become a swirling blur as you feel something take control over your body. You feel yourself say, "Hey, have you heard? General Aracelis is working with the Jotun." A bright red snake slithers past. The vision ends.*

*You are in a busy Freeborn street. "Hey," a young woman gossips to her pet red bird, "Have you heard about Qusay i Kalamar i Guerra's debt to the Lictors?" Her bird laughs, and the street become a swirling blur as you feel something take control over your body. You feel yourself say, "Hey, have you heard? Senator Qusay i Kalamar i Guerra made a deal with a Callidus herald to corrupt a whale, which has been sinking ships for their treasure." The vision ends.*

*You are in a busy Freeborn street. "Hey," a stylish young man gossips to his friend, "Have you heard about what the Hakima are planning?" His friend laughs, and the street become a swirling blur as you feel something take control over your body. You feel yourself say, "Hey, have you heard? The Hakima are planning to set the Kohan on the dhomiro," and your friend responds, "They're like the Hakima's dogs!" You did not know that you had a friend with you. You do not recognise them. The vision ends.*

*A tulpa of the Three Sisters is spreading malicious rumours about the Brass Coast*

*You are in a busy Freeborn street. "Hey," a stylish young man gossips to his friend, "Have you heard about the Dragonfly Cartel?" Her friend laughs, and the street become a swirling blur as you feel something take control over your body. You feel yourself say, "Hey, have you heard? The Dragonfly Cartel are bribing the senate!" and your friend responds, "So much for honesty." You did not know that you had a friend with you. You do not recognise them. The vision ends.*

*You are in a busy Freeborn street. "Hey," a stylish young man gossips to his friend, "Have you heard about that Marta of Little Quzar?" His friend laughs, and the street become a swirling blur as you feel something take control over your body. You feel yourself say, "Hey, have you heard? Marta's Chamber of Delights is run by a freedom cultist" and your friend responds, "I heard the chamber of delights is just a front." You did not know that you had a friend with you. You do not recognise them. The vision ends.*



*You are in a busy Freeborn street. "Hey," a stylish individual of indeterminate gender gossips to their friend, "Have you heard about the Artisan Guild's little secret?" Their friend laughs, and the street become a swirling blur as you feel something take control over your body. You feel yourself say, "Hey, have you heard? The Artisan Guild are selling to the Jotun" and your friend responds, "I bet you could blackmail them." You did not know that you had a friend with you. You do not recognise them. The vision ends.*

*A tulpa of the Three Sisters is spreading malicious rumours about the Brass Coast*

*You are in a busy Freeborn street. "Honestly," a stylish old woman gossips to her friend, "The Burning Falcons are a disgrace." Her friend nods sagely, and the street become a swirling blur as you feel something take control over your body. You feel yourself say, "Hey, have you heard? The corsair's lost three quarters of their number over the last season" and your friend responds, "They're the reason the Sea of Brass is in this mess to begin with." You did not know that you had a friend with you. You do not recognise them. The vision ends.*

*You are in a busy Freeborn street. "Is it true?" a stylish old man gossips to his friend, "About the Kohan?" His friend nods sagely, and the street become a swirling blur as you feel something take control over your body. You feel yourself say, "Hey, have you heard? The Kohan are like attack dogs for hire!" and your friend responds, "Even the militia are scared of them." You did not know that you had a friend with you. You do not recognise them. The vision ends.*

*A tulpa of the Three Sisters is spreading malicious rumours about the Brass Coast*