

Whispering Shadow Courtiers

Vision

Shadows rise and swirl around you.

You are in a wide stone plaza beneath a pale sky scattered with pinpoints of blackness that are almost – but not quite – like stars. These false stars are laid out in a way that suggests they form unfamiliar constellations.

Hanging directly over the plaza are five bright pseudo-stars arranged in the constellation of the Spider - you can tell they represent this constellation because they are overlaid with the flickering, shadowy image of a massive arachnid.

Before you is a raised circular dais. Atop it stand four figures shrouded in cowlled, vibrantly coloured, robes. One is in crimson silk, one in cloth-of-gold, one in a swirling patchwork of ebony-and-emerald wool, and one in deep cobalt blue wool. They wear gloves, and their faces are entirely concealed behind delicate porcelain masks, each identical, featureless except for empty black eye-holes.

Between you and the dais, stands a fifth figure. It is youthful and unremarkable, dressed in white clothes that remind you of the southern League or perhaps the Brass Coast. In one hand they hold a silver tray, atop which lies a scroll.

The figure steps forward, and proffers the tray - and the scroll - toward you.

At the same time, the figures on the dais begin to speak. There are several distinct voices, but they are hard to make out. They weave together and afterwards it is impossible to say for sure if they spoke one at a time or all at once, or how many voices in all were heard, or precisely what words they used. It is as if you did not hear the words so much as *remember* the words after the fact.

“Their Dark Majesties extend their hands to you. These are some of the secrets they desire. Words are easy. Action wins approval. Action proves worth. Seek secrets. Whisper them through the gate. Become the ally of the Court.”

You feel dizzy, and the sky seems to spin above your head. Shadows surge around you, swallowing you ... and you return to full wakefulness.

In your hand, however, is a scroll that was not there before.

Mechanical Effect

Each contributor to the *Whispering Shadow Courtiers* ritual should find that they have a ribboned scroll in their hand when the vision ends.

The scroll is physically present IC, and you may keep it.