

THE DM TOOL CHEST

THE FALLING OF DE'CHRA KON'SIE

NIGHT OF THE END'S KISS PART I



STRANGE EVENTS ARE CAUSING CHAOS DURING THE
AUTUMN FESTIVAL OF DE'CHRA KON'SIE



THE FALLING OF DE'CHRA KON'SIE

The *Falling of De'chra Kon'sie* is designed for **four characters with an Average Party Level (APL) of 5th to 10th level.**

Throughout the adventure text are notes on where to add additional creatures to encounters or extra rolls on charts depending on the party's current level. While none of these changes are drastic, they are intended to keep the same level of intensity or sense of urgency as the base encounters for characters of 5th level APL. Throughout the adventure text, you'll find helpful GM tips and roll charts. We encourage using these, but you are also welcome to select only those that you find most useful or interesting for your group.

You can run this adventure as a stand-alone experience or pair it with 'Karma's Call at Midnight' for a complete story arc.

BACKSTORY

De'chra Kon'sie literally translates to 'Celebration of the Beginning and the End' and revolves around the tale of two celestial beings, each representing seasons at odds with each other who fall in love. Hadzel, representing spring and rebirth, was a celestial loved by all who watched over the mortals in their care closely—interacting with them regularly and helping them to learn when to plant crops. Tahel, representing winter and death, was a celestial feared by all as they only came on the day of their death to help guide them to the afterlife of their chosen deity. Trying to respect the uneasiness Tahel created in mortals, they tried to limit their interactions but would fly over the fields at first snowfall to signal the end of the harvest season. Over the years, each time the pair's paths would cross, their love grew until they

could not deny it any longer. From their union, the seasons of summer and fall were born. De'chra Kon'sie celebrates Hadzel and Tahel's second child Fall, mirroring Vela'seg Gi'ate (translating to 'Celebration of the Heat and Yearning'), which celebrates their first child Summer. No one knows what happened to the celestials after their children were born, but most stories say they gave themselves to the world, becoming spring and winter. The festival of De'chra Kon'sie ends with a masked ball held in the streets of Voleubeuge called the Night of Filiolum, also called the Night of the End's Kiss, or the night Fall was made.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The party arrives in town just in time for a week of parties, food, and games as De'chra Kon'sie kicks off. But what was supposed to be a relaxing week of fun quickly takes on a different tune as a series of strange things start happening to disrupt the merriment. The mysterious events appear to be linked to an eccentric noble's magical collection, and the characters have been assigned to investigate them. They will explore the city to investigate the strange happenings and talk to the locals to gather whatever information they can about what is happening. Eventually, they discover that the newest addition to Arxot Karma's collection is the root of the problem just in time for disaster to strike as cultists descend to take the cursed item.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Here are suggestions for integrating this location into your campaign and engaging your players:

STRANGE THINGS AROUND

Stories of strange occurrences in Voleubeuge can be overheard in local taverns and among town gossips. Some people are beginning to speculate that the gods must be angry with the town. The mayor of Voleubeuge is calling for all adventurers to help so that De'chra Kon'sie isn't canceled.

MYSTERY INVITATION

A mysterious invitation appears, inviting the party to join the citizens of Voleubeuge for the festival of De'chra Kon'sie, including a paid-for stay at the Middle Roost Tavern. Who could this unknown benefactor be?

PRIZE ON DISPLAY

There are announcements posted everywhere talking about De'chra Kon'sie and the 'Prizes, Glory and Fun awaiting all those who join!'. The signs discuss a prize of 1,000 gp for any that can master all of the festivities booths. Are the characters up to the challenge? (*The characters need to win all three of the Games in Part 2: De'chra Kon'sie Begins to be awarded the prize*)

VOLEUBEUGE

Voleubeuge is a small-to-medium-sized town where the people are known for their pleasant attitudes and enjoying a good party. The townsfolk tend to be open, friendly, helpful, and genuinely happy—which sometimes is off-putting to adventurers that have been on the road for a while. The most interesting person in Voleubeuge is Arxot Karma, a former adventurer who has retired to a manor in town that had been empty about 20 years ago. For a time, Arxot's old adventuring party would often visit, a few even moving in on occasion. They would throw parties to which the whole town was invited and were very generous with their time and wealth. But something happened several years ago, causing Arxot to close off and become a bit of an eccentric recluse. Unknown to the townsfolk, Arxot is grieving the death of their former adventuring party. Where she had chosen to retire and relax, the others joined other groups or adventured independently. One day Arxot received a letter asking for help and arrived too late, finding their friends dead. Arxot found a large blackened key clutched in the hands of the cleric Nishru and took it back with them, adding it to the collection of items from adventuring. She placed the key as the featured item displayed in a memorial section for her fallen companions.



THE BLACKENED KEY

Unknown to Arxot, this large blackened key is *Erzith's Crux*, the last remaining item keeping a powerful fiend imprisoned. A cult led by Ruk Tux is trying to use the key to free this fiend in hopes of gaining power from them. Recently Ruk was able to sneak into Arxot's manor but was spotted before they could take the item. They were, however, able to awaken some of its dark magic, which is the cause of all the weird things happening in town when the party arrives.

THE FALLING OF DE'CHRA KON'SIE

Our heroes begin this adventure enjoying a beautiful celebration before strange things start happening in town. Soon after, a stranger approaches them, claiming to know the answer, and points them toward a reclusive noble named Arxot Karma. The stranger, Ruk Tux, is secretly a cult leader interested in the cursed item and intends to use it to release a powerful fiend from its magical prison. But not one to get his hands dirty, he plans to use the party to further his plans.

PART 1:

THE LEAVES OF VOLEUBEUGE

The group arrives at Voleubeuge to the bustle of setting up for the week's celebrations. The town is bursting with activity, noises, and smells as everyone rushes around to get ready for the week-long celebration of De'chra Kon'sie. Booths are being built on all the major streets, long wooden tables arranged in the town square, and various-sized stages set up on the side streets.

Laughter fills the air as bodies press and move past each other. The sounds of hammers, saws, and creaking ropes fill the air as you move further into the town. Everyone seems excited for De'chra Kon'sie to the point that you feel yourself get caught up in it as well for a moment.

VOLEUBEUGE



FEATURES OF VOLEUBEUGE

These features are prominent throughout the town during this part of the adventure. You can use any of the following to add to the character's experience as they walk through the town.

Crush of People. During De'chra Kon'sie, moving through the town's main streets is considered difficult terrain.

Party Noise. Wisdom (Perception) checks made using hearing are made at disadvantage for the week.

Catching Excitement. The group makes any saving throws to avoid being pulled into the celebrations at disadvantage.

Entertainers. Plenty of entertainers of all sorts flit around the streets offering mini shows to build anticipation for later performances. They attempt to draw the group into viewing and spending some coins. The entertainer is determined by rolling on the Festival Performers table.

Visiting Thieves. With so many people descending on Voleubeuge for De'chra Kon'sie, the cutpurses are out in force. There is a 30% chance one attempts to steal from someone in the group, a DC 16 Passive perception or Wisdom (Perception) check will notice and foil the attempt.

A Place to Stay. The group is directed to the Middle Roost Tavern for rooms. If they came without the strange invitation (see Adventure Hooks), they are told it's likely the only place left with rooms. If they arrived at the behest of the invitation, it's where they were told rooms would be waiting for them.

FESTIVAL PERFORMERS

d6 PERFORMER

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|---|--|
| 1 | Sword Swallowers show off, hyping the crowd up for a death-defying act later in the week. |
| 2 | A sleight of hand game is played by a thin, extremely tall green dragon born talking about the game tents being set up. |
| 3 | Contortionists try to wow the crowd and build buzz about the circus' show happening in two days. |
| 4 | Twin giant saber-tooth tigers balance on balls as a satyr walks across a wooden pole balanced between the two. They are part of the Darefey's Brigade show happening the night before the masked ball. |
| 5 | A band plays saucy ballads about love and adventuring, featuring the Gray Guards, being sure to talk about their show tomorrow night before moving to another spot to repeat. |
| 6 | An artist offers portraits for coins telling onlookers to stop by the art show happening all week. |

PART 2:

DE'CHRA KON'SIE BEGINS

At sunset, the partying begins with a feast to kick off De'chra Kon'sie. The townsfolk begin to head to the town square, where the festivities are the loudest, and the crowd packs onto the dancefloor.

VOLEUBEUGE'S TOWN SQUARE

The town square is the heart of a lot of the big events that happen during De'chra Kon'sie. It is decked out with decorations, a large makeshift dance floor set up for party-goers. While the characters can explore the rest of the town, they should eventually make their way here, as most townsfolk are here already.

A band plays as people dance to its upbeat pace. Long wooden tables are laden down with foods that people take from freely. Waiters rush about with drinks and making sure the food makes it to tables as needed. The town square is lit up by dancing lights that seem to move in time with the music.

GM NOTE

The party can return to any stalls, vendors, or games described during De'chra Kon'sie if they are interested in it. The whole week is meant to try and provide a fun experience as the background for the main adventure. This will most likely be a part of the adventure the party comes back to several times.

FEATURES OF THE TOWN SQUARE

While exploring the town square, the characters can join in the festivities. Here are a few examples of what they might find here:

A Good Feast: Taking part in the food for at least 2 hours gives the effect of the spell *heroes' feast*.

Joyful Partiers: Many people will approach the group to pull them into the festivities if they try to avoid it. A DC 14 Dexterity saving throw is needed to keep from being dragged along to participate.

Games of Chance: A group off in a corner is playing a game of cards with an 8 sp buy-in. Everyone rolls 5d6 and bets on having the highest total. A character that succeeds on a DC 17 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check can reroll one dice. Anyone caught cheating will need to make a quick getaway or be attacked by five **commoners** who use non-lethal strikes. They flee if the characters show intent to use deadly force. At least three rounds need to be won for the Games of Chance to be

considered beaten; however, the group can continue playing as long as they'd like.

Games of Strength: Several arm wrestling games have popped up, and a player can join for 3 sp. The winner keeps taking on challengers until they lose or leave with the current pot of winnings. The player and DM each roll a d20. The player adds their Strength modifiers, and the DM earns a +1 bonus to their roll each round the player survives. Each new challenger adds 3 sp to the current pot of winnings. At least three rounds need to be won for the Games of Chance to be considered beaten; however, the group can continue playing as long as they'd like.

Games of Skill: A set of four emblems is set on the table that at first glance look identical. But a DC 13 Perception (Wisdom) shows that two of them have the wrong flowers, and one has the wrong blue outline. Then a blank badge the same shape as the emblems is handed over for a duplicate to be attempted. A passible forgery can be completed on a successful DC 13 Performance (Charisma) or DC 15 Sleight of Hand (Dexterity) check. The new duplicate is added to the others, shuffled, and presented for inspection for the true emblem to be picked out again. This time a DC 15 Perception (Wisdom) check is needed, with +1 DC for every 2 over the DC during the forgery portion is added.

Top Prize: If all a single player has won the Games of Chance, Games of Strength, and Games of Skill, they will be dragged onto a small stage where the mayor will give them a small medallion to wear as well as the 1,000 gp reward.

Knick Knack Hockers: Roaming sellers offer fake swords, flower crowns, carved leaves with *light* cast on them, and many other small items for sale. Shouting to get people's attention and tempting the group every time they pass. Make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or pick up a small item worth 6 SP.

The Main Event: At midnight, the band gets somehow even louder to the cheers of the crowd as everyone rushes onto the dance floor. The group must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or be pulled onto the dance floor for the Dance of Seasons. A successful DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check or a DC 13 Charisma (Performance) check is needed to match the steps of the dance. If they succeed, the crowd cheers; otherwise, they'll be the butt of jokes the rest of the night.

Many Weird Things: During the festivities, roll on the chart below based on the APL of the party. For a party of 5th level characters, roll 3 times at different points in the night. Add an additional roll for every other level after the 5th level (up to 10th level). Reroll on duplicate rolls or choose an event that has not yet occurred.

WEIRD THINGS (EASY TO MEDIUM)

d12 EVENT

- 1 Something smells terrible. All Wisdom (Perception) checks made with smell are taken at disadvantage for the next hour.
- 2 A small object goes flying. One character picked at random must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d4 bludgeoning damage.
- 3 Two random NPCs get into a fight. It lasts for 30 seconds before neither remember why it started.
- 4 Nearby flames roar into an inferno. Anyone within 15 feet must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 4 (1d8) fire damage.
- 5 A large object falls out of the sky from nowhere. Each character must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 1d8 bludgeoning damage and being knocked prone on a failed save, or taking no damage and being knocked prone on a successful one.
- 6 An errant firework makes a loud pop next to the party. Each character must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be deafened for 10 minutes.
- 7 A clumsy alchemist drops a potion into the mud, and it explodes in a geyser. Everyone within 20 feet is covered in mud, and any Dexterity skill checks and saving throws are made with disadvantage until they clean themselves off.
- 8 Something slams the shin of 1d4 people in the area. Each must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.
- 9 A bird drops out of the sky. It isn't dead, however, and is just stunned and has no idea what happened.
- 10 You hear maniacal laughter floating around you. Each character must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened and flee in a random direction for 1 minute.
- 11 An animal tries to take a bite out of the nearest person. One character picked at random must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) piercing damage.
- 12 An object is knocked off a table, and it shatters onto the ground causing nearby activity to stop for a moment before quickly resuming.

PART 3:

A STRANGE CONVERSATION

As the party begins to wind down, a strange fellow approaches the group as they are dancing around and enjoying the festivities. The cult leader Ruk Tux wants the cursed key in Arxot Karma's possession and intends to leverage the characters to his own ends.

A PARTY WINDING DOWN

The festivities have gone long into the night. While most townsfolk have ended their evening, there are still many who are out enjoying themselves. Most of the performers have finished their shows and joined in the drinking.

FEATURES OF THE FEAST'S END

Festival features have changed throughout the event and now include the following additions and changes:

Deep Into Drinks: Most party-goers still out are very intoxicated, giving advantage on skill checks made to steal from them or convince them to do something.

Loud Hum: The raucous celebration has evolved into a hum of conversations with low music playing. Any attempts to overhear a conversation a character is not actively participating in are made at disadvantage.

Shadows: Stealth checks are made with advantage.

A STRANGER APPEARS

At some point in the evening, a cloaked figure seemingly out of nowhere joins the group, and a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check is needed to notice them before they speak up. The figure is Ruk Tux (see Appendix A), and they casually mention the strange events that have happened in town and a possible cause before getting up to grab drinks for everyone and joining again to sip from their glass quietly.

Rumor Has It: Any character attempting to gain further information from Ruk Tux must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check. They'll talk about a local noble named Arxot Karma who collects magical items and currently has a newly awakened cursed item, according to the staff's gossip. The rumor is that the more dangerous the magic item, the more this noble wants it for their collection.



THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER RUK TUX

A Suggestion: Ruk mentions that it would be good if a discerning group started to look into things and that many in the town would be appreciative and have even put together a fund for answers. They ask the group to think about the offer. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals they are serious about the proposal, and if the check succeeds by 5 or more, it also shows that it's not for the reasons they stated.

Large Commotion: A loud crash and the sounds of fighting force the party to make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw, and anyone that fails misses the stranger leaving. Those who succeed their saving throw notice the figure leaves a card on the table before getting up to merge into the crowd and shadows; otherwise, they turn back to only find the card on the table. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) or Wisdom (Survival) check is needed to track them back to an abandoned warehouse in town.

PART 4:

MYSTERY OF THE KARMA

The group has an opportunity to learn more about the noble that the stranger, Ruk Tux, blames for all the strange things happening. It is time to investigate for themselves what the cause is and how much blame falls on Arxot Karma.

CURIOUS ENCOUNTERS

The town is lively at all hours, with tons of people, music, and distractions. It also means that it can be pretty easy to get people talking with the right motivation. The townsfolk are happy to gossip for some coin or drink but leave if they think the conversation is too much of a downer.

FEATURES OF DE'CHRA KON'SIE

Loose Lips: Charisma checks made after partaking in drinks or festival activities are made at advantage.

Game of Sending: Word travels fast in Voleubeuge, and facts get distorted easily. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check is needed to determine which rumors are true.

WEIRD THINGS (MEDIUM TO HARD)

d8 EVENT

- 1 Gravity forgets how to work for a moment, raising everyone in a 10-foot radius up 15 feet before going back to normal. A successful DC 16 Dexterity saving throw is needed to land without taking damage.
- 2 Objects get flung through the air by an invisible force, and all characters must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage.
- 3 Flashing lights shoot out of a random person in the crowd as if a *hypnotic pattern* spell were cast on them, but they can't control it. This effect lasts for 1 minute before fading away.
- 4 Suddenly three *boars* appear in the crowd and begin to panic before charging the group.
- 5 Hail begins to fall in a 15-foot radius, causing 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage for anyone starting or entering the space.
- 6 Flames shoot up randomly out of the ground. Characters must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (1d10) fire damage.
- 7 Each character must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or fall unconscious for 1 minute. They cannot be woken until the time ends, but they wake with no side effects.
- 8 One *crocodile* appears very confused as people begin screaming.

Out of the Corner of Your Eye: A successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check will spot a figure that appears to be following the party after asking a few questions around town. The figure disappears as soon as it's noticed, and this keeps happening the more the party asks questions. It is, of course, Ruk Tux checking that his plan is falling into place.

More Weirdness: Roll twice on the chart below while the characters are going around town asking questions. Add an additional roll for every two APL levels above 5th level (up to 10th level).

Noble Rumors: As they ask around town about Arxot, the party hears rumors from the chart below.

GM NOTE

Any rumors, gossip, or information given to the group during their investigation is marked with either True or Untrue. Use this in conjunction with the 'Game of Sending' feature of this section of the adventure. To help keep rolls to a minimum, using the characters' passive Insight score is suggested unless they specifically state they'd like to do an Insight check.

ARXOT RUMORS

d12 RUMOR

- 1 Arxot Karma used to be a pirate. (True).
- 2 They sold their soul for the ability to fight. (Untrue).
- 3 Arxot was in a relationship with their companion, the cleric Nishru. (True)
- 4 She has children that she sent away. (Untrue)
Arxot has taken an interest in the town orphanage (True) in order to train a replacement adventuring party (Untrue).
- 5 They've killed thousands before with a single canon. (Untrue).
- 7 Arxot doesn't participate in any town activities anymore. (True)
- 8 She is responsible for the death of her adventuring group. (Untrue, though Arxot feels it is)
- 9 Arxot frequents the seedier stores of the town (True) in order to extort them for protection from the law (Untrue).
- 10 They collect magic items from their travels and display them. (True).
- 11 Arxot hates people thinking them stupid (Untrue), avoiding interacting with them for the last few years (True).
- 12 She's part of a cult that practices dark magic. (Untrue).

Chance Encounter: A character chosen at random must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone as they run into **Arxot Karma** (see Appendix) when the bustling crowd jostles them together. She is very apologetic and helps them up if knocked over, but otherwise, she continues on her way as if it never happened. When she leaves, she'll have dropped a crumpled letter of sorts that looks very worn and often read. This note is the letter asking for her help that she was too late in answering (see Backstory).

Panicked Search: Later, the characters find Arxot searching for the dropped note and getting angry at any passerby when she's unable to find it. She punches through a nearby wooden sign before sitting against a wall with a blank stare. A successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check is needed to get their attention at all.

Sad Tales: If the letter is returned, Arxot offers to have the party over for dinner. A successful DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check will have Arxot explain why the note is so important to them and that it was the last letter they ever received from her partner.

Second Run In: If the letter isn't returned, Arxot spots the group and asks for their help finding the note, offering a small reward of 20 gp. Should the party help, or at least appear to, they invite them over for dinner as a thank you.

PART 5: THE CULT DESCENDS

When the party arrives for dinner at Manor Karma, they find a band of cultists attacked, and Arxot is fighting for their lives.

MANOR KARMA IN CHAOS

Things seem off as the party approaches the manor: the gate is open and unattended where it should have been manned and patrolled. They find obvious signs of fighting, and as they approach the manor doors, they hear the sounds of combat inside. The characters see cultists attacking Arxot as they fight to buy their staff enough time to escape. Feel free to start dropping hints as early as you'd like to encourage them to hurry to investigate.

Once the characters arrive at the manor, read aloud the following:

Squeaking metal fills the air as the gate swings freely, a slightly sweet tang in the air. It isn't until you are already on the trail that you realize that smell is blood—signs of a scuffle and bleeding lead towards the manor.



ARXOT KARMA OF THE GREY GUARDS

KARMA MANOR

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



GENERAL FEATURES

These general features are prominent throughout Manor Karma unless otherwise noted in the area descriptions.

Ceilings, Floors, and Walls. Ceilings in the hallways and sleeping quarters are 30 feet tall, while those in the ballroom, entranceway, and study are 60 feet tall.

Doors. The internal doors are currently either broken open or thrown open as everyone runs about in chaos.

Lights. The manor is lit by magical wall sconces that hold a floating dancing light orb.

Maze-like. A successful group DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check is needed to navigate the space without getting lost. Getting lost results in a 25% chance of

Arxot Karma being found seriously injured and a 10% chance of finding them dead.

Chaos. The noise of combat makes all Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing done with disadvantage.

Heated Trouble. Cultists have set several rooms on fire, including sleeping quarters on the second floor, that need to be dealt with before they spread to the rest of the manor. Each room has 1d6 + 1 fires, each with an AC of 10 and 20 hit points that need to be extinguished. This can be accomplished by beating them with a rug to smother the flames, dousing them with spells that produce sufficient water or control fire, or other creative ways the characters may come up with. Every 3 rounds that a room isn't being dealt with has an additional fire added. After a room reaches ten fires burning, it has a single round left before it's considered consumed by the fire, destroying everything of value within.

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following descriptions correspond to the keyed locations on the provided map of Manor Karma.

1. ENTRANCE HALL

The polished marble floor is smeared with blood as the sounds of steel on steel ring out. Shouts of feverish rage are the only warnings before cultists charge, ready for battle as they swing for a kill.

Encounter: Greeting Party. In the foyer are eight **cultists** surrounding **Arxot Karma** (see Appendix). A scattering of dead guards and cultists lying on the floor causes the terrain to be considered difficult terrain within a 20-foot radius of where Arxot is fighting.

2. SITTING AREA

There are flung furniture pieces everywhere, and a dead cultist lies draped over the broken remains of a table while staff members cower in the corner in fear.

Hysterical Staff. A DC 14 Persuasion (Charisma) check is needed to calm them down before being convinced to try to get to safety. They tell the party that they saw a group of cultists rush to the kitchens, and several make a break for the stairs.

3. DINING HALL

Scattered food shows a meal interrupted, with broken plates and dinnerware splattered with fresh blood. A chair thrown through a now broken window lets in a rush of air that flaps the tattered curtains.

4. KITCHEN

Crates and furniture have been stacked together to create a makeshift barricade to keep the cultists at bay as the staff throw objects at them. With a shout that would cause a sailor to blush, a large cook flings a pot of boiling soup over the barrier as the cultists try to rush forward.

Encounter: Trapped Staff. Calls for help lead to the kitchen, where three **cult fanatics** surround three manor staff (**commoners**).

Escorting to Safety. Arxot shouts out to clear the way to get the staff to safety. Exiting the kitchen will find five **cult fanatics** blocking the way.

5. BALLROOM

What once was a pristine ballroom of polished floors and mirrored ceilings is now a minefield of falling mirrored tiles and smears of blood. The fire from the second floor crackles through the missing sections.

Falling Tiles. The fire from the second floor is loosening the mirrored ceiling tiles. Every round 1d4 tiles drop, forcing each creature in this room to succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d2 piercing damage per tile. Being knocked prone in this room causes an additional 1d6 slashing damage.

Planned Distraction. As characters approach the stairs, the building rocks, forcing each character to succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity save or be knocked prone. A figure jumps from the stairway as fire flares around them, trying to escape through the smoke and flames past the group. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check will spot them running by. The figure is Ruk Tux after a failed attempt to steal an item from the 3rd floor and trying to get away before they are noticed.

Daring Escape. Ruk Tux attempts to make it to the ballroom, dodging falling ceiling tiles to leap through one of the floor-to-ceiling windows that look out on the gardens. The characters need to knock him unconscious or restrain him as he fights hard to escape, focusing on getting away beyond anything else. Once outside in the darkness, Ruk Tux has advantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to get away or hide.

GM NOTE

When running a chase, remember that both sides can take actions to help impede the other party or increase their own chances of getting away. To do so, they sacrifice the ability to Dash as part of their action. If willing to push themselves, those in the chase can use the Dash action multiple times in a row but run the risk of having to roll for exhaustion levels. Remember that in addition to what both sides may throw at each other, the environment itself will also provide obstacles; feel free to have fun with these as the GM!

6. HOUSE STAFF QUARTERS

Cultists are breaking into and tossing open doors, and several small fires are causing panic in this area. A young staff hand is pulled out by his hair, screaming from a room.

Encounter: Endangered Youth: Two **cult fanatics** are dragging a young staff hand out of their room to kill him. One has a hand gripping his hair, and the other is using a small torch to light the room on fire.

CONCLUSION

If Ruk Tux manages to escape, he stays out of sight in the warehouse and works on a new plan to get what he wants. If the party spotted him, he goes to great lengths to augment his appearance.

Should the group manage to capture Ruk Tux, they find the mark of the cultist on him. The next day another stranger sent by the cult will enter the city to try and finish the job that Ruk Tux set out to do. They will lay low and watch the group before deciding on what to do next.

If Arxot Karma is killed, a massive funeral procession is held the next day in the streets. Everyone is dressed in mourning garb. The mayor gives a speech about the importance of community before announcing that Arxot donated the manor for use as a museum and library for all of Voleubeuge. If Ruk Tux is alive, he will try to become the curator. Otherwise, the new cultist is hired instead.

A living Arxot Karma will retreat into the manor, locking it up tight and refusing to accept visitors. If any of the rooms their former adventuring party stayed in were destroyed, they'll focus entirely on restoring them no matter the costs. Should Nishru's room have been destroyed, they'll lock themselves in it and not let anyone else touch anything as they go through it to see what can be saved.

Continued strange occurrences will keep happening in the town but seem to have reset back to a few rolls on the 'Weird Things (easy to medium)' chart a day. They'll also be spread out far enough away from each other in town to be hard to connect to each other. The item causing it revels in Arxot's pain and is temporarily satisfied with how much it has soaked in.

Word spreads quickly in Voleubeuge about what the group did. They'll find it easier to get what they want in town for the rest of De'chra Kon'sie. With a 30% chance of being offered some small free things when spotted by stall owners or entertainers. The mayor will search them out and offer them a reward of 500 GP for stepping in to help defend against the cultists 'invading this here fine town of ours'.

APPENDIX: NPC'S & MONSTERS

RUK TUX, THE STRANGER

Working on behalf of the fiend Erzith, the cult leader Ruk Tux is interested in what's causing things because he believes it is the key to Erzith's prison being unlocked. The fiend has promised Ruk to provide immense power to them once they are released and no longer bound from granting that power to mortals. Ruk Tux led the cultists who slaughtered the other members of the Gray Guards.

MODIFICATIONS FOR RUK TUX

Ruk uses the **assassin** stat block with these additions:

Darkvision. 80 ft.

Friendly Face. Ruk Tux has advantage on Charisma skill checks and saving throws. If successful, the creature that triggered the save believes Ruk Tux and sees them as a good friend to be protected. This effect lasts until Ruk Tux successfully hits them with an attack or damages them.

One of Those Faces. When Ruk Tux leaves someone's sight, they must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or find they can't remember what Ruk Tux looks like. If Ruk Tux enters their sight again, Ruk can choose if the target recognizes them automatically or if they must repeat the saving throw to do so.

ARXOT KARMA, THE NOBLE

Arxot is a former pirate and adventurer who settled into retirement life. Sweet with low wisdom (meaning a little clueless) but a great fighter. Former Powder Monkey of the Belfast Drury and the Triton Fighter of the Gray Guards, its last surviving member.

ZAUZAU, ARXOT'S FAMILIAR

Arxot Karma saved Zauzau from the mouth of a roc. It's a strange-looking creature that resembles a cross between a rodent and a unicorn, given the spiraled horn poking from their forehead. Zauzau stays by Arxot's side and has become a kind of emotional support familiar now that all of their old adventuring party is gone.

NISHRU

Nishru is the deceased half-orc former lover of Arxot Karma. The cleric kept a room in Arxot's manor and spent every moment they weren't adventuring together among the streets of Voleubeuge. Nishru had plans to propose to Arxot when they returned from the mission that ended in their death; the ring was on them among their things.

ARXOT KARMA

Medium humanoid (human), neutral good

Armor Class 18 (plate armor)

Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +6

Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +5, Perception +6, Survival +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Halfling

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Proficiency Bonus: +4

Back Swing. As a bonus action, Arxot can make an offhanded attack with a handaxe or dagger.

Indomitable (2/day). Arxot rerolls a failed saving throw.

Second Wind (Recharges after a short or long rest). As a bonus action, Arxot can regain 20 hit points.

Spellcasting. Arxot is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). Arxot has the following wizard spells prepared:

- Cantrips (at will): *booming blade, shocking grasp, thunderclap*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Arxot makes three attacks with their greatsword or crossbow.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 80/320, one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Handaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., thrown (20/60), one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., thrown (20/60), one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage.

ZAUZAU

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 3 (1d6)

Speed 40 ft., Burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 20 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages understands Common but cannot speak

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Keen Hearing and Smell. Zauzau has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Calming Presence. Holding Zauzau calms Arxot Karma and gives them advantage on Wisdom saving throws.

Always There. Zauzau can use a bonus action to teleport up to 80 feet to an unoccupied space next to Arxot Karma.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Horn. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

CREDITS

Author: Kayla Bayens

Editing & Proofing: TJ Phoenix

Production & Design: [THE DM TOOL CHEST](#)

Cartography: TJ Phoenix, Dyson Logos

Cover & Interior Illustrations: Shutterstock

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