

The Mad King's Queen

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Introduction

A TTRPG adventure compatible with Dungeons and Dragons 5e adventure for a party of level 4 characters.

The people of Rueven were ruled by a vicious tyrant and his elven queen for decades. When a young ambitious knight and his men assaulted the castle and finished this reign of terror the kingdom rejoiced. Within a week the knight was declared the new king of the city and he promised to always do the right thing by the people of the kingdom.

However not all were pleased. After the last and most brutal attempt on his life his demeanour changed and the stoic knight began to claim that he had a queen, one that had never been seen and one where there was no ceremony. The people thought his moment of madness would pass as he recovered from the assassination attempt but as the years passed it did not. Yet despite his madness he held true his oath and was still a just and gracious king who put the needs of his people first.

Every year he celebrates Celestes, his Queen's, birthday with a feast that the kingdom is invited to partake in, funded by the king's treasury. But There is a rumour that the king's madness has grown and that the assassination attempt years ago has left him unfit to rule. A growing discontent has formed in pockets of the kingdom and there has been a more vicious rumour. That the king isn't mad and that there is a hidden power behind the throne, a darkness that not even the once just knight can wrestle from.

Captain Park's request.

The Frisky Mare



The party had heard about the famous feasts that the city of Rueven have this year and it was just their luck that they had set sights on their wall a few days before it was due to commence. But their presence in the city had been greeted with a few sideways glances and looks from unfamiliar people and before long city guards approached them. "Excuse me, but we aren't exactly used to familiar faces. If you could come with us we have a few questions we would like to ask you before you continue to enjoy the festivities as we prepare for the Queens feast." The guard at the front asked with a pleasant but annoyed look. "I wouldn't normally bother with any of these precautions but it's the guard captain's order to bring anyone who looks capable to him. We find ourselves in need of some assistance."

The guards walked with and talked about the city like they were providing a tour guide, excitedly telling the party of the shops, blacksmiths, bakeries and, at last, the Frisk Mare, the best tavern in the city.

Park looked at the adventurers in front of him and nodded. They will do nicely. "Thank you for agreeing to meet me. I was not sure if adventurers of your stature would be willing to help without any forewarning. I hope that the guards approaching you did not alarm you but we are in need of a group of your capabilities." Park said as he purposefully took off his gauntlet and ran his

hand through his hair. *"The King, my friend, is mad. Ever since he was attacked by a magic user years ago his mind has been addled. I believe that he is either hiding something or something has cursed him and keeps his mind prisoner."* he paused as he wiped his eyes.

"What my request is is twofold. I need you to fulfil the king's request and act as a hidden guard and look for a killer. But I also need you to sneak into his chambers and search for evidence of witchcraft or sorcery. The room will be unguarded but the guard, my men, will be busy guarding the party." Park said, a twinge of guilt at the betrayal of his friend panged his heart. But this was for him and for the kingdom. He had justice in his heart and believed that this was necessary.

"You will be rewarded, once by the king and once by me once you have searched his room. What say you?"

NPC's:

- Captain Park
- Este - The maid

Encounter: Meeting the Maid

Creature: N/A

Map - N/A

Captain Park introduces the party to Este, the maid. She informs them of the plan, how the king suspects that the queen will be assassinated. If questioned about the queen's existence she will say that she fully believes the king. Just because people don't recognise or see the queen doesn't mean that she doesn't exist. She believes she surely would exist as the king states it as such.

Preparation

NPC's:

- The King Joseph Daroan
- Este - The Maid
- Captain Park

Encounter: Preparing for the two missions

Creature: N/A

Map - N/A

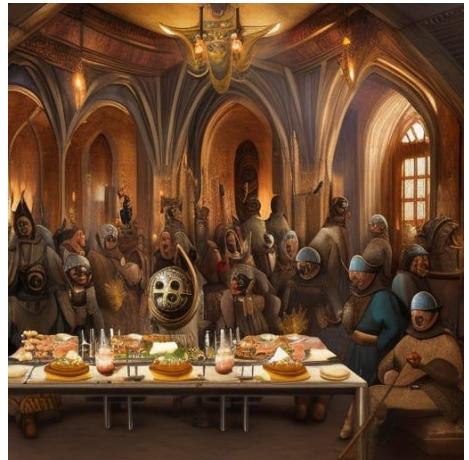
This part of the adventure is up to the party. How they want to prepare, where they want to go, what they want to do. They can go anywhere except the hallway and beyond that leads to the king's chambers - no one except for Captain Park, The maids and staff and the guard are

allowed back there. When the party is ready with disguises, stories or items the next part of the adventure can occur.

The Feast

The city

The city is alive with people visiting for the Queens feast. Hundreds of people fill the streets celebrating and the vendors, merchants and artisans are busy bartering and partying with the rest. The celebrations continue into the castle, the great feasting hall open for all to attend. Row after row of tables with hundreds of chairs and piles of food and drink fill the room.



The cacophony of sound that comes from the dining hall is immense. In fact it is so loud in here that even without the masks muffling the sound of people's voices you need to lean into people to hear their conversations. The King and "Queen", Este, sit at the end of the table in masks as guests come to greet them. However peaceful it looks there are some obvious guards dressed and scattered amongst the guests, almost too obvious. In fact if anyone with a keen eye for these types of things cared to look they would notice that there are many things that are out of place. However despite these things that draw the eye the room is merry. The table is well stocked with food and drink and the company is overall pleasant.

The guards are even lax at their posts to the halls beyond to the bedroom.

NPC's:

- Este
- Captain Park
- King Joseph Daroan

Encounter: Banquet hall

Creature: Party Infiltrators

Map - N/A

The infiltrators will skulk around and, poorly, look at slipping substances into food or drink. They will approach the king and queen and offer them a drink, with a barely passable insight check the party will realise the intent, a glint of steel or something. But Este will notice the look in their eyes and will spill the wine on herself. Then excuse herself with the guard captain, the disguised King to escort her out. The Guard and King will then remove the attempted assassin from the party with an escort. However they will notice a few men sneak out of the party through the now unguarded hall.

The Hallway

The halls to the bedrooms and rooms away form the party thrum with the noise from the feast. However despite the dim and the constant chorus of laughter the sounds of uncaredful footsteps can be heard. Up ahead, a shadow of a human sized creature lies against the wall. Approaching it carefully and drawing a weapon the party approaches the figure, however there is a problem. The figure is a statue with a hat placed carefully on it. The astute in the party hear the faintest scrape from an oiled scabbard as daggers and blades are drawn from concealed places. It seems that the party has found the infiltrators and competitors.

The Kings bedroom

The infiltrators had run this way, past the doors to the kitchens, past the study and a meeting room and towards a large set of double doors. Careful to not leave a mess, as Park had instructed, the unconscious men were secured in a locked room. As they moved to the double doors they swung open and they found themselves staring at those who had escaped as well as a goliath of a man. Large rippling muscles gripped a crossbow in his hand. The darkened weapon was complemented with a black mace that swung from his hip.

After the brief, muffled fight the party find themselves at the second objective. The King's bedroom, apparently unguarded. The king's bedroom is well lit with a table to one side of the wall. A tangle of fine sheets cover a large bed opposite it and a wardrobe lies open with a mixture of men's and women's clothes. Next to the bed is a chest that is mostly covered by a blanket. The desk is well made from dark wood and brass. On top of it lies several papers in various stages of being written as well as an open ink bottle and quill. The rug that covers the ground is comfortable and a quick glance reveals that it would be quite expensive.

**NPC's:**

- Este
- Lark Grundfellow

Encounter: Infiltrators, Competitors, Assassins

Creatures: 1 Infiltrator per party + 2, 1 Hired Muscle and later Lark and 2 infiltrators. Adjust based on the level of the party.

Map - N/A

As the party turns to leave the room with the evidence that Park had asked them to retrieve, they head the door open and close rapidly behind them. Este, the maid that they were introduced to earlier by Park, looked terrified at them as she walked towards them. Looking nervous she wet her lips before checking behind the curtains, having noticed the unconscious bodies in the hallway. "I was being followed. But I thought I could lose the man on the way here but I lost them instead. I believe he was

heading this way but I needed to confirm that he hadn't made it into the king's bedroom.. But you are here.. Why are you in here?"

"Because they too are after what I am. They want to expose the king's madness for what it is. Truth." a man said from the doorway, the latch hadn't even made a sound. "The king does have a queen, Oh yes. A hidden Queen. One that hides in plain sight, one that delights in the infiltrators and competitors that she enticed to her web. A deceiver queen amongst all who poisoned the mind of a man she was sent to kill and instead wed him in secret." the man said as he effortlessly drew out a longsword. "I don't know what you speak of.." the maid Este began to stutter "the king.."

"You don't need to play coy with me Celeste. I am an envoy of the king's sanity. One who saw through your charade and who has waited for this moment. You are the assassin. You are the hidden queen!"

Lore & NPCs

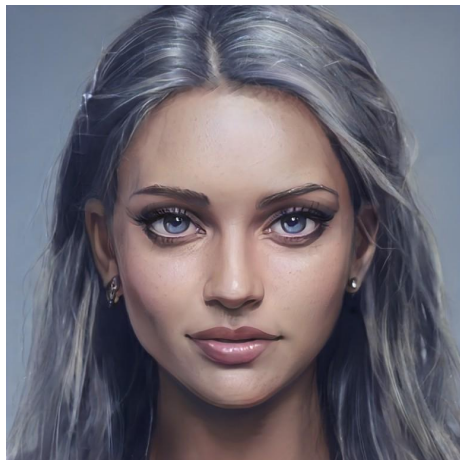
King Joseph Daroan



No one would dispute the kindness that King Daroan has shown the people of the kingdom. Elected king after he defeated the previous king, a tyrant, he fought for the people and is known as a capable warrior. However with the battle for his crown over many attempts at his life had been made and one such one a few years ago left him not quite the same. Since then he started to celebrate his wife's birthday, and refer to her being present in all things.

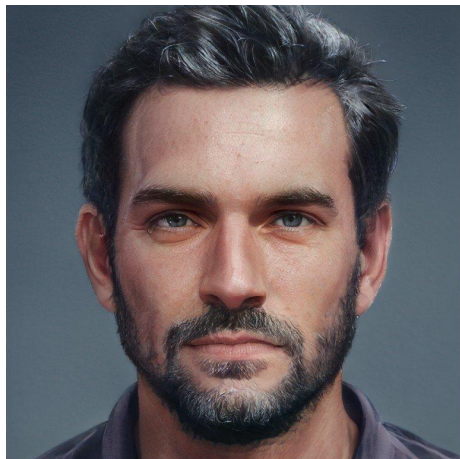
Despite this the people are fiercely loyal to the king.

Maid Este (Queen Celeste)



Este has worked in the castle for some years now and attends the king and the empty bedroom where the queen is meant to reside. Despite looking young Este had elf blood in her ancestry and has seen more winters than many in the castle. Despite her station, the King and Park have grown to trust her and her ability to sense the intentions of people.

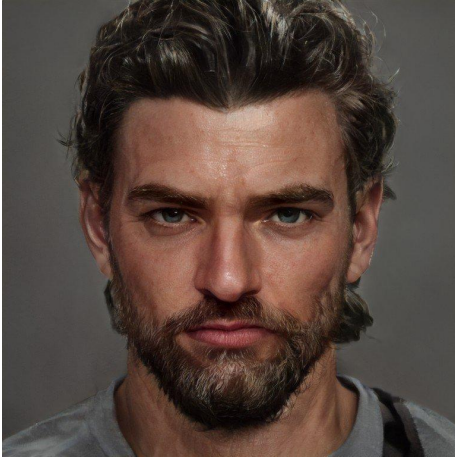
Captain Park



Present when Joseph Daroan defeated the tyrant and principally responsible for the prevention of the majority of the attempts on

his life, Captain Park is the king's oldest friend and ally. Despite the apparent decline in his mental health and sanity Park remains loyal to his friend but has faced his anger a few times when he questions his wife's existence.

Lark Grundfello



Little is known about Lark, however he is one of those attempting to both murder the king and queen as well as steal their greatest treasure during the queen's birthday feast. Lark however would tell you that the King is not what he seems and that he is a freedom fighter coming to rid the kingdom from a ruler that is corrupt and twisted by the foul powers that once tried to kill him.

Announcement of the Party



The king stood in front of his subjects as they gathered in the square beneath him, his worn but strong hands gripping the railing to the balcony he stood at. "My beloved subjects of Rueven," he stopped as the cheering erupted from his subjects. Gesturing for them to stop he continued, "as you know every year I throw a feast for the kingdom to celebrate the birthday of my queen, our queen. This year is no exception! Come, be merry for under the full moon we will feast, be merry and celebrate queen Celeste!" His voice bellowed forth across the people down beneath him. Another chorus of cheering and rejoicing erupted from the crowd.

"My queen has a request, this party will be a masked festival. There will be games, contests of strength, agility, wit and talent. Everyone will be masked and no one will be treated any different – everyone is equal for this day. You will be invited to dine at the same table as I and the queen and we shall enjoy the feast as one people, one kingdom." he stopped as the murmuring began in the crowd. An awkward moment passed before somewhere, someone in the crowd began to clap. Soon the single sound of applause grew to a thunderous racket and his people were celebrating the idea of the festivities this year.

As he stepped back from the applause he walked, alone, past his guards and attendants

“Park, a moment.” he requested as his guard captain walked nearby.

“Yes sire, what can I do for you?” he asked, looking around for the queen out of habit, the one no one had seen.

“I believe that we may have some trouble with this event. The queen's life has been targeted and we intend to catch them in the act. I need you to seek out adventurers. A group that can blend in with the crowd and act as castle staff to apprehend the would-be assassins. We can only trust you in this.” he said as he gripped the shorter man on the shoulder.

“Yes but sire,” he hesitated, apprehensive if his words would bring out his king's rare but famous anger. “Will the queen be present this time? She hasn't been present,” he picked his words carefully “for some time now.”

The king smiled, “she is always present. Don't play games now Park, you know how my queen likes them. You may end up playing her games and not having time for yourself if you keep it up. Now we have a party to prepare and you have adventurers to find.”

“Yes my king,” Park said, his face hiding his sadness at the state of his king's sanity.

The king walked through the other housekeepers and guards, sighing as he rolled his huge, broad and muscular shoulders. “Are you sure of this, my queen?” he asked under his breath. “If you believe someone is after you, are you sure you want to make it easier for them to sneak amongst us?”

“Yes, I am. I do love these games.” his queen's voice came in response, like a gust of wind in his ear.

Monsters

Adventure Encounters

Party Infiltrators

PARTY INFILTRATOR

Medium humanoid (Bandit), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage

The Hired Muscle

THE HIRED MUSCLE

Medium humanoid (Thug), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. The hired muscle has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of its allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The hired muscle makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Lark Grundfellow

LARK GRUNDFELLO - THE BOSS

Medium humanoid (Knight), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave beyond reason. Lark has is immune to being frightened and has advantage on saving throws against being charmed.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Lark makes two melee attacks.

Bastard sword (Long sword). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Question of Honour. Lark can bark out a call of challenge. Lark targets a single enemy that he can see and that can hear him. That creature must make a DC:13 Charisma Saving throw or they fall for his challenge. For 1 minute, Lark gains advantage on saving throws against creatures other than from the one chosen. Furthermore creatures other than the one challenged have disadvantage on attack rolls against Lark.

REACTIONS

Parry. Lark adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, Lark must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.