

# The Vipers Smile - 518SuViSm

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Imgard is the city of a hundred inns, taverns and pubs. Where all that you could want to sample is available and normally a price that the average sampler and purveyor of such goods would not be able to afford. However, there has been an increase in the illicit trade of 'goods' that are not deemed lawful to make within the walls of Imgard of late.

The guards are busy trying to bring down these crime rings while something darker slithers its way into the city. The guard have put out a call for aid to get to the bottom of a series of grisly murders and worse. Their role? Infiltrate the cult, group or gang that has infiltrated Imgard.

**DM:** (Shape changing Yuan-ti have infiltrated the city to get a foothold in this region - and to start to influence the largest market hub on the continent. The party is caught up in the middle of it all as always!)

The party arrived in Imgard weary from their travels, drawn by whispers of an opportunity requiring their particular skills. Whether they slipped into the city unnoticed through the bustling merchant gates or carved a path through the more unsavoury districts, they quickly realized that coin dictated survival here.



The streets, lined with towering stone structures and golden-lit markets, presented both temptation and danger where promises were made just as swiftly as they were broken.

The party sat in the dim glow of the Wonky Mule, drinking watered-down Kicking Mules, their sweetness and spice masking the strange infusion within. The air carried the scent of roasted meat and damp wood, mingling with the sweat of restless patrons. Beneath the low ceiling, conversation swirled, a tangled mess of traders bragging or brooding over recent ventures, mercenaries negotiating their next job, and thieves murmuring about darker dealings. Over the last two days, familiar figures had emerged: an old man in the corner, endlessly chewing tobacco as he spun tales of lost glory, and the bartender twins, tall and scarred, balancing mugs and muscle in equal measure.

Near the old man's perch, a finely dressed stranger drank among dubious company, shuffling cards in a game rigged for ruin. The off-key strains of a bard's melody cut through the chatter just as a cloaked figure stumbled near the party's table, catching themselves on the worn wood. With a slurred apology, they tossed the party a single coin before shambling upstairs; exactly the sign they had been waiting for. As the bard's song drew to a close, the party rose from their seats, following their supposed employer into the shadows above, where secrecy held greater weight than timeliness.

**DM:** (The party makes it to the tavern to meet with their contact. They had been told that once the contact had identified them they would make contact with the party to ensure that the information they held was safe. Refer to **518MolnIm**)



The party climbed the loudest stairs they had ever encountered, their ascent echoing through the upper floor. As they reached the hall lined with rented rooms, their search for a sign led them to a glinting object beneath one of the doors. A closer look revealed another of the peculiar coins left at their table, prompting them to knock.

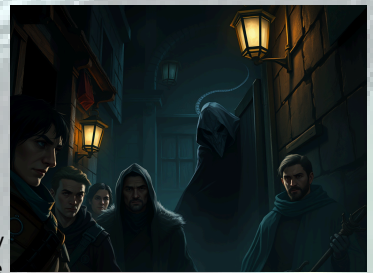
When the door swung open, they stepped inside, settling around a table as the old man within hurried to shut the curtains and lock the doors. His hunched posture straightened, shedding the guise of a ragged storyteller, under the lantern light, his weathered face smoothed, his presence shifting from an aged pauper to something far sharper. The deliberate disarray of his greying hair and the streaked beard framing his mouth had concealed piercing blue eyes brimming with intelligence.

Introducing himself as Lace, a member of Imgard's Harpers, he explained the grim situation. The individuals they had tracked as suspects behind the

city's disappearances had been found dead, yet, disturbingly, their likenesses continued to be spotted around the city and beyond. The Harpers, compromised by their own notoriety, needed outsiders; neutral eyes, to uncover the truth. The party, unknown and expendable to the shadows of Imgard, would serve as both bait and hunters. As they departed, a moment of unease struck when they locked eyes with a pale-faced figure descending the stairs though none had heard him approach. The aged wooden steps groaned beneath even their lightest step, but the stranger's passage had been silent. Whatever mystery Lace had set them upon, it was already watching.

**DM:** (One of the infiltrators had already caught up with them. They see the suspect leave almost deliberately letting the party see them doing so - its definitely a trap. Refer to **518TuDaLa**)

The party pursued their target through the dimly lit streets, their only guide the flickering glow of scattered lamplight. Though the district was rough and lawless, the man they followed moved with singular purpose, slipping between shadows with practiced ease. As they closed the distance, he abruptly ducked into a doorway, scanning the



street for signs of pursuit before vanishing inside. The party, equally swift, pressed into cover and listened. A voice from within spoke in hushed tones, confirming the arrival of fresh recruits to replace those who had outlived their usefulness. Yet, as the words continued, the speaker's tone shifted, masculinity dissolving into something unnatural, lisping and feminine.

Peering through a grimy window, the party stifled their shock as the man's face melted, features slipping away to reveal the unmistakable serpentine visage of a Yuan-ti. A chill ran through them as realization settled—this was no ordinary infiltration. Stepping back in uneasy retreat, they froze as two imposing figures emerged from the shadows on either side of the building, their hulking forms blocking any escape. From within, the door creaked open, revealing the transformed infiltrator. Conversation or combat, it seemed there was no turning back now.

**DM:** (Refer to **518Welnid**, this is a low to moderate challenge fight with two infiltrators and two guards. Refer to **518FrYuln** and **518SaYuSc**)

The Yuan-ti had no intention of negotiating, seeking instead to kill the party and take their identities to further their infiltration. However, they had vastly underestimated their opponents, and the battle was swift and decisive. With the area secured and no witnesses to their clash, the party scoured the room, uncovering a hidden cache of parchment detailing the infiltration efforts and who was being targeted, how deep the deception ran, and most crucially, a scheduled gathering of infiltrators in the coming few nights time. Armed with this revelation and the beginnings of a plan, they discreetly disposed of the bodies and prepared for the next stage of their mission.

As the party moved into the Imgard Sanctum, a large garden created to pay respect to the heroes that had given their life in the defense of Imgard, they became increasingly aware that eyes were already on them. However when those guarding the garden greeted them they greeted them in a phrase that was more hiss than common tongue and let them through. The sheer number of infiltrators gathered beneath the fountain's glow made it clear how deeply Imgard had been compromised. Dozens of figures spoke in practiced ease, their casual chatter of family, business, and weather quickly revealing itself as coded exchanges. The party, wary of the bulkier Yuan-ti lurking unseen among the trees, kept their distance until they were approached. As questions flowed and answers were given, an unsettling awareness crept in. Something about this encounter felt off, and they could feel the weight of unseen eyes upon them

**DM:**(Refer to the map on the next page as well as **518ThlmSa**. The encounter should be challenging to very challenging with the assumption that the party will need to have a plan in place before entering the Sanctum. The infiltrators will use range where possible unless many of them can attack the same exposed party member at once relying on their poison, skills and numbers rather than power. Refer to **518FrYuln** and **518SaYuSc**)

