

PRISMA / ADVENTURE

The Silk Web

A magitech-noir heist in Vordanne: forbidden silk, a masked auction and the cost of accepting help.



Kirill Sakhin

Original English manuscript with AI-assisted editorial preparation and translation of the Russian GM-name appendix.

Complete English development reading edition. Contains GM information and spoilers.

Contents

Credits	3
About the Setting - Prisma	3
Chapter I: Vordanne at a Glance	3
Chapter II: Cast of the Web	12
Chapter III: Adventure Flow	18
Chapter IV: Enemies	29
Chapter V: Rewards & Consequences	35
Appendix I: DM Tools	40
Back-cover description	43
Original sourcebook map	44

A Prisma adventure for a 5th-level party.

Unravel the threads of corruption in a city that sells salvation by the yard.

Credits

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Made With

The Homebrewery

[Homebrewery.Naturalcrit.com](https://homebrewery.naturalcrit.com)

About the Setting - Prisma

The **Prisma** world sits at the dawn of an industrial-magical revolution. Mana is refined into crystals, fueling shields, engines, weapons-and appetites. Nations that mastered magitech surge ahead, while others cling to old gods. In crowded capitals like **Vordanne**, gilded salons overlook alleys where syndicates barter in miracles and monsters. The cost of progress is measured in secrets, and the wrong truth can topple a city.

Chapter I: Vordanne at a Glance

Vordanne, the Independent City-State upon the southern shore of the *Azure Sea*, is Prisma's crossroads - a powder keg poised between empires.

Its marble spires and smokestacks gleam over labyrinthine alleys where magitech smoke mingles with incense, and every street corner carries both opportunity and betrayal.

Once a shining mercantile republic, Vordanne is now a fractured oligarchy divided by its neighbors' ambitions. Azhora's merchant princes, Varnhavia's spies, and Imperial agents wage their silent wars here through coin, information, and blood.

Behind the facade of civility, the city teeters on the edge of collapse - its independence preserved only because no one dares let the others win.

Government and Law

The **Guided Senate** governs Vordanne in name alone: a corrupt, three-faction parliament perpetually deadlocked.

- *Pro-Varnhavia Bloc* - traditionalist nobles nostalgic for the Empire's old order.
- *Pro-Azhora Bloc* - industrialists and financiers demanding progress at any cost.
- *Neutral Bloc* - mercenary lords and criminal backers who profit from chaos.

Real order is maintained by the **Bronze Wardens**, an elite private security force loyal to contracts, not conscience.

The official **City Watch** exists mostly for paperwork and bribes.

Underworld

Vordanne's shadow economy is ruled by the **Crimson Sun Syndicate** - smugglers, extortionists, and auctioneers of forbidden magitech.

Rival gangs like the **Gutter Rats** and **Veiled Fangs** skulk beneath them, while the elusive **Black Veil** manipulates the city's destiny from the unseen heights above.

Mana-dust smuggling, Withered trafficking, and illegal auctions keep the city's veins full of gold and corruption.

Faith in Vordanne

Though commerce and corruption rule the streets, faith in Vordanne still flickers between factories and salons. Temples stand as both sanctuaries and businesses, balancing devotion with pragmatism. Most citizens worship quietly, seeking blessings for trade, travel, or survival rather than salvation.

Religion is tolerated only so long as it serves profit, art, or order.

Major Temples

Temple	Deity	Domains	Description	District
Temple of Merkandros	Commerce & Knowledge	Trickery, Knowledge, Forge	Merchants seek blessings before major contracts; vault-rumors and ledgers of power.	Bazaar District
Sanctuary of Amarethiel	Compassion & Mercy	Life, Peace	Refuge for the poor and sick; mercy amid magitech fallout.	Old City
Chapel of Aqueor	Travel & Water	Tempest, Nature	Sailors' lanterns and storm-prayers at the docks.	Harbor District

Special & Forgotten Sites

Site	Patron / Aspect	Description	District / Notes
Shrine of the Silent Weave	Selenea - Balance, Duality, Twilight	Former Moonblade sanctuary turned radical stronghold; restoring it could mend planar guardianship.	Old City
Cistern of Lost Gods (rumored)	Forgotten / Banned Deities	Subterranean ruin whispered to shelter Withered cult work and first-age relics.	Beneath the Old City; sealed aqueduct access

Minor Churches

Chapel / Shrine	Deity	Domains	Description	District
Chapel of Aurion	Justice, Honor, War	War, Order	Oath banners near barracks; duelists and officers gather here.	Senate District
Chapel of Solara	Light, Order, Fire	Light, Order	Marble sanctuary for magistrates; "burn away deceit."	Senate District
Garden Shrine of Verdana	Nature & Growth	Nature, Life	Ivy-walled refuge; herbalists tend rare, cleansing plants.	Old City
Hall of Meliora	Inspiration & Art	Light, Trickery, Charm	Artists' guild and salon; beauty, intrigue, and masks.	Old City
Chapel of Valar	Forge & Craft	Forge, Knowledge	Anvil altar glows with embedded mana crystal; artisans' rites.	Industrial Quarter
Chapel of Judicar	Order, Death, Knowledge	Order, Grave	Funerary rites and necromantic wards for the catacombs.	Cemetery Quarter

DM Notes

- **Faith as Facade:** incense masks bribery; donations circle back to the Senate.
- **Corrupted Sanctity:** priests of Solara/Aurion arbitrate law; Judicar's clergy police the dead.
- **Hidden Hope:** amid greed, a few true believers still kindle light.

Temples by District

District	Sites
Harbor	Chapel of Aqueor
Senate	Chapel of Aurion; Chapel of Solara
Bazaar	Temple of Merkandros
Industrial Quarter	Chapel of Valar
Old City	Sanctuary of Amarethiel; Hall of Meliora; Garden Shrine of Verdana; Shrine of the Silent Weave
Cemetery Quarter	Chapel of Judicar

Economy & Industry - Vordanne

Vordanne's prosperity is built on **sanction-dodging trade**, **mana-dust refining**, **mercenary labor**, and the **sale of secrets** - a tenuous balance of gilded innovation and industrial rot. The Bazaar's courts arbitrate fortunes by day while syndicates move contraband by night.

Core Sectors

Sector	What It Is	Who Controls It	Notes
Trade & Smuggling	Legal shipping + black routes exploiting sanctions between Azhora, Varnhavia, and the Empire	Merchant guilds, Crimson Sun at the docks	The Coinmaster's Court arbitrates disputes; bribes oil every gear.
Mana-Dust Refining	Hazardous refining just outside the city; feeds all magitech	Private refineries, Assembly-aligned engineers, criminal middlemen	Drives Factory Row and depot traffic; Withered outbreaks are a known risk.
Magitech Production	Devices, components, arcane presses, crystal housings	Lucent Observatory , artisan guilds, contract labs	R&D hub; espionage magnet; frequent accidents and sabotage.
Mercenary Labor	Security, "peacekeeping," and industrial strikebreaking	Bronze Wardens , private militias	Order is bought, not sworn; Senate relies on contracts, not law.
Information Brokering	Ledgers, blackmail, coded textiles, auction intel	Spies, guild factors, salon circles	"Secrets" rival silk in value; the city's truest currency.

Why Doesn't Vordanne Collapse?

Despite corruption, the city endures because **no great power can let another claim it**; stalemate money keeps ships moving, presses running, and courts busy. That tension is the true engine of Vordanne's industry.

Industrial Geography

District	Economic Spine	Highlights
Harbor	Chokepoint for imports/contraband	Dockmaster's Guildhall, Sailor's Market; Crimson Sun dominance.
Bazaar	Arbitration & high trade	Temple of Merkandros , Silk Bazaar , Coinmaster's Court .
Industrial Quarter	Production & storage	Lucent Observatory , Factory Row , mana-crystal depots.
Old City	Culture meets commerce	Hall of Meliora salons mask espionage deals.

Supply Chains (From Dust to Device)

- 1 **Extraction & Dust** -> rural refineries outside Vordanne; smugglers and cartels move sacks under cover.
- 2 **Purification & Presses** -> dust purified and compressed into **mana crystals** in licensed (and unlicensed) workshops.
- 3 **Fabrication** -> crystals socketed into housings; devices assembled across **Factory Row** and guild shops.
- 4 **Distribution** -> finished magitech auctioned privately or routed through guild contracts; disputes settled at **Coinmaster's Court**.

Major Players (Economic)

Actor	Levers of Power	Adventure Use
Merchant Guilds	Shipping licenses, storage yards, auditors	Paper trails & ledger heists.
Crimson Sun Syndicate	Docks, auctions, "settlements"	Black-market lots, debt-oath contracts.
Bronze Wardens	Contracted security & strikebreaking	Hirelings or obstacles; evidence custodians.
Lucent Observatory	Prototypes, patents, recruitment	Sabotage, theft, or rescue operations.
Coinmaster's Court	Arbitration, liens, asset freezes	Social/intrigue set pieces; records & writs.

Risks & External Pressures

- **Sanctions & Proxy Trade:** Azhora vs. Varnhavia routes force Vordanne to profit in the gray - and bleed for it when crackdowns come.
- **Industrial Accidents:** Overclocked presses, depot leaks, and "blue fog" incidents trigger quarantines (and Withered rumors).
- **Espionage War:** Guild agents, imperial spies, and salon couriers compete to steal formulas and ledgers.

City Defenses

Vordanne's defenses were once the pride of the southern Azure coast. Now they are a patchwork of neglected bastions, corrupt garrisons, and private militias whose loyalty is measured in coin, not creed.

Powerful factions buy protection, while the Senate argues over whose taxes will fund the next repair that never comes.

Major Defensive Structures

Structure	Description	Status / Control
Iron Ring Wall	Ancient outer wall encircling Vordanne, built after the First Mana War.	Crumbling; patched by private militias and Senate contracts.
Harbor Fortresses	Coastal bastions guarding the Azure Sea and controlling trade entry.	Well-armed, but riddled with bribery and espionage.
Skyhook Tower	Magitech spire capable of generating a citywide mana shield.	Often inactive due to siphoned fuel and corrupt oversight.
Private Militias	Hired enforcers of noble families and guilds.	Outnumber official guards; discipline varies wildly.
Bronze Wardens	Professional mercenaries under Senate charter.	Loyal only to gold; the Senate's final insurance policy.

Districts of Vordanne

Vordanne is divided into seven main districts, each reflecting a fragment of the city's fractured soul.

Together they form a microcosm of Elyxion's conflicts - progress versus decay, order versus ambition.

Harbor District (Northeast)

The city's gateway to the Azure Sea - a nest of traders, spies, and smugglers.

Functions: trade, shipping, contraband, foreign agents.

Key Sites: Chapel of Aqueor, Harbor Fortresses, Sailor's Market, Dockmaster's Guildhall, *Crimson Petal*.

Factions: Crimson Sun, dockworker gangs, corrupt officials.

Themes: Contraband, bribery, and international intrigue.

Senate District (Northwest)

Where laws are written, sold, and ignored.

Functions: governance, diplomacy, noble estates.

Key Sites: Guilded Senate Hall, Skyhook Tower, Chapels of Solara & Aurion, Senators' Gardens.

Factions: Pro-Varnhavia and Pro-Azhora blocs, foreign spies.

Themes: Corruption, backroom deals, espionage.

Bazaar District (Center)

The heart of trade and deceit.

Functions: commerce, arbitration, high society.

Key Sites: Temple of Merkandros, Silk Bazaar, Coinmaster's Court, Velvet Parlor.

Factions: Merchant guilds, Black Veil informants, Crimson Sun financiers.

Themes: Commerce, manipulation, ambition.

Industrial Quarter (West)

The city's engine - and its ticking bomb.

Functions: production, magitech refinement, research.

Key Sites: Lucent Observatory, Chapel of Valar, Factory Row, Mana-Crystal Depots.

Factions: Manifold Assembly agents, labor unions, Halcyon saboteurs.

Themes: Innovation, exploitation, Withered outbreaks.

Old City (South)

The soul of the city - faded, fractured, and holy.

Functions: faith, archives, secrets.

Key Sites: Sanctuary of Amarethiel, Hall of Meliora, Shrine of the Silent Weave, Garden Shrine of Verdana, entrance to the Cistern of Lost Gods.

Factions: Fractured Moonblades, radical priests.

Themes: Restoration, redemption, forbidden magic.

Slums (East)

Where survival is a profession and mercy a myth.

Functions: crime, labor, bloodsports.

Key Sites: Broken Coin Tavern, Cinder Arena, Crimson Sun Warrens.

Factions: Crimson Sun, Gutter Rats, Veiled Fangs.

Themes: Brutality, desperation, survival.

Cemetery Quarter (Far East)

The quietest - and most dangerous - part of the city.

Functions: funerary rites, ossuaries, necromancy.

Key Sites: Chapel of Judicar, Catacombs of the First War, Ossuary of Quiet Ashes.

Factions: Necromancers, gravekeepers, smugglers.

Themes: Death, memory, desecration.

Summary Table

District	Function	Tone
Harbor	Trade & smuggling	Contraband & corruption
Senate	Politics & law	Espionage & hypocrisy
Bazaar	Commerce & gossip	Greed & ambition
Industrial	Magitech & labor	Danger & progress
Old City	Faith & rebellion	Ruin & redemption
Slums	Crime & poverty	Violence & survival
Cemetery	Death & secrecy	Silence & decay

Chapter II: Cast of the Web

This chapter presents the adventure's summary as well as principal figures and factions entangled in *The Silk Web* affair.

Adventure Summary (for the DM)

The **Silk Web** is a magitech-noir heist for a *5th-level party*, set in the opulent yet rotting city of *Vordanne* - the beating heart of the Prisma setting.

A shipment of *Imperial silk*, outlawed after the recent war, has resurfaced in Vordanne's underworld. Within its shimmering weave lies a *hidden cipher* - a secret powerful enough to reshape alliances, ruin noble houses, and draw the attention of ancient forces.

The adventurers are hired by **Lord Cedric Corvalis**, a fallen aristocrat seeking redemption through commerce, to recover the stolen silk. But they soon find themselves caught between three powers:

- the **Crimson Sun**, a gilded criminal syndicate hosting an underground auction,
- the **Black Veil**, an ageless faction orchestrating world events for reasons unknown, and
- Corvalis himself, whose motives may be more dangerous than any of them.

Through salons, docks, and shadowed courts, the party will decide whether to serve gold, ideals - or destiny itself.

Tone: Intrigue > Combat • Masks, mirrors, and moral ambiguity.

Playtime: 1-2 sessions • Level 5 • D&D 2024.

Adventure Flow Map

Scene	Title	Focus	Type
I	Corvalis' Briefing	Introduction, quest hook, exposition	Roleplay
II	The Docks Investigation	Leads, clues, forged manifest	Investigation
III	Ambush at Pier 6B	Combat, evidence, moral tension	Combat / Inquiry
IV	The Hall of Meliora	Meeting Mirella (Veyra Anshiel)	Social Intrigue
V	The Auction	Heist, social play, climax	Heist / Hybrid
VI	The Unraveling	Aftermath, faction choices, epilogue	Resolution

Key Characters

Each NPC carries their own secrets, motivations, and potential alliances. How the party deals with them determines who survives - and who controls the truth.

Key Factions

Faction	Description	Motivation
House Corvalis	Once an esteemed noble house, now desperate and drowning in debt. Cedric Corvalis leads it alone after his family's fall from grace.	Restore status through the silk deal; manipulate both Azhora and the Empire for personal gain.
The Crimson Sun Syndicate	Vordanne's most powerful criminal network, controlling docks, contraband, and smuggling.	Profit from the auction of the stolen silk and punish betrayal.
The Black Veil	A hidden and ancient faction operating behind the curtain of history. Its motives are unknown, its members faceless.	Manipulate world events through the cipher's distribution.
Azhora's Merchant Princes	Influential trade magnates seeking to undermine Imperial monopolies.	Acquire the silk - and the secrets within - to weaken the Empire's power.
Varnhavian Spies	Agents of the militaristic empire to the east.	Monitor Azhora's interference, intercept any data that threatens Imperial dominance.
The Empire of Vael'Theris	Former superpower of Elyxion, now hiding behind diplomacy.	Allowed the cipher's theft intentionally, using it to mislead enemies.

Lord Cedric Corvalis

Fallen noble and desperate visionary.

Race / Gender: Human Male

Alignment: Lawful Neutral (teetering toward desperate self-interest)

Role: Client and manipulator

Base of Operations: Corvalis Manor (Senate District)

Appearance: Late 40s, gaunt but dignified, with streaks of silver in his hair and a fine coat that has seen better days.

Personality: Proud, persuasive, reckless with money but never with reputation.

Motivation: Recover the stolen silk - not for wealth, but for the cipher it conceals. He plans to sell it to an Azhoran trade prince for leverage over the Empire.

Secrets:

- Knows about the cipher's existence but not that it's fake.
- Will betray the party if necessary to secure it.
- Maintains quiet contact with Varnhavian agents.

Edric Sallow

The dead smuggler whose greed began the web.

Race / Gender: Human Male

Alignment: Chaotic Neutral

Role: Catalyst (found dead early in the adventure)

Base of Operations: Abandoned warehouse near Harbor District

Appearance: Found dead, throat slit. Once a sharp-dressed smuggler.

Personality: Cunning, ambitious, careless with loyalties.

Motivation: Stole the silk from the Crimson Sun to sell it to Mirella.

Secrets:

- Left notes proving the harbor master's corruption.
- Knew nothing about the cipher.

Jareth “Rat” Morn

Petty thief, survivor, reluctant informant.

Race / Gender: Human Male

Alignment: Neutral

Role: Informant, comic relief, potential ally

Base of Operations: Crimson Petal brothel (Harbor District)

Appearance: Small, wiry man with darting eyes and missing teeth.

Personality: Cowardly but street-smart.

Motivation: Stay alive and maybe get rich doing it.

Mirella Dalvere (Vera Albers)

Information broker, phantom of the Black Veil.

Race / Gender: Unknown (appears as human female)

Alignment: True Neutral

Role: Secret antagonist and Black Veil agent

Base of Operations: Hall of Meliora (Old City)

Appearance: Impossible to recall - every witness describes her differently. She wears gloves of black silk and a silver pendant shaped like a tear.

Personality: Elegant, analytical, and disarmingly calm.

Abilities: Subtle enchantment that clouds memory; capable of altering small details in perception.

Motivation: Recover the cipher - not for its content, but to ensure it reaches a specific faction at the right moment.

Secrets:

- The *real* Mirella Dalvere was murdered weeks ago.
- The current Mirella is an agent of the Black Veil using her name.
- Knows the cipher is a fake but will not reveal it.

Kahl Ren

Crimson Sun lieutenant and auction overseer.

Race / Gender: Half-Orc Male

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Role: Auctioneer / syndicate arbiter

Base of Operations: Coinmaster's Court (Bazaar District)

Appearance: Broad-shouldered, greying tusks, golden Crimson Sun ring; eyes glow faintly when channeling telepathy.

Personality: Cold, methodical, treats auctions as judicial proceedings.

Abilities:

- Maintains telepathic network linking all bidder plaques.
- Reads surface thoughts to prevent cheating.
- Uses *Calm Emotions* and ward sigils to control crowds.

Motivation:

- Preserve the auction's order and profit.
- Rise within the Crimson Sun hierarchy.
- Secretly keeps ledgers of noble buyers for blackmail.

Secrets:

- Ordered Edric Sallow's execution.
- Records name every corrupt senator tied to the Sun.

Rival Bidders (choose 3-5 to spotlight at the auction)

Mask / Tell	Who	Goal	Notes
Black Ledger	Corvalis Proxy	Retrieve silk for Cedric's Azhoran play	Confident; avoids eye contact with PCs
Silver Serpent	Azhora Envoy	Outbid Imperial interests	Sharp questions about provenance
Harlequin	Imperial Buyer	Quietly repatriate the bolt	Overpays to avoid scandal
Coin Visage	Guild Factor Sel Verdan	Flip for profit, resell later	Chatty; trades gossip for favors
Sun-Lacquer	Crimson Sun Plant	Inflate bids & watch the room	Reports directly to Kahl Ren

The Crimson Sun Syndicate

Symbol: Red sunburst lacquer.

Methods: Black auctions, debt-oath contracts, intimidation masked as arbitration.

Seat of Power: The **Vault of Arbitration** beneath the Coinmaster's Court.

Adventure Role: Hosts the auction; mid-arc antagonists who respond to stealth, coin, or blood.

The Black Veil

Symbol: Silver tear in a black circle.

Nature: Ancient; few; goal unclear - balance, prevention, or something darker.

Known Agent: *Mirella Dalvere* (alias).

Adventure Role: Offers the party an alternative path; rewards discretion and difficult choices.

Supporting NPCs

Name	Role	Where Found	Why They Matter
Varlen Doss	Harbor Master (corrupt)	Harbor Office	Holds/forges manifests; points to Pier 6B
Bren Keller	Dock Inspector (nervous)	Harbor	Nudges PCs to Doss; saw the "transfer"
Bronze Warden Agent	Party contact	City-side	Keeps PCs "neutral"; reports upstream
Hall of Meliora Curator	Social gatekeeper	Old City	Smooths the Scene IV meeting with Mirella

DM Guidance (using this chapter at the table)

- **NPCs as Nodes:** Every favor to one is a slight to another - track "who feels owed."
- **Truth in Layers:** Cedric hides goals; Mirella reveals selectively; Kahl enforces order until he doesn't.
- **Foreshadow the Auction:** Seed plaques, masks, and whispered lots early so Scene V feels inevitable.
- **Veil's Shadow Token: Only** from Mirella if the party completes her ask; never Crimson Sun loot.

Chapter III: Adventure Flow

This chapter presents the **scene-by-scene flow** for *The Silk Web*: hooks, read-aloud, key checks, outcomes, and transitions. Use **Noise** to modulate security and suspicion across scenes.

Scene Index I. Corvalis' Offer -> II. Docks & Dead Man -> III. Pier 6B Ambush -> IV. The Web of Mirella -> V. The Crimson Sun Auction -> VI. Settlement & Fallout.

SCENE I - Corvalis' Offer (Senate District)

Tone: Polite desperation, gilded poverty

Goal: Learn about the *stolen imperial silk* and accept the job. PCs may sense Cedric cares more about the silk's **hidden cipher** than the silk itself.

Read-Aloud (short)

Candlelight throws long shadows across threadbare velvet. Lord Cedric Corvalis stands ramrod straight in a coat that remembers better years. "You came recommended," he says. "The silk is everything. Its return... means restoration."

Key Beats & Checks

- **Persuasion 13** (advance payment / letter of passage).
- **Insight 14** (he's hiding a secondary goal).
- **Investigation 12** (ledgers hint at Azhoran ties; timeline is tight).
- Success: lead to **Dock 17** and a **harbor office trail**. Failure: same lead, but no letter (-advantage later at the gate).
- **Noise:** none yet.

SCENE II - Docks & Dead Man (Harbor District)

Tone: Fog, salt, and paper lies

Goal: Discover **Edric Sallow** is dead, trace the shipment to **Pier 6B**, and sense that the Crimson Sun already owns the prize.

Areas

- 1 **Sallow's Warehouse** - scorched, half-looted office; faint ticking from deeper in the dark.
- 2 **Harbor Office** - paper maze run by **Varlen Doss** and clerk **Bren Keller**.
- 3 **Wharfside Witness** - *Yarin*, rope-keeper with ale-breath memory.

Clues & Checks

Check	DC	Result
Perception	12	Hear soft <i>mechanical ticking</i> from the storeroom (foreshadows mana-harvest tech).
Investigation	13	Spot a bootprint in mana-soot ; soot trail ends near the canal stairs.
Arcana	14	Identify the soot as residue from a centrifuge core -equipment used by magitech refiners.
Investigation	13	Recover burned Harbor Log naming <i>Dock 17</i> ; signature "V. Doss".
Perception	13	Find wax flake stamped with a crimson sunburst.
Persuasion / Bribe / Intimidation (Yarin)	13	Yarin recalls "masked heavies with that sun-mark unloading a covered crate." Adds confirmation of Sun link.

Harbor Office (Varlen Doss & Bren Keller)

- **Approach:** Polite talk (Persuasion 14) or bribe (10 gp) -> partial manifests.
- **Press too hard:** Doss panics and **lights the file stack**; **Dex save 13** or lose the **violet-sealed manifest** (Noise +1 if the fire spreads).
- **Mirella Foreshadow:** anyone noticing the wax seal (Investigation 12) sees a **violet sigil "M D"** - Doss mutters, "the lady with the violet seal pays better."
- **Alternate path:** Keller can be coerced (Intimidation 13) into revealing Dock 17 -> Pier 6B.

Clue Summary

- *Warehouse:* Sun wax + soot = Crimson Sun + magitech connection.
- *Office:* Violet-seal manifest = **Mirella** breadcrumb.
- *Witness:* Confirms Suns handled the transfer.
- Combined success (≥ 3 major clues) grants **advantage on recognizing Sun tactics** in Scene III.

Noise Tracking

Action	Noise
Quiet investigation	0
Scuffle / bribe loudly	+1
Fire spreads or guards called	+2

Transition -> Scene III

The trail ends at a charred ledger line: **“6B - Final Transfer Complete.”**

Outside, Yarin squints through the fog. “Pier Six-Bee? Aye... no one comes back from there after dark.”

SCENE III - Pier 6B Ambush (Harbor Canals)

Tone: Retribution in the rain

Goal: Survive or defuse the **Crimson Sun** trap; secure proof the **Suns already hold the silk** and plan to auction it.

Who’s Here

- **Foreman Karr** (Sun enforcer, “make it hurt”).
- **Lessa “The Ink” Marin** (Sun ritual scribe, burns records).
- 4-6 Sun thugs; one lookout.

Approach & DCs

- **Stealth 14** to approach unseen; **Perception 13** to spot kill-zone angles.
- Parley setup (before blades): **Deception 15** (pose as buyers), **Intimidation 14** (show muscle), or **Persuasion 15** (buy time).
- Fight triggers if any check fails or PCs push.

Clues on Site (on success or after combat)

- **Half-Cipher A** (Sallow fragment) hidden in a belt seam.
- **Burned Letter & Route Map** (names **Mirella Dalvere**; points **Bazaar tunnels -> Hall of Meliora**).

Outcomes & Noise

Resolution	Consequence
Peaceful exit	Noise 0 ; a Sun contact may “let them walk once.”
Quick, quiet fight	Noise +1 ; Suns note the loss, no citywide hunt.
Loud brawl / fires	Noise +2 ; Watch alert pings later.
Capture Karr	Confirms Suns possess the silk ; it will be sold at auction.

SCENE IV - The Web of Mirella (Hall of Meliora, Old City)

Tone: Seductive intrigue, fate-talk, and velvet threats

Goal: Choose whether to **ally** with *Mirella* (Black Veil), who offers covert entry to the auction - and points the party at *Corvalis’ true goal: the cipher*.

Read-Aloud (opening)

Soft music, varnish, and candle-gilded statues watch you enter. The woman in violet turns as if she’s been waiting since time began. “You’ve come far from Dustmere,” she says. “And Lord Corvalis is already regretting the lies he fed you.”

Social Skill Matrix (choose 1-2 per PC)

Skill	DC	Effect
Insight	15	She’s truthful about Corvalis’ greed; conceals her own endgame.
Persuasion	14	Gains forged invitations and Veil-blessed token (adv. on Stealth & Deception at the auction).
Deception	--	Automatically fails: she knows where the cipher is.
Arcana	16	Sense luck/memory “ripples” around her - reality bending.

Choices & Consequences

- **Accept her deal:** Access to Scene V + Veil token; moral debt later.
- **Pretend to accept:** Double-agent setup; both Cedric & Mirella expect the cipher.
- **Reject / Threaten:** She smiles, vanishes; **Noise +2**.
- **Attack:** Illusions shatter; Veil repercussions later.

Transition A black-glass token warms in your pocket. Tomorrow night, beneath the Trade Hall, the threads will knot again.

SCENE V - The Crimson Sun Auction (Vault of Arbitration)

Tone: Gilded corruption; quiet voices in curtained booths

Goal: Acquire or steal the imperial silk (Lot VII) with the **cipher in the hem**.

Location: Sub-basement beneath the **Coinmaster's Court**; amphitheatre of marble & bronze with a **brass balance**; masks mandatory; **telepathic auctioneer** (Magister **Kahl Ren**).

Arrival Read-Aloud (condensed):

*Night lacquer glints on the Court's rear gate. Masked guests drift through a judge's private door. An elevator hum, then amber light: velvet booths, a gleaming balance, and a gold-masked figure inclining his head. "Welcome to Arbitration," a voice says **inside your mind**.*

Location Structure (quick map)

- **A1** Judge's Lift (token check, 2 Suns).
- **A2** Ten curtained booths (sound-cage sigils).
- **A3** Balance dais (null-field; suppresses spells >2nd-level within 20 ft).
- **A4** Side corridor to **vault** (Arcana 16 or Thieves' Tools 17; 2 mage-clerks).
- **A5** Servant gallery (wine, spare plaques) -> freight shaft (escape).
- **A6** Hidden drainage passage (Perception 15) -> canal alley.

Security & Rules

- **Visible:** 6 Sun Sentinels; 2 Mage-Clerks; **Kahl Ren** (Detect Thoughts during bids).
- **Wards:** anti-divination/teleport; dais null-field; latent **Zone of Truth** ring (triggered by disputes).
- **Veil Lock:** if blood is shed -> mirrored shutters seal exits **5 rounds**; gas-lamps flare (Disadvantage to **Stealth**).

Mirella's Briefing (if allied) - masks, forged invites, routes (front lift, archive stair, drain duct), and the **null-field cutoff at the judge's fountain**.

Auction Structure (I-VI warm-up -> VII finale)

Stage	Theme	Function
I	Exotic curiosity	Teach bidding rules safely
II	Dangerous artifact	Raise stakes; tempt casters
III	Political leverage	Pull nobles into play
IV	Living/forbidden	Ethical discomfort test
V	Magitech wonder	Real loot temptation
VI	Special commission	Calm before storm

Suggested Lots I-VI (pick 3-5)

- **Lot I - Whispering Quill (common, 500 gp):** writes the **intent** behind words; perfect tutorial lot.
- **Lot II - Heart of the Red Vaults (≈750 gp):** sealed devil heart; **Arcana 15** reveals engine potential; **Con 13** on handling.
- **Lot III - Ledger of Seven Debts (1 000 gp):** political leverage vs senators/guilds; advantage on **Persuasion/Intimidation** vs nobles.
- **Lot IV - Withered Specimen (stasis) (1 250 gp):** moral provocation; Dustmere echo.
- **Lot V - Aetheric Lens (uncommon, 1,500 gp):** **Detect Magic** at-will; **See Invisibility** 1/long rest (10 min); stored in the vault.
- **Lot VI - Commission of Shadows (1 750 gp):** assassin's contract; tension, no item.

Balance & Pacing: Only one durable item (Lens) is intended as lasting loot. If the party robs the vault: ~2,000 gp + 1 uncommon item = level-appropriate.

Lot VII - Imperial Silk of Vael'Theris (Finale)

Spot the Hem: **Perception 15** or **Arcana 14** up close; from a booth via spyglass: **Perception 17** (Disadvantage).

Remove the Tube: **Sleight of Hand 16** (proximity required); **Tools (weaver/jeweler) 15** for a clean cut; failure pings the wards.

Four Ways to Win (choose the flavor)

- 1 **Play It Straight (and Dirty):** Out-bid with social pressure; you owe coin/favor to the Suns.
- 2 **Switch & Snatch (Stagecraft Heist):** Diversion (**Performance/Arcana 14** or spark a dispute -> **Zone of Truth**) then **Sleight 16** (advantage if using **A6**).
- 3 **Surgical Strike (Vault Job):** **Stealth 15 / Deception 14** to A4; **Tools 17** or **Arcana 16**; 2 mage-clerks (nonlethal spells).
- 4 **Weaponize Chaos (Mirella's Way):** 1-round ward flicker; **all** make **Wis 13** vs. disorientation; PCs get advantage on one theft action; guards **Disadvantage on Perception**. Debt to the Veil follows.

If Things Go Loud - Veil Lock

- **5 rounds sealed.** 2 Sentinels + 1 Mage-Clerk arrive; **Kahl Ren** uses **Calm Emotions**, then **Command: SURRENDER**.
- **Environment:** cut lamps (**Con 12** or blinded 1 rd); **shove the balance (STR 14)** to create cover.
- **Win:** endure, subdue, or open **A5/A6** to escape.

Inside the Silk (on success)

- **Cipher Tube (metal):** **Investigation 15** or **Comprehend Languages** -> Imperial script, two-part key (*A = Sallow, B = in the silk*).
- **Lore Sting (optional):** immediate decode *seems* to reveal routes/payouts - later arcs may prove it a **planted false trail**.

SCENE VI - Settlement & Fallout (Post-Auction)

Tone: Quiet knives, signed smiles

Goal: Decide who gets the **cipher**; resolve debts and set campaign vectors.

Settlement Options

- **Deliver to Corvalis:** material reward + noble goodwill; paints a target on PCs; future political entanglement.
- **Deliver to Mirella (Black Veil):** **Veil's Shadow Token** (ring; *Pass without Trace* 1/day, self) + covert backing; moral ambiguity grows.
- **Keep/Copy the Cipher:** gain leverage; both sides court or hunt you.
- **Destroy/Hide It:** earn enemies; possibly Veil interest for "defiance."

Rewards & Reputation

- **Gold:** depends on route (auction winnings, vault haul, or patron payments) - target ~2,000 gp party total + 1 uncommon.
- **Reputation flags:**
 - *Crimson Sun Hostile* (if bloodshed/theft obvious).
 - *Senate Whisper* (if the Ledger of Debts surfaces).
 - *Veil Attention* (if you used Mirella's flicker or delivered the tube).

Campaign Threads

- **Corvalis Ascendant or Ruined:** future patron or enemy.
- **Veil Thread:** token resonates near planar anomalies; future summons.
- **Withered Echo:** if Lot IV was freed or bought, consequences return later (G.U.A.R.D.S. continuity).

DM REFERENCE - The Silk Web Quick Sheet

Core Mechanics

Tracker	Range	Effect
Noise	0-2	Rising city awareness. 0 = silent; 1 = watchful guards; 2 = rumor & reinforced security (adds +2 DC to Stealth / Deception checks in Scenes IV-V).
Social Standing	0-3 (auction)	Bidding influence. +1 per successful charm or intrigue exchange; -1 for violence or insults.
Veil Debt	Boolean	If the party uses Mirella's help or chaos plan in Scene V, mark [x]. She will call it in later.

Scene Flow Overview

#	Scene	Goal	Key Checks (DC)	Notes & Noise
I	Corvalis' Offer	Accept job; spot hidden motive	Persuasion 13, Insight 14, Investigation 12	Gain Dock 17 lead; 0 Noise
II	Docks & Dead Man	Gather clues, link to Suns & Mirella	Perception 12 (ticking) · Investigation 13 (bootprint / log) · Arcana 14 (soot) · Dex 13 (save burning files)	Collect ≥3 clues -> adv. vs Suns; Noise +0 quiet / +1 loud / +2 fire
III	Pier 6B Ambush	Face Crimson Sun operatives · learn auction plan	Stealth 14 · Perception 13 · Deception/Persuasion 15 · Intimidation 14	Karr confirms auction; Noise 0-2 depending on fight volume
IV	Web of Mirella	Parley with Black Veil agent · choose alliance	Insight 15 · Persuasion 14 · Deception 15 · Arcana 16	Accept = token + auction access; Reject = Noise +2
V	Crimson Sun Auction	Acquire the silk by bid or heist	Stealth 15 · Sleight/Tools 16 · Arcana 14 · Performance 14 (diversion)	Veil Lock on combat (5 round seal); Noise rolls over from IV
VI	Settlement & Fallout	Resolve cipher fate	Insight 14 · Persuasion 15 · Intimidation 15	Determines future alliances and Veil Debt resolution

Key Clues by Location

Scene	Clue	How Found
II	Burned Harbor Log signed "V.Doss"	Investigation 13
II	Mana-soot footprint -> magitech link	Arcana 14
II	Violet seal (M.D.) -> Mirella foreshadow	Dex save 13 to rescue manifest
II	Witness Yarin saw Sun-marked crate	Persuasion / Bribe 13
III	Obsidian Auction Token	Loot / Search
III	Half-Cipher Fragment (A)	Search Sallow corpse
III	Burned Letter & Route Map to Meliora	Investigation 13
IV	Mirella reveals Corvalis' true motive	Insight 15 or Persuasion 14
V	Silk's Hem -> Cipher Tube	Perception 15 or Tools 16

Auction Reference (Phase Guide)

Phase	Type	Skill Hook	Typical Bid	Social Impact
I	Curiosity Lot (Whispering Quill)	Arcana 10	500 gp	+1 Standing if won
II	Dangerous Artifact (Devil Heart)	Arcana 15	750 gp	Moral tension
III	Political Leverage (Ledger)	Persuasion 14	900 gp	May draw Senate attention
IV	Forbidden Item (Withered Specimen)	Insight 15	1 000 gp	Veil reacts negatively if freed
V	Magitech Wonder (Aetheric Lens)	Investigation 15	1 200 gp	Potential loot
VI	Contract (Commission of Shadows)	Deception 14	0 gp	Sets tone for VII
VII	Imperial Silk / Cipher	Perception 15 / Sleight 16	variable	Main resolution

Noise & Security Effects Summary

Noise Level	Description	Effect on Later Scenes
0	Clean work · no attention	+0 to DCs
1	Whispers & extra guards	+1 to Stealth/Deception DCs in IV-V
2	Widespread rumor · Sun alert	+2 to Stealth/Deception DCs; auction security reinforced

Rewards & Hooks at a Glance

Outcome	Reward / Consequence
Deliver Cipher -> Corvalis	500 gp ea + noble favor; later betrayal possible
Deliver Cipher -> Mirella	Veil's Shadow Token (ring; <i>Pass Without Trace</i> 1/day) + Veil Debt
Keep Cipher	Future power · both factions pursue PCs
Destroy Cipher	Moral closure · Veil antagonism
Survive Auction Cleanly	~2 000 gp party loot + 1-2 uncommon items
Noise ≥ 2 ending	Senate Watch investigation · Crimson Sun retaliation

Running The Web - Tips

- **Shift tone by district:** polish -> grit -> perfume -> decadence.
- **Link every clue forward:** each artifact names the next NPC or locale.
- **Escalate stakes through Noise:** start with fog and ledgers, end with mirrors and blood.
- **Always remind PCs:** *every favor owed in Vordanne accrues interest.*

“When they leave the Vault, the balance tips - but which way depends on whose silk they chose to weave.”

Chapter IV: Enemies

Magister Kahl Ren

Medium humanoid (half-orc), Lawful Evil

Armor Class: 16 **Hit Points:** 90 (12d8 + 36) **Speed:** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws: Wis +4, Cha +6 **Skills:** Insight +4, Arcana +5, Performance +6 **Senses:** passive Perception 11 **Languages:** Common, Infernal, Thieves' Cant; **telepathy 30 ft**
Challenge: 5 ; **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Adjudicator's Poise. When Kahl Ren succeeds on a save vs. charmed or frightened, he ends that condition on himself and gains +2 AC until the start of his next turn.

Spellcasting. 5th-level caster (Cha; DC 14, +6 to hit).

Cantrips: *thaumaturgy, guidance, toll the dead*

1st (4/day): *command, shield, sanctuary*

2nd (3/day): *hold person, calm emotions*

3rd (2/day): *counterspell, dispel magic*

Actions

Multiattack. Two *Judgment Strike* attacks or one and a cantrip.

Judgment Strike (Gavel). *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 9 (2d6+3) force. If the target is frightened or charmed, it takes +3 (1d6) extra damage.

Command Word (1/SR; Circlet). Each creature of his choice within 15 ft must succeed on a DC 13 Wis save or drop a held item or fall prone (Kahl's choice).

Blinding Flash. (Recharge 4-6) Constitution Saving Throw: DC 14, each creature in a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on a point Kahl can see within 120 feet. *Failure:* 13 (3d6 + 3) Radiant damage, and the target is *Blinded* until the start of the bandit's next turn. *Success:* Only half damage.

Legendary Actions

Calm Wave (1/LR; Gavel). Kahl strikes the dais; he casts *calm emotions* (DC 15) centered on himself. While he concentrates on it, he has advantage on Charisma and Wisdom saving throws.

Sun Sentinel

Medium humanoid (any), Lawful Evil

Armor Class: 17 (chain mail, shield) **Hit Points:** 65 (10d8 + 20) **Speed:** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (0)	12 (+1)	11 (0)

Saving Throws: Str +5, Con +4

Skills: Athletics +5, Perception +3

Challenge: 3 ; **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Actions

Multiattack. Two attacks with the *Longsword* or *Heavy Crossbow* in any combination.

Longsword. *Melee:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) slashing, or 9 (2d10+3) if used two-handed.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged:* +3 to hit, 100/400 ft. *Hit:* 12 (2d10+1) piercing.

Reactions

Shield Brace. When an adjacent ally is hit by an attack, the sentinel adds +2 AC against that attack.

Parry. *Requirement:* The warrior is hit by a melee attack roll while holding a weapon. *Effect:* The warrior gains a +2 bonus to AC against this attack, which can cause this attack to miss.

Mage-Clerk

Medium humanoid (any), Lawful Evil

Armor Class: 13

Hit Points: 44 (8d8+8)

Speed: 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills: Arcana +4, Insight +3

Challenge: 2 ; **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Actions

Spellcasting. 4th-level caster (Int; DC 12, +4 to hit).

Cantrips: *mage hand, ray of frost, minor illusion*

1st (4/day): shield, magic missile, command

2nd (3/day): hold person, mirror image

Arcane Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, 120 ft. *Hit:* 7 (2d4+2) force.

Bonus Actions

Mirror Protocol (1/Day). *Casts mirror image as a bonus action.*

Foreman Karr

Medium humanoid (any), Neutral Evil

Armor Class: 16 (studded + bracers)

Hit Points: 82 (11d8 + 33)

Speed: 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws: Str +6, Con +6

Skills: Athletics +6, Intimidation +4

Senses: passive Perception 10

Languages: Common, Thieves' Cant

Challenge: 2 ; **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Pack Taskmaster. When an allied Crimson Sun creature Karr can see hits a creature within 10 ft of him, that ally deals +2 damage.

Pack Tactics. Foreman Karr has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if an ally that isn't Incapacitated is within 5 feet of that creature.

Actions

Multiattack. Karr makes two attacks with his *Crimson mace* or *Jawbreaker* in any combination.

Crimson Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10+5) bludgeoning, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Str save or be shoved 5 ft.

Jawbreaker (Recharge 4-6). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one creature. *Hit:* 14 (2d8+5) bludgeoning, and the target can't take reactions until the start of its next turn.

Bonus Actions

Boss's Orders (Recharge 5-6). As a bonus action, Karr targets up to two allies within 30 ft. Each can immediately move up to half its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Reactions

Backhand. When a creature Karr can see within 5 ft misses him with a melee attack, he makes one mace attack against it.

Lessa “The Ink” Marin

Medium humanoid (any), Lawful Evil

Armor Class 13 (leather)

Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws: Wis +3, Cha +4

Skills: Deception +4, Religion +3

Senses: passive Perception 11

Languages: Common, Infernal

Challenge: 2 ; **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Scribe of Blood-Ink. When Lessa casts a 1st-level or higher spell that forces a save, she can impose **disadvantage** on one target’s first save against that spell once per turn (ink-sigil amplifies).

Actions

Spellcasting. 4th-level caster (Cha; save DC 12, +4 to hit).

Cantrips: fire bolt, thaumaturgy, toll the dead

1st (4/day): command, burning hands

2nd (3/day): hold person, silence

Dagger. *Melee/Ranged:* +4 to hit, 5 ft/20-60 ft. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+2) piercing.

Seal of Smoke (1/Day). Lessa smears a rune; a 15-ft-radius lightly obscuring smoke persists until the start of her next turn. Creatures standing within the radius of this smoke have *Blinded* condition.

Bonus Actions

Brand the Contract. After Lessa damages a creature with a spell, one ally within 10 ft gains +2 to its next attack roll against that creature before Lessa’s next turn.

Crimson Sun Bruiser

Medium humanoid (any), Lawful Evil

Armor Class: 13

Hit Points: 32 (5d8+10)

Speed: 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills: Athletics +4, Intimidation +2

Challenge: 2 ; **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Sun-Mark Fear (Recharge 5-6). Creatures of your choice within 10 ft must succeed on a DC 11 Wis save or be frightened until the end of their next turn.

Actions

Multiattack. Two scimitar attacks or a single attack with a light crossbow.

Scimitar. *Melee:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+2) slashing.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged:* +3 to hit, 80/320 ft. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) piercing.

Grapple. Bruiser may attempt to grapple one creature within 5 ft. reach causing this creature to make a Strength saving throw (DC 14). *Failure:* the target has *Grappled* condition, and Bruiser's allies get advantage on attack rolls against this target. The grappled target can try to break free by succeeding the Strength saving throw on its next turns.

Crimson Sun Marksman

Medium humanoid (any), Lawful Evil

Armor Class: 14

Hit Points: 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed: 30 ft., Crawling 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills: Perception +3, Stealth +5, Survival +3

Challenge: 2 ; **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Coordinated Volley. If a visible ally is within 5 ft of the marksman's target, the marksman deals +3 damage on its next ranged weapon hit that turn.

Actions

Multiattack. Two shortbow attacks or a single *Sapping Shot*.

Shortbow. *Ranged:* +5 to hit, 80/320 ft. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing.

Sapping Shot (Recharge 5-6). *Ranged:* +5 to hit, one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) piercing, and the target's speed is reduced by 10 ft until the end of its next turn.

Bonus Actions

Aim. Marksman can spend 30 ft. of its movement to grant itself an *Advantage* on its next attack roll.

Reactions

Uncanny Dodge. *Condition:* The Marksman is hit by an attack roll. *Effect:* The scout halves the damage (round down) it takes from that attack.

Chapter V: Rewards & Consequences

*Every deal leaves residue - coin, secrets, or ghosts.
Choose carefully which you carry forward.*

- Mirella Dalvere (Vera Albers)

Mirella's Gifts - Black Veil Rewards

If the party allies with **Mirella** or delivers her the cipher, she rewards them before vanishing into the mist.

She chooses one major gift for the group (or individual heroes who impressed her) and always leaves a **minor Veil token** as her mark of favor.

Veil's Shadow Token

Ring, uncommon (requires attunement)

While attuned, you gain **advantage on Stealth** checks made in dim light or darkness and can **cast Pass without Trace** (self only) once per long rest without expending a spell slot and consuming any components normally required to cast the spell.

Each use causes a fleeting "Veil echo" - a whisper or mirrored after-image reminding the wearer that unseen eyes follow them.

"A reminder that silence can protect - or conceal."

Mask of the Hidden Thread

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

While attuned, you gain advantage on **Deception** and **Insight** checks in social encounters. Once per long rest, as a bonus action, you can activate the mask for 1 minute:

- Advantage on **Stealth** checks.
- The **first attack** against you each round has **disadvantage** (illusory after-images).

Threadneedle of Shadowweave

Wondrous item, uncommon

Acts as **Thieves' Tools** or an **arcane focus**.

You may make an Arcana or Sleight of Hand check DC 15 to disable a glyph, alarm, or arcane lock you can physically interact with for 10 minutes. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain the ability to use the threadneedle at the next dawn.

Bonus Coin Payment

In addition to any Veil item, Mirella transfers **500 gp** through a proxy under a false company name.

Corvalis Rewards - Merchant-Noble Path

If the party delivers the silk or cipher to **Lord Cedric Corvalis** instead:

Reward Details	Value	Reward Conditions
Payment for goods	1 000 - 1 500 gp (total share)	The silk is delivered to Lord Corvalis.
Corvalis Favor II	One use: automatic success or advantage on Persuasion/Negotiation with nobles or Senate figures.	The cipher is delivered to Lord Corvalis.
Political Consequence	Corvalis grows indebted to Azhoran interests; Mirella marks the party as "useful but naïve."	The cipher is delivered to Lord Corvalis.

Loot from the Vault of Arbitration

If the party kills or loots during the auction - especially **Magister Kahl Ren** - they may claim:

Gavel of Silent Judgment

Weapon (light hammer), uncommon (requires attunement by a spellcaster)

Functions as a spellcasting focus.

- When casting a spell that forces a save vs. charm or fear, add +1 to the DC.
- Once per long rest, you can strike the gavel to cast *Calm Emotions* (DC 15) as a bonus action.

Faint whispers echo, "**Arbitration concluded.**"

Circlet of Adjudication

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

- Grants **telepathy 30 ft.**
- Cast *Detect Thoughts* (DC 13) once per short rest.
- While concentrating, you have **advantage on Insight** checks.

Minor Vault Spoils

- 1 - 3 **Obsidian Plaques** (100 gp each; risky to fence).
- 200 - 400 gp in trade bars.
- **Ledger pages of noble debts** (political blackmail tool).
- **Crimson Sun signet coin** - advantage on Intimidation with criminals, disadvantage with Wardens.

Auction Lots I-VI (Treasures & Temptations)

Lot #	Name / Theme	Item Type	Starting Value	Function / Hook
I	Whispering Quill - Truth written in lies	Wondrous item (common)	500 gp	Reveals emotional intent in writing (Insight adv.).
II	Heart of the Red Vaults - Infernal temptation	Artifact fragment	750 gp	Arcana 15 to reveal devil heart; Con 13 save or nightmare visions. Power component for future plots.
III	Ledger of Seven Debts - Political leverage	Information asset	1 000 gp	Advantage on Persuasion/Intimidation vs. nobles; fence for blackmail.
IV	Withered Specimen - Moral crucible	Macabre curio	1 250 gp	Ties to <i>Incident in a Mining Camp</i> ; ethical choice.
V	Aetheric Lens - Magitech relic	Wondrous item (uncommon, requires attunement)	1 500 gp	<i>Detect Magic</i> at will; <i>See Invisibility</i> 1/LR 10 min; overuse = 1d4 force dmg.
VI	Commission of Shadows - Assassin's contract	Service contract	1 750 gp	Tension builder; no item; future quest seed.

Moral & Faction Resolutions Summary

Outcome	Reward Tier	Primary Consequences
Deliver Cipher -> Corvalis	Gold + Favor	Political alliance; Veil hostility.
Deliver Cipher -> Mirella	Veil Item + 500 gp	Veil favor; Corvalis resentment.
Keep Cipher (hidden)	Choice of 1 Item + ½ gold	Both sides hunt the party.
Destroy Cipher	1 minor Item or Favor	Moral prestige; mystery deepens.

Treasure Balance Summary (Level 5 Party)

Treasure Type	Approx. Value	Notes
Uncommon magic items (1-2 pcs)	1 000-1 200 gp ea	Veil or Vault sources only.
Gold / Trade bars / Plaques	600-1 500 gp	Adjust by Noise and choices.
Political leverage / blackmail	Priceless narrative value	Senate hooks for later campaigns.

Total expected value ≈ **2 000 - 2 500 gp shared**, ideal for a Level 5 arc.

Every reward reflects *The Silk Web's* themes - **deception, reflection, and the cost of silence.**

*When the masks are gone and the city sleeps, three treasures remain:
the coin that bought the lie, the ring that hid the truth,
and the memory that someone, somewhere, wanted it all to happen this way.*

Appendix I: DM Tools

List of generic names

Human names

- Lucius Greyhill
- Edwin Thorn
- Fiona Blackstone
- Celine Ferris
- Basil Ravenshaw
- Vera Cross
- Harlan Brightrunner
- Leona Valmont
- Eli Mercer
- Cyril Devereaux

Dwarven names

- Thrain Earthbrow
- Rurik Stoneshield
- Kara Ironfist
- Dorrin Deepforge
- Gilda Coppervein
- Corin Hammerstriker
- Felinor Frostbeard
- Balin Stoneheart
- Eldrin Fireforge
- Tilda Ironside

Elven names

- Aeloria Lighthaven
- Vaelan Starfire
- Lirel Moonwhisper
- Tendrilith Sunstrike
- Elandris Starleaf
- Aendir Stormhold
- Sereniel Dawnwhisper
- Kalend Nightbloom
- Valendris Earthglades
- Talindra Swiftshadow

Tiefling names

- Zariel Ashbane
- Maris Nightflame
- Kaelin Twilightwhisper
- Tazra Fireheart
- Lilith Shadowtide
- Balthazar Inferno
- Soren Emberbloom
- Xandria Darkflare
- Ezren Dreadfury
- Vira Felstorm

Halfling names

- Daren Berryspark
- Tilly Bramblefoot
- Finley Tumblehill
- Pip Bramblerose
- Milo Stonebranch
- Coraline Goodfellow
- Bramble Swiftfoot
- Rory Goldleaf
- Merry Windwalker
- Lark Meadowbreeze

Other names and affiliations

- Valara Dawnwanderer (Halcyon Covenant)
- Fergus Shatterstone (Dustmere miner)
- Eris Thorncloak (independent agent)
- Jareth Nightstone (mercenary)
- Boris Ironclaw (mercenary leader)
- Selen Firestar (magitech researcher / innovator)
- Aurelia Brightville (magitech engineer)
- Lorien Blackwater (black-market dealer)
- Kaelen Goldcrest (merchant)
- Sira Windfury (alchemist)

Back-cover description

Beneath the glittering lights of **Vordanne**, the jewel of Elyxion's western coast, lies a city built on secrets. Its canals carry more than trade; they bear whispers of forbidden deals, masked conspiracies, and the echoes of a war that refuses to fade. In the shadows of marble towers and brass machinery, a single missing bolt of silk threatens to unravel the fragile balance between power and ruin.

The Silk Web invites adventurers into a world where every choice has weight, and every alliance hides a blade. From the misty docks of the Harbour District to the velvet-draped halls of the Coinmaster's Court, the party must navigate a tangle of deceit, ambition, and intrigue. Each thread they pull tightens another - binding them to forces far older and far darker than they first imagined.

Rich in political drama, noir atmosphere, and moral tension, this adventure challenges players not only to survive Vordanne's underworld, but to decide what truth is worth keeping - and what must be sacrificed to preserve it. In a city where everyone wears a mask, even silence can be deadly.

For use with any fantasy roleplaying ruleset. Play the best game of your life!

Homebrewery.Naturalcrit.com

Original sourcebook map



Vordanne city map: Azure Sea, Senate District, Harbour District, Bazaar District, Industrial District, Cemetery Quarter, Slums, Old City and surrounding greenery.

The illustrated city map provides setting context. Scene locations and the auction's A1-A6 area key are defined in the adventure text.

Edition and typography

This reading edition preserves the adventure text and mechanics for portfolio review. Design and writing credits appear in the manuscript. Artwork is drawn from the original adventure materials; supporting project diagrams retain their stated source language.

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