



# THE ATROCIOUS EXHIBITION

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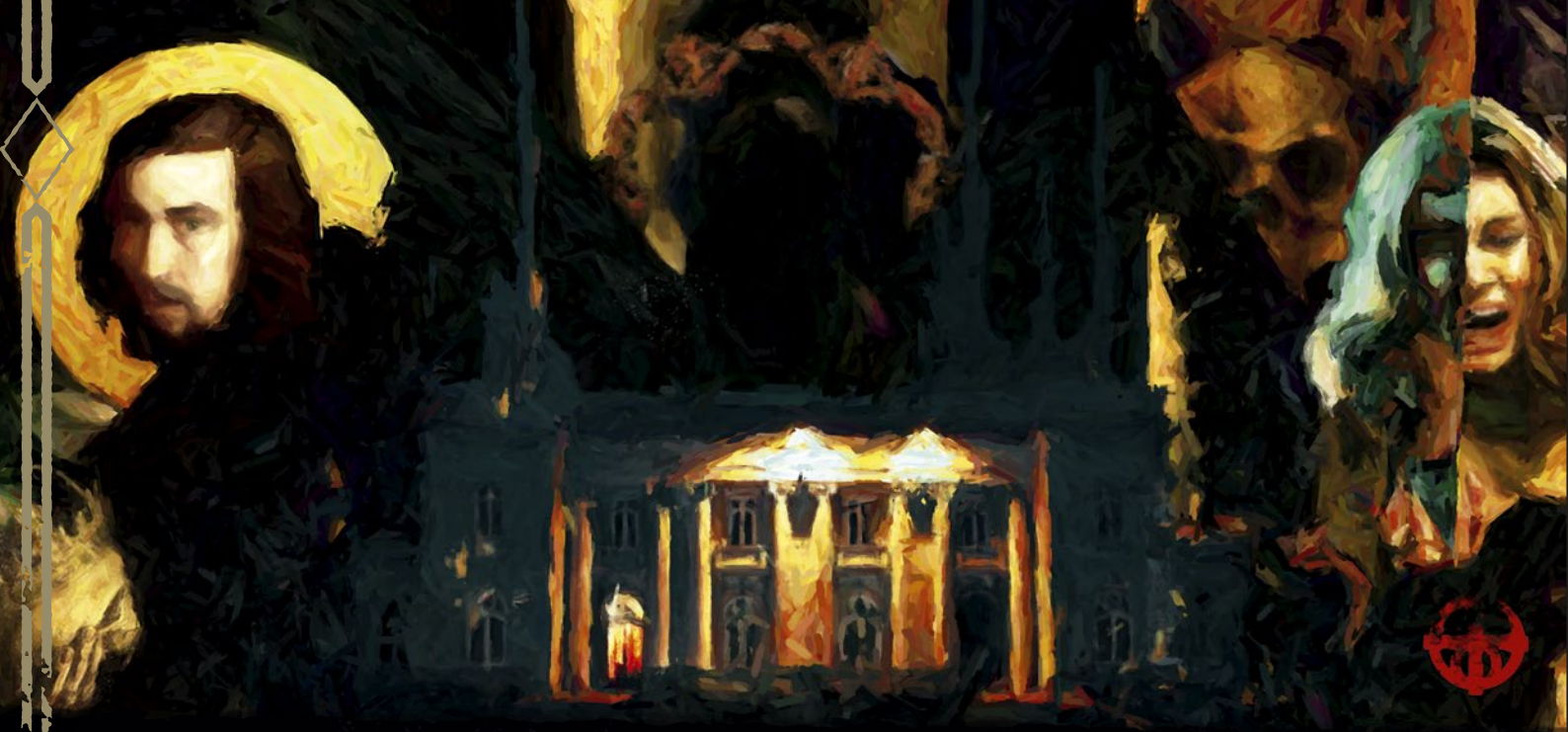
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# THE ATROCITY EXHIBITION

**Y**OU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE EXCLUSIVE MIDNIGHT SHOWING of the Cecil Throne Art Centre. After more than three decades, Guy Vauquelin's entire Triumph De La Mort collection, known as the Atrocity Exhibition, will be presented to the public.

A mad virtuoso, a dark prophet, Vauquelin's infamy surrounds him like a miasma. Rumored to have studied at Death's feet, his insight resonates within his macabrely beautiful paintings, entrancing and horrifying viewers with their apocalyptic visions. Consumed by madness and hedonism, he ended his own life, leaving behind his artistic legacy.

Now whispers of strange noises and ghostly apparitions in the gallery hang on people's lips. Even Vauquelin himself has been sighted, returned from the dead, and wandering the halls. Are these simply the product of an inventive marketing campaign, or is something far more sinister at work?

Whatever the truth, all will be revealed at the Exhibition's formal unveiling.

An unveiling no one will soon forget.



## DESCRIPTION

Renowned for his naturalistic technique, *Guy Vauquelin* blurred the boundaries between nightmare and reality until his suicide. His notorious paintings are scattered across the globe, secreted away in private collections and galleries for more than thirty years. Praised and reviled for its nihilistic beauty, Vauquelin's *Triumph De La Mort* (*Triumph of Death*) – also known as the Atrocity Exhibition – has never been assembled in its entirety, outside of his catalogue raisonné. Until now.

Sparing no expense, *Marielle Dubois* – a wealthy mondaine – arranges for the complete collection to be presented at the Cecil Thorne Art Center, a local art gallery. The Atrocity Exhibition's midnight viewing draws a wide variety of socialites, art historians, and the morbidly curious; all eager to see the debauched artist's masterwork.

Her husband, *Anthony*, funds this artistic venture, grudgingly tolerating his wife's latest obsession. But Marielle's fixation with Vauquelin goes far deeper than simple infatuation. Most are unaware of Dubois's intimate past with Vauquelin, their scandalous romance only whispered rumor. She knows her former lover was a Death Magician and possessed a mystical connection to his art. She recognizes the Atrocity Exhibition's true power and what it can provide her.

Recently diagnosed with terminal cancer, Marielle desperately needs a dark miracle to survive the year. Vauquelin's masterwork will provide her that miracle. When in close proximity, Vauquelin's paintings thin the veil between Elysium and Inferno, allowing passage between both. With the assembled Atrocity Exhibition, she believes Vauquelin can return to this world and bless her with immortality.

Dubois is only partially correct in this belief.

As she suspects, the Atrocity Exhibition can reunite her with Vauquelin.

However, the Vauquelin she remembers and loves no longer exists. Now the thrall of Togarini – a Death Angel – the painter has been transformed into a powerful nephairite. He desires only to entomb the world in putrescent flesh, spreading the Living Death. When unleashed, Vauquelin plans to drag the gallery and its patrons back into Inferno to eternally serve Togarini's grand design.

The Atrocity Exhibition's influence in Elysium has already allowed Vauquelin to possess *Alano Toset* – Head of Security at the Cecil Thorne Art Center. Together with Marielle, he's ritually prepared the Center for the midnight unveiling, thinning the Illusion. Most of their activities have gone unnoticed, but not all.

*Meri Janson*, an art curator, and *William Reeves*, a private detective, have grown suspicious of the peculiarities surrounding the Atrocity Exhibition. An art dealer, *Brahim Nasra*, believes Marielle has stolen one of its pieces from him and has crossed the world to confront her. But none could dream of the horrors waiting for them.

At the midnight showing, they and the Center's patrons are pulled into Vauquelin's personal purgatory. A surreal tapestry of memory and madness, this terrifying world offers insights and horrors alike. Trapped, the survivors must use their wits and cunning to escape Inferno before the night is through. Otherwise, they will become little more than brushstrokes in Vauquelin's final masterpiece.

## THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

The *Atrocity Exhibition* can incorporate virtually any player character (PC) Archetype. No specific Dark Secrets, Disadvantages and/or Advantages are required for the scenario. However, some Archetypes and Advantages may be more appropriate and helpful than others. Socialites and artists are easier to involve in the events, as are journalists and similar professions. Characters with arcane backgrounds may possess knowledge of *Vauquelin's* dark history and can assist in disrupting the rituals. Martialy-oriented characters will have an advantage during combat sequences.

*GM Note: William Reeves, a non-player character (NPC), can fill out this latter role, if required.*

Involving the characters can be accomplished in several ways, but utilizing the NPCs is strongly suggested. The characters should know at least one of the NPCs through past experiences. Feel free to flesh out these connections with the PCs; perhaps, the NPCs have appeared previously in the campaign.

Art collectors and debutantes receive an invitation to the gallery from *Marielle Dubois*. In this case, they know either of the Dubois, *Samantha Church*, and/ or *William Reeves*. Characters with international art connections know *Brahim Nasra* from previous interactions, business or personal. Connections with the Cecil Thorne Art Center establish a professional relationship with either *Meri Janson* or *Alano Toset*.

Meri Janson can be involved as a romantic or professional contact. As head curator for the Cecil Thorne Art Center, she's witnessed unsettling activity at the Center ever since the Atrocity Exhibition arrived. Frightened by these events, she contacts the PCs to discuss them. If required, she'll provide access to the Center, including invitations to the midnight showing.

Associates of Alano Toset have noticed recent changes in his behavior. Prior to his possession, he approaches the PC, complaining of nightmares about the Atrocity Exhibition and recurring images of Death personified. After his possession, he stops taking calls, answering emails, and avoids friends and family entirely. Characters seeking him out discover their friend much changed, both physically and mentally.

Characters knowledgeable in the Death magic recognize Vauquelin's name and his history as a death magician. With minor research, they discover that the Atrocity Exhibition possesses some kind of power, as well is responsible for disappearances, suicides, and other oddities.



# SCENARIO THEME

Depending on the scenario's presentation, the Atrocity Exhibition can explore several themes. In particular, the *Fear of Death* motivates the narrative's central figure, *Marielle Dubois*. She willingly sacrifices anything and anyone to avoid her impending demise and achieve immortality. As the gallery is swept into Inferno, the unfortunate attendees encounter the embodiment of Death. How they face their fear defines and guides them, revealing their true natures.

Marielle also represents *Death and the Maiden*, a recurring motif in death art. Much like the story of Persephone and Hades, her relationship with *Vauquelin* possesses an erotic subtext, revealing the connection between sensuality and death. Many aspects of Vauquelin's purgatory have sensual undertones.

Themes of *Death* itself are also explored. Vauquelin and his master, Togarini, reflect *Death as an eternal prison*, destroying the hope of reincarnation and renewal. Their minions – the Living Dead – serve as (un)living representations of this theme. Once plunged into Inferno, the *Triumph of Death* should be ever-present throughout the scenario, reflected in the transformed world and its encroaching threats. Death is inevitable, no one escape its grasp. But it offers no release, only entropic dissolution.

A subtler, but no less important, theme is *Art's connection to the Soul*. This theme's significance is reflected in the intimate connection between the Atrocity Exhibition and Inferno, as well as to its creator. In this case, art literally binds the soul to Reality, and thus becomes Vauquelin's weakest link. One cannot exist without the other.

## TIPS FOR THE GAMEMASTER

### The Cecil Thorne Art Center

Most of the scenario takes place within the art gallery and, eventually, its reflection in Inferno. Characters can freely explore the building, encountering events in the order determined by the GM. As such, the GM should consider the setting to be as important as the plotline itself.

A model of brutalist architecture, the two-story Cecil Thorne Art Center is designed for esthetics and functionality. Its textured interiors, elegant lines, and open spaces create a sophisticated atmosphere, as if the building is a work of art in of itself. Illuminated by the second-story skylight, the first floor consists of the main lobby, main offices, and gift store, as well as a small café and sitting area. Sculptures and larger pieces are exhibited in this central area, and most public functions are held here. Twin staircases rise from the lobby to the second floor,

where the four main galleries are located. Two staircases allow access to the basement. Also, a small elevator provides handicapped access to both the upper and lower levels.

Named after the center's main donors, each gallery exhibits a specific collection, varying throughout the year. Currently, the *Dubois Gallery* houses the Atrocity Exhibition and is closed to the public until the night of its official unveiling. In the weeks prior to the Atrocity Exhibition, the other three galleries are open and feature displays that complement the grand opening. The *Hewett Gallery* is showing a photographic collection of skull art, including Mexico's *Dia de los Muertos* festivals and the Parisian *Caracombs*. The *Rosenfeld Gallery* features funerary art from the Renaissance and Middle Ages, detailing various cultures. Finally, the *Van Assen Gallery* explores Death in all its guises, including *The Best Doctor* by Alfred Kubin.

The extensive basement contains a movie theatre and children's art gallery, as well as the staff labs and offices, loading dock, and storage areas. Each floor is connected by service corridors and elevators, allowing gallery staff to move freely throughout the facility without disturbing the general public. *Meri Janson's* office serves as her art lab and contains the main vault. She can be found here most days and evenings, working.

*GM Note: If incorporated into a continuing campaign, the GM can change the scenario's location to utilize famous art galleries, such as New York's Guggenheim, London's National Gallery, Stockholm's Wetterling Gallery, or the Louvre in Paris. Most art galleries have detailed websites, as well as floor plans, allowing the GM to restructure the scenario as they wish. The GM could also use a much smaller venue, such as a street gallery; one or two rooms creating an intense, claustrophobic atmosphere. Being trapped in such a confined space, surrounded by the undead horrors of Inferno, might add an element of unrelenting dread.*

### The Atrocity Exhibition

The culmination of Vauquelin's life experiences and artistic skill, the Atrocity Exhibition consists of eight oil paintings and one triptych. To the outside observer, each piece is an exquisite combination of anamorphosis and naturalism, representing elements of Mortality. However, beneath this disquieting beauty lurks a far more insidious purpose; each painting representing an element of the Illusion.

The Atrocity Exhibition includes:

- ◆ *The Prison*: A self-portrait of young Vauquelin, flanked on either side by his corpse, representing the Body;
- ◆ *The Coupling*: A dark bedroom with crumpled sheets, empty wine bottles, and rotting food, where two corpses rest in the afterglow of their lovemaking, representing the Feelings and Passion;
- ◆ *The Wanderer*: Framed in moonlight, a robed figure traverses vast desert, seeking an indistinct city, representing the Intellect;
- ◆ *Three Angels*: A dying man chained atop a pile of skulls reaches up toward three stone angels, representing the Imprisonment in the Illusion;





*The Prison: A self-portrait of Vauquelin, flanked by corpses, representing the Body.*

- ◆ *Fool's Wisdom:* A disemboweled man offers his entrails to a seraphim in exchange for divine insight, representing the Instincts;
- ◆ *Autunno Caldo:* A crucified Vauquelin stands before burning ruins, while anarchists dance in the background, representing the Force of Life;
- ◆ *Feast of Ignorance:* Deep within the Parisian catacombs, haloed figures examine the stigmata of Vauquelin's emaciated corpse, representing the Will; and
- ◆ *Triumphator:* A haloed Death stands above Adam and Eve slipping into the churning chaos of Purgatory, representing the Consciousness.

Finally, the exhibit's centerpiece, *The Tears of Djeraba*, is a man-sized triptych, representing the Awakened Self. The left and right panels depict two roads – one light and the other dark – snaking over two citadels. The middle panel depicts the Spring of Death; a bone-white fountain that overflows with black ichor. A tall, dark figure is visible beyond the spring, cloaked in shadows, its face etched with age. Anyone with mental instabilities viewing the open triptych can become hypnotized by the painting, lowering their resistance to possession by entities in Inferno.

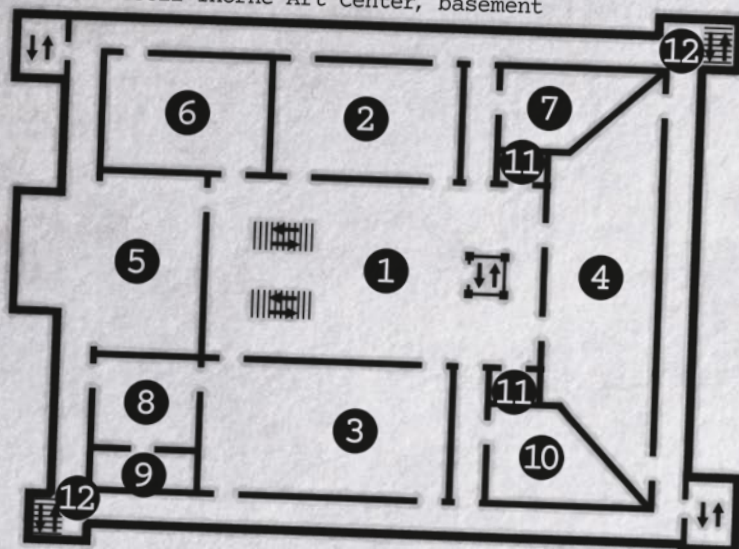
Individually, these paintings have very little power, but with the correct training they can be utilized

for rituals to gaze into the realms of Death. Prolonged study of their symbology can provide insight into Death magic. On extremely rare occasions, they can cause the Illusion to thin enough to create a temporary gate to the Underworld. However, their true power is only revealed when *The Tears of Djeraba* is fully opened in proximity to the entire Atrocity Exhibition. Within moments, the paintings dispel the border between Elysium and Inferno, drawing the surrounding area into Vauquelin's personal purgatory, as well as anyone unlucky enough to be in its proximity. *GM Note: Normally, this effect is localized – little more than a single room. However, Vauquelin and Marielle spend several weeks ritually preparing the Center to extend the effect to encompass the entire building.*

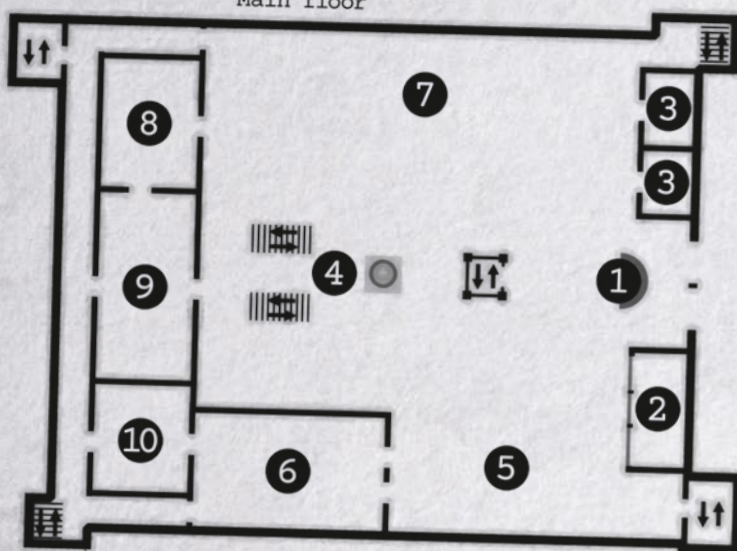
In addition to its numerous physical perils, characters trapped within Vauquelin's purgatory face mental dangers as well. Over time, PCs begin 'acclimatizing' to the purgatory, altering it with their own unconscious desires for punishment. The GM should be aware of the various Dark Secrets and Disadvantages that might manifest physically to torment each character. Eventually, their bodies may transform appropriately, twisted into grotesque parodies of their former selves. NPCs can cause similar manifestations, providing the GM with additional opportunities for roleplay.



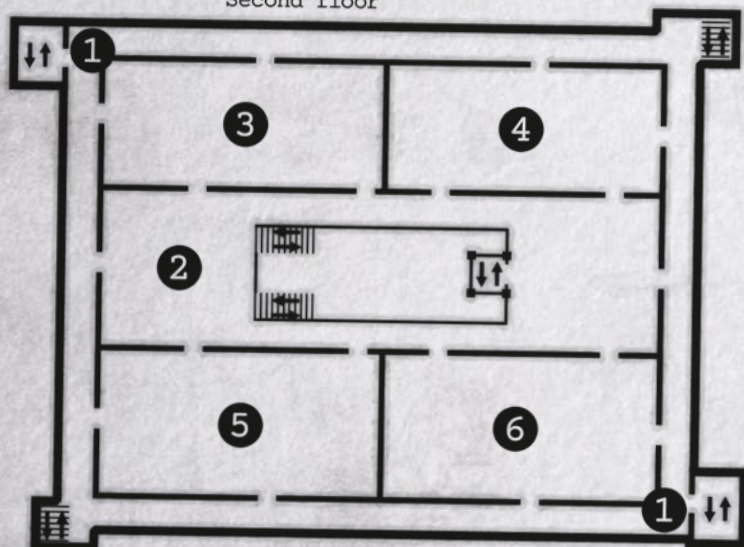
The Cecil Thorne Art Center, basement



Main floor



Second floor



# THE CECIL THORNE ART CENTER

## Basement

[1] **Lower Gallery:** This area serves as a gallery for local artists, as well as the art produced in the regular classes. On the night of the Atrocity Exhibition, a small bar and catering table will be made available for patrons.

[2] **Classroom:** This open area serves as the classroom for regular children/adult art classes. It will be opened to the public on Opening Night.

[3] **Work rooms:** This open area consists of the tool room, metal and wood shop, as well as a small ceramics studio.

[4] **Theater:** This large theater can seat sixty people comfortably. On the night of the Atrocity Exhibition, it will be featuring a documentary on Vauquelin.

[5] **Loading Dock/Maintenance Area:** The loading dock also doubles for the maintenance area, including the boiler room. A small forklift sits in one corner for major items.

[6] **Library:** This quiet room is stacked with artistic books and documents, as well as business materials not stored in the main offices. Several small tables have been set up for reading.

[7] **Security Offices:** These cramped offices belong to the security staff, featuring a bank of security cameras that can view any room in the building. *Alano* keeps an automatic handgun in his locked desk drawer.

[8] **Meri's Office:** *Meri's* office is a painfully organized and Spartan room, which also serves as a second home for her. It has security locks on every sturdy door.

[9] **Vault:** This hardened room has been converted into a vault for the most valuable items in the gallery's collection. Only *Meri*, the Director, and *Alano* have the current access code.

[10] **Projectionist Room:** This room looks out onto the theater and contains the controls for its multimedia equipment.

[11] **Washroom:** Men's and Women's washrooms. Very clean.

[12] **Service Corridor:** Long corridor with access to the two service elevators and stairwells.



## Main Floor

- [1] **Information Desk:** This information desk is manned throughout the day by two interns. On the night of the Atrocity Exhibition, two guards will be here as well, checking invitations.
- [2] **Coat room:** This large room serves as the coat room, as well as minor storage. One person will always be behind the counter.
- [3] **Washroom:** Men's and Women's washrooms. Very clean.
- [4] **Fountain/Courtyard:** This open-air courtyard features a large fountain, as well as statuary. On Opening Night, a small podium will be set up between the stairwells for speeches.
- [5] **Café:** The Brain Frieze is a small café serving sandwiches, coffee, and pastries. It is also known for the best gelato in the city. On Opening Night, it serves an extravagant buffet.
- [6] **Art Gallery Shop:** A small shop selling prints and other knickknacks in association with the various artistic exhibitions. It will be closed on Opening Night.
- [7] **Gallery:** This wide area serves numerous artistic functions, as well as offering a sitting area for patrons. On Opening Night, it will feature a bar and musicians, as well as small tables.
- [8] **Director's Office:** Emmett Veirs' personal office. Surprisingly chaotic. Locked on Opening night.
- [9] **Main Offices:** A cube farm office, this area serves as the administrative offices for the gallery. It will also become a temporary prison for the surviving patrons once Vauquelin takes over the gallery.
- [10] **Store Room:** General store room for the café, offices, and store.

## Second Floor

- [1] **Service corridor:** These service corridors allow staff access to the entire facility without ever being seen. Security doors are key-coded.
- [2] **Mezzanine:** This mezzanine looks down onto the Main Floor's fountain and courtyard. Most of its roof consists of a gorgeous skylight. Metallic ravens hang from the rafters, reflecting the light. On Opening Night, a bar and small catering table are set up for patrons.
- [3] **Hewett Gallery:** Currently showing a photographic collection of skull art, including Mexico's Dia de los Muertos festivals and the Parisian Catacombs
- [4] **Rosenfeld Gallery:** Currently showing funerary art from the Renaissance and Middle Ages
- [5] **Dubois Gallery:** Location of the Atrocity Exhibition. Guarded night and day until the Opening.
- [6] **Van Assen Gallery:** Currently showing art on the various aspects of Death, including *The Best Doctor* by Alfred Kubin.

# THE SCENARIO

## Introduction

Depending on how the PCs become involved in the Atrocity Exhibition, the scenario can begin in several different locations. However, the majority of the scenario takes place at the Cecil Thorne Art Center and its dark reflection in Inferno. The Introduction should be tailored to the characters and how involved they are with the NPCs, as well as and the GM's willingness to improvise. If time is short, the scenario can begin immediately at the midnight showing.

Characters connected to *Meri Janson* are contacted prior to the midnight showing. She nervously informs them about her experiences at the Center and her growing disquiet regarding the Atrocity Exhibition. A stalwart and unshakeable woman, Meri doesn't scare easily. Since the exhibit arrived, she's heard odd noises in the gallery at night, as well as caught glimpses of shadows and strange lights. While working late, she observed Marielle Dubois and Alano Toset touring the Center, apparently conducting 'ritualistic' activities. She's unsure the true nature of this behavior, but recognized the languages used to be French and Latin. Believing that something illegal is being done, she provides the PCs with invitations to the midnight showing, hoping they'll assist her if something goes wrong.

Characters connected to *Alano Toset* notice his sudden personality shift and odd behavior. If they attempt to contact him, he'll be dismissive to the point of rudeness. If approached at work, he'll have them escorted from the building, stating that he's too busy for idle conversation. If they follow him after work, he leads the characters through the worst parts of town, as if looking for something. At the GM's discretion, they may witness him killing a transient and then resurrecting them into one of the *Living Dead*. Confronting him at this point can be very dangerous, as he is fully possessed by *Vauquelin*. If approached, the nepharite attempts to escape rather than fight, unwilling to reveal his true nature.

PCs with connections to either *Brahim Nasra* or *Samantha Church* are employed as witnesses for his confrontation with Ms. Dubois. They are provided invitations and asked to meet them at the gallery showing. Possibly, they can meet sooner to discuss the situation regarding the stolen art work. In short, Brahim reveals Dubois' likely involvement with the theft of *The Tears of Djeraba*. He also knows Dubois had an unsavory past with Vauquelin, perhaps romantic in nature.

It is unlikely *William* directly contacts the characters even if they know of him, as he is unwilling to betray his client's confidence. If they have worked with him in the past, he simply informs them that he is on a case. That said, he appears slightly harried, as if something is eating at him.

Socialites close to *Marielle* and *Anthony Dubois* notice the growing rift between them. Marielle acts fixated to the point of obsession, talking only about the Atrocity Exhibition. Her animated nature belies her pallid appearance. Anthony appears distracted, if somewhat on edge when talked to. He confesses his suspicions about Marielle's possible infidelities to extremely close confidantes; otherwise, he remains silent on the issue. Both provide the characters with invitations.



## The Opening Night

On Opening Night, the Cecil Thorne Art Center becomes a vibrant hub of activity. *Patrons* arrive between nine and ten o'clock. In attendance are artists and art collectors, critics, dealers, and historians, all eager to view Vauquelin's work first-hand. Other attendees are socialites and debutantes wishing to be seen in public, as well as indulge their morbid curiosity. Many are associates of the Dubois, invited specifically by Marielle. Invitations are checked at the door; anyone without one will be turned away by the well-dressed doormen. Patrons are informed to keep the invitations, as they determine the viewing order.

*GM Note: PCs should acquire invitations through one means or another; be it their social standing or from one of the NPCs. If not, they can sneak or smooth-talk their way inside. This should be played out, but considering the number of caterers and staff entering and exiting the Center, gaining access to the facility offers little challenge to inventive characters.*

Roughly one hundred patrons are in attendance. Most remain in the Center's main lobby, which serves as the central meeting point for the showing. There is a coat check at the front door, as well as a line of greeters, including the Center's director and other senior staff. Caterers set up in the café, offering an elegant selection of Tunisian and French cuisine. An open bar is located against the hall's far wall, gathering a crowd as the night goes on. Wait staff tour the venue offering drinks and hors d'oeuvres to the patrons. Chairs and tables have been brought in for comfort, providing miniature islands in the sea of bustling people. Two young women, a pianist and a cellist, play somber classical music, almost drowned out by the crowd. Nervous interns provide information on the Cecil Thorne Art Center and its current collection.

A smaller bar and food table have been set up on the second floor. The Hewett, Rosenfeld, and Van Assen galleries remain open to the public throughout the evening, allowing patrons to tour them at their leisure. *GM Note: The current exhibitions are discussed above.*

The Dubois Gallery remains roped off until midnight, its windows darkened by thick curtains. Two security guards prevent all access – even to staff. Upon closer examination, the two men appear pale and sullen, their eyes slightly puffy and dark. They answer questions in monotones, repeating the same dismissive comments. A strong odor of aftershave lingers around them; perceptive observers noticing a hint of decaying meat. They are *Living Dead* under Vauquelin's control, very recently turned. If hard pressed, they lead the unruly into the gallery and dispose of them away from the crowd. Otherwise, they remain at their post.

In the basement, the theatre features a documentary on Vauquelin – the short film set on perpetual loop. The film details the artist's life, but offers little insight into his unsavory or arcane activities. A few patrons mingle here, enjoying the relative quiet. Otherwise, most of the downstairs remains closed off to the public; only staff and caterers occasionally drifting through. *Meri* remains in her workshop during the early evening, distracting herself with one of her current projects. If she knows the PCs, she'll make sure to inform them where she is.

The Dubois arrive fashionably late, immediately causing a minor stir. They exchange pleasantries with friends and peers for about thirty minutes. Finally, *Marielle* makes a public address, welcoming everyone to the Center and thanking them for their support. She discusses her much-edited history with Vauquelin and why his work is so important to the art community – comparing him to a modern Caravaggio. This speech is unusually impassioned; those who know the debutante take notice, whispering amongst themselves. After the speech, she filters through the crowd until the midnight hour.

*GM Note: During the Introduction, the PCs are generally left to their own devices. While the GM may make this section as long or as short as they wish, the characters should be encouraged to interact with the crowd and explore their surroundings. This will provide them with a more intimate connection to the setting and the minor NPCs. Although this places a burden on the GM, these interactions make the upcoming events all the more intense and rewarding for the PCs. Also, the juxtaposition between normalcy and horrific will be far more jarring.*

## THREAT ESCALATION

Vauquelin wishes to escape his current torments by expanding the Atrocity Exhibition's influence in Elysium and Inferno. Knowing this is beyond him, Vauquelin wishes to appease the Death Angel, Togarini, with an offering – the body and soul of every Cecil Thorne Art Center's patron. Ultimately, he believes Togarini will pardon him from his purgatory in reward for his faithfulness. Furthermore, if empowered, the Atrocity Exhibition could create a permanent portal to Inferno.

### Escalations

- [1] *Dubois (or Alano) parts the veil between Elysium and Vauquelin's purgatory:* This escalation effectively begins the core section of the scenario. It is highly unlikely the PCs can prevent this from occurring, as *Dubois* and *Vauquelin* have prepared for months to address most eventualities. The Cecil Thorne Art Center plunges into Inferno, dragging the PCs and NPCs with it.
- [2] *Vauquelin unleashes his minions against the gallery and its Patrons:* Taking advantage of the panic and confusion, *Vauquelin* turns his minions loose on the gallery patrons, including the characters. *Marielle* – now *The Grieving Angel* – joins this hunt. Those unlucky enough to be captured are brought to the main hall to be transformed into the *Living Dead*. The hunt continues until Vauquelin feels confident in his position; roughly two hours later.
- [3] *Converted captured patrons into Living Dead:* *Vauquelin* begins torturing and transforming the captured patrons, adding them to his ranks. During this time, he becomes entirely preoccupied with the 'artistic' pleasures of this horrible process. Remaining survivors are kept under guard in the Center's main office. Most are terrified to





*The Coupling:* A dark bedroom with crumpled sheets, empty wine bottles, and rotting food, where two corpses rest in the afterglow of their lovemaking, representing the Feelings and Passion.

inaction, even as they're dragged off one by one. Some retain their sanity enough to assist anyone brave enough to escape.

- [4] *Consecrate temporary temple:* **Vauquelin** sacrifices living **Patrons** to consecrate a temporary temple inside the Center's main hall. As he intends to perform only one ritual, this process requires 24 hours of preparation. However, this demands total commitment and concentration. His attentions remain entirely focused on this intricate process. As a result, he is at his most vulnerable during this time, as disrupting the consecration requires the ritual to be performed from the beginning.
- [5] *Vauquelin performs Summon Creature of Death ritual:* With the assistance of his **Living Dead**, **Vauquelin** begins the complex ritual to summon the Death Angel **Togarini**. After seven hours, the *Summon Creature of Death* ritual is completed and the Death Angel is summoned into the gallery. Whether or not this appeases **Togarini** and creates a permanent connection to **Inferno** and his **Citadel** is up to the GM. However, if the Death Angel is summoned, his terrible presence prevents the gallery from returning to **Elysium**; **Vauquelin's** dismissal and/or the **Atrocity Exhibition's** destruction are no longer effective. Permanently trapped in this hellish prison, prospects for the characters and any survivors are decidedly grim.

**Goal:** Free himself from his purgatory and empower the **Atrocity Exhibition**

## CENTRAL SCENES

The scenario contains three Central Acts, each broken up into several Scenes. These should occur in the order presented.

### Act 1: The Party

Details regarding the pre-exhibition party are outlined in the *Introduction*. However, prior to the unveiling several key scenes take place. These help establish the NPCs and their various interactions. The Acts do not necessarily occur in the order presented, but will take place prior to the next Scene – *The Unveiling*. The GM is free to add or subtract Acts as they see fit.

#### SCENE 1: THE PARTY AT THE GALLERY, MEETING THE DUBOIS (INCLUDED IN INTRODUCTION)

After **Marielle's** speech (see *Introduction*), the **Dubois** make themselves available to the guests for a brief greeting, stand near the podium. A barely-contained tension exists between the husband and wife. **Marielle** is pale, gaunt, but strangely animated, almost manic in her tone, as if she's anticipating something monumental. **Anthony** remains polite, but appears troubled, frequently glancing at **Marielle**. Eventually, they part company, eager to mingle with their friends and peers.



If the PCs know Anthony, they can pull him aside near the end of the evening. If pressed, he confesses that he's never seen Marielle like this before, even in her 'wild' youth. Ever since the exhibit entered her life, she's acted increasingly secretive and obsessed, as well as disappearing late at night without explanation. He suspects she's involved in an affair. Still, he wants to make her happy, his love and devotion for his wife palpable. He's frustrated that the private investigator he hired hasn't been able to uncover anything.

## SCENE 2: CONFRONTATION BETWEEN MARIELLE DUBOIS, BRAHIM NASRA, AND SAMANTHA CHURCH

At some point in the evening, *Brahim* and *Samantha* approach and corner *Marielle*. Brahim accuses her of stealing *The Tears of Djeraba* while Samantha records the conversation, interjecting questions. This scene escalates quickly, drawing a small crowd of people, including *Meri*. Despite her best efforts, Meri becomes swept up into the discussion, as she approved the painting's import and ownership documentation. She refuses to take sides, offering to escort Brahim to her office to discuss this further. The characters can become involved depending on who they are associated with.

Should the argument escalate too far, the Center's security staff intervene. They escort Brahim and Samantha into the main office, siding with Dubois. If the characters act disruptively, they'll also be escorted to the main office. *Alano* becomes involved at this point. Unwilling to risk further incidents, he locks the group in the office, leaving them here until the Unveiling (Act 2, Scene 1).

Otherwise, *Anthony* intervenes on his wife's behalf, ushering her away to meet more important people. Snubbed, Brahim gladly relays details of the theft to anyone who'll listen, as well as the background regarding *The Tears of Djeraba*. The scene incites gossip amongst the crowd, people eager to share snippets of Marielle's questionable past.

## SCENE 3: MERI EXPRESSES HER CONCERNS

Following the confrontation with Dubois and Nasra, *Meri* approaches the Center's Director – Emmett Veirs – with her concerns. If possible, she requests that the characters accompany her as witnesses. She wants to inspect the exhibition before the opening, specifically *The Tears of Djeraba*. As curator, she's concerned by Nasra's claim and doesn't want the Center to be embarrassed by this possible infraction. Emmet refuses, citing that Ms. Dubois's people have everything under control and Meri's concerns are unfounded. He dismisses her out of hand, ignoring the PCs as well.

If they comfort her afterwards, she reveals her concerns about the exhibition, including the strangeness surrounding it. If Nasra is present, he confirms the history surrounding the Atrocity Exhibition, claiming it is cursed.

## SCENE 4: THE THINNING

While touring the Van Assen Gallery, one of the PCs is nearly knocked over by an older gentleman retreating toward the exit, stricken with fear. When finally calmed down, Victor reveals that while in the gallery, one of the paintings began shimmering like a mirror, the pigments

melting away to reveal his wife, Georgia, putrefying and in extremis. She'd died from lingering illness several months ago. Mute, she silently pleaded with him, as if begging for help.

Unless the characters intervene, security escort the man from the building, intolerant of all disruptions to the party. With some convincing, he leads them back to the dimly lit corner of the Van Assen gallery. For the moment, the painting – plague art from the Middle Ages – appears completely normal, if decidedly morbid. The characters realize the painting shares an interior wall with the Dubois gallery. Upon examination, the wall radiates with a bitter cold, its plaster almost silken to the touch. After a few moments more, the spotlights flicker and the painting's colors dull noticeably. A faint mewing emanates from the painting like someone screaming through cotton. Eventually, the lights regain their full strength and the effect fades, as does the numbing chill.

*GM Note: Unnerving incidents like this begin occurring as the evening draws on. They should not be truly threatening, only unnerving to help increase the tension. The GM may use as many or as few incidents as they desire. Some may include:*

- ◆ *While in the public bathroom, rotted fingers reach under the opening from the next stall, grasping at the PC, only to retreat just as quickly. If investigated, the other stall will be empty.*
- ◆ *Pleading whispers, unintelligible, but obviously pained filter out of the PA system. No one else appears to hear them.*
- ◆ *People appear to be rotting and bloated when seen out of the corner of the eye, but normal when viewed straight on.*
- ◆ *The PC sees someone dead from their past – usually in relation to a Disadvantage or Dark Secret. Before they can confront them, the person disappears in the crowd.*
- ◆ *The movie in the basement changes to reveal Vauquelin's purgatory in all its grisly glory, including the flayed and decaying purgatives, pressed against the screen wanting to get out.*
- ◆ *Sand and bone dust pool in the hall's shadowy corners. If touched, the sand simply fades, as if made from smoke.*
- ◆ *Art takes on a sinister life of its own. Statues shift position, death masks change their expressions, and paintings mutate when not directly looked at.*
- ◆ *Exterior windows reveal a desolate landscape of sand and scrub. Cast in moonlight, a mountain village is seen in the distance, ringed by rows of fleshless corpses astride moldering horses. The image fades almost as quickly as it is noticed.*

## SCENE 5: WILLIAM CONFRONTS ALANO (OPTIONAL)

This scene takes place in the basement or out of sight from the main party. Unless the PCs follow *William* or *Alano*, this incident could go unnoticed. William accuses Alano of an affair with Marielle, which Alano denies. He produces his cellphone, revealing the photos of the two of them together. This immediately escalates; Alano grabbing for the cellphone. They fight and Alano is injured, temporarily breaking the nepharite's hold on him. He warns William that something is coming and the paintings must be destroyed. Before he can say much else, *Vauquelin* reasserts control and attacks William full force – his rotted flesh rearing as the demon warps the body from within. Unless the characters intervene, it is likely William will be knocked out or killed. If the former, he'll be hidden away for eventual transformation into a *Living Dead*, possibly leading to a rescue by the characters.





*The Wanderer:* Framed in moonlight, a robed figure traverses vast desert, seeking an indistinct city, representing the Intellect.

*GM Note: PCs connected to either William and/or Alano notice the two men departing from the party. This allows the characters the opportunity to participate in this Scene. Also, PCs connected with Alano wishing to press him on his strange behavior may replace William in this Scene.*

## Act 2: The Unveiling

At midnight, a low bell resounds throughout the gallery, the party-goers falling silent. All eyes go to **Marielle**, who stands on the second floor balcony. Like a dark angel, she radiates with majestic vitality; the previous exhaustion completely faded. Indeed, she possesses a manic aura to her, something wild and feral. She addresses the crowd, thanking them again for their attendance. She calls for people with a skull on their invitations to join her. The PCs notice this includes them, as well as the main NPCs and thirty other attendees.

People file into the large Dubois gallery; empty except for the nine paintings, arranged on the far wall. Muted spotlights illuminate the eight paintings, casting them in an eerie glow – the canvases appearing wet, as if freshly painted. *The Tears of Djeraba* remains closed, its enormous case exquisitely carved – writhing corpses decorating its exterior, their bodies in pain or pleasure. The air is thick with incense coming from two bronze braziers. Somber music echoes from hidden speakers, barely masking a low, rhythmic chant. A pentagram decorates the polished floor, its pattern contained within a dark circle. A triangle is

painted in end of the pentagram closest to the paintings, glowing from beneath; an effect that shouldn't be possible. Various names are written in Enochian symbols within the pentagram. *GM Note: These names represent the various Incarnations of the Death Angel, Togarini. Characters skilled in Death magic recognize these as key elements of the Gateway to the Underworld ritual, albeit a more complex version.*

Once the **Patrons** are ushered inside, the security guards close the doors behind them. The walls begin to shimmer and change, a rusty light leeching through. Most people believe these are simply special effects, enjoying the show with nervous laughter and whispers. An oppressive weight fills the air, as the walls seem to move inward, adding to the claustrophobic ambience.

### SCENE 1: THE SACRIFICE

Dubois opens the triptych, revealing the painting inside. Excited, people press closer for their first look. After a few moments, the pentagram's glow intensifies, the paintings shimmer, their pigments darkening, becoming increasingly realistic in appearance. As the crowd's attention focuses on the paintings, **Marielle** removes a knife hidden behind *The Tears of Djeraba*. Unceremoniously, she steps forward and plunges it into her husband's side. If he isn't available, she stabs the closest person. This happens too quickly to prevent.



The crowd is momentarily stunned, most believing this is part of the show. Blood splashes over the pentagram, causing the glow to flare like summer lightning. As the blood is consumed, the air grows rank with the scent of burning copper. Around the room, the walls crumble and rot, paintings peel, and lights flicker and sputter out. Entropy runs rampant, everything decaying at an advanced rate, stripping away the veneer of Reality to reveal the purgatory beneath. Within moments, the gallery shifts completely over to Inferno; outside the room, the Center undergoes the same fate.

At this point, *Vauquelin* sheds Alano's skin, erupting from the man's body in a gruesome display, taking on his full nepharite form (roll *Keep it Together*). He hovers over Marielle, before sweeping her into an intimate embrace. She doesn't resist him, despite his appearance. Gentle at first, the embrace turns deadly as her flesh begins to calcify and stone wings tears from her back, transforming her into *The Grieving Angel*.

## SCENE 2: THE DESCENT

Panic immediately ensues; the *Patrons* rush for the only apparent exit. They discover the doors are now chained shut, blocking their escape. People are crushed against the doors, as those behind them continue to push, mad with terror. Characters risk being trampled under this insane rush.

Adding to the panic, *Purgatides* and *Living Dead* emerge from the paintings, attacking anyone within reach. At this point, they are so hungry, they kill rather than capture, turning the entire chamber into a slaughterhouse. This provides the PCs some maneuvering room, as their attackers aren't unified or strategic in their assault. Even so, they'll be overwhelmed in short order unless they take immediate action. Once *Vauquelin* and *Marielle* enter the fray, things turn truly deadly.

Even if the PCs manage to escape the gallery, they discover the remainder of the Center similarly transformed. The Black Sun shines through the skylight, casting the world in greasy light. Beyond the front doors, nothing but broken buildings can be seen, burned out and smoldering. Things unholy move and dart just out of sight, shadows on shadows. Swirling sand soon shuts the doors completely, trapping the guests inside.

The main hall devolves into madness and butchery. *Patrons* fight to escape as statuary, paintings, and photographs come to life, birthing undead abominations from Inferno. With minimal armament, they stand little chance against these creatures, most falling to torturous fates within moments. Others scatter and hide throughout the facility; many of who accidentally wander into the various sections of *Vauquelin's* purgatory and are lost forever.

## SCENE 3: THE ESCAPE

Just when things look their worst, *Meri* beckons frantically to the characters from the opposite side of the room. While most of the crowd remains focused on the locked main exit, she uses her key-pass to open an inconspicuous security door in the far wall, allowing access to the service tunnels. Depending on which NPCs are close by determines the size of the group the GM will need to oversee during most of the scenario. Too soon, the increasing threat forces her to lock the doors behind them, condemning dozens of people to an unspeakable fate.

Although transformed, the service tunnels remain far safer than the exterior areas. Knowing them well, *Meri* leads the group back to her offices in the basement. She strongly suggests this course of action, as the vault-like offices are easily defended and well supplied. This should provide them enough time to regroup and assess the situation. The journey to *Meri's* office should be relatively straightforward; the real threats saved for *Act 3*. However, this is an excellent opportunity for minor encounters with *Purgatides* and *Living Dead*, as well as manifestations of *Vauquelin's* purgatory.

Meanwhile, *Vauquelin* commands his minions to collect the survivors together, locking them into the Center's main office. The Atrocity Exhibition is transported down to the main lobby and placed under guard. He remains here for the scenario's duration, fully devoting his efforts to the temple's consecration and ritual preparations (see *Threat Escalation*). He discards *Marielle* completely, allowing her to wander through his purgatory, lost and enraged.

## SCENE 4: FALSE SANCTUARY

*Meri* and the group retreat to the vault/lab area. Aspects of *Vauquelin's* purgatory bleed into it, altering furniture and architecture, overlapping them with items from Paris, Milan, and SidiBou Said. Crumbled sections of wall reveal weird, organic tubing and nonsensical machinery. Rank steam rises from rusty vents in the floor, reverberating with the distant echo of thunderous engines. Otherwise, most of the room remains untouched. It serves as an excellent sanctuary from this point forward. Next door to *Meri's* offices, there is a tool room, metal and wood shop, as well as a ceramics studio. Characters are free to utilize the various furniture, tools, and chemicals to arm themselves, as well as strengthen their defenses as they see fit. There are also medical supplies, food and water, and even spare clothes.

*GM Note: The GM is encouraged to allow the PCs some leniency here, playing up the survival horror aspects of the situation. Surviving NPCs have their own ideas on how to proceed, so this could provide interesting roleplaying opportunities. No matter how far the PCs venture into the purgatory, they eventually find their way back to these rooms. If things slow down too much, the GM can introduce threats to the group, as they see fit. Finally, if the session is running long, this is an excellent place to wrap before the next Act.*

## Act 3: The Atrocity Exhibition

Utilized to create his purgatory, the Atrocity Exhibition is intimately connected to *Vauquelin*, physically manifesting his thoughts, desires, and dreams. As such, exploring *Vauquelin's* personal hell provides insight into the artist's history and intentions; although, not all of its imagery and symbolism will be comprehensible to outward observers. The following Scenes can be run in whatever order the GM desires, but all should be encountered. The GM can invent additional Scenes, adding to this string of events as characters make their way through *Vauquelin's* purgatory. Furthermore, each Scene provides some clue and/or weapon for



the characters to use in the final confrontation.

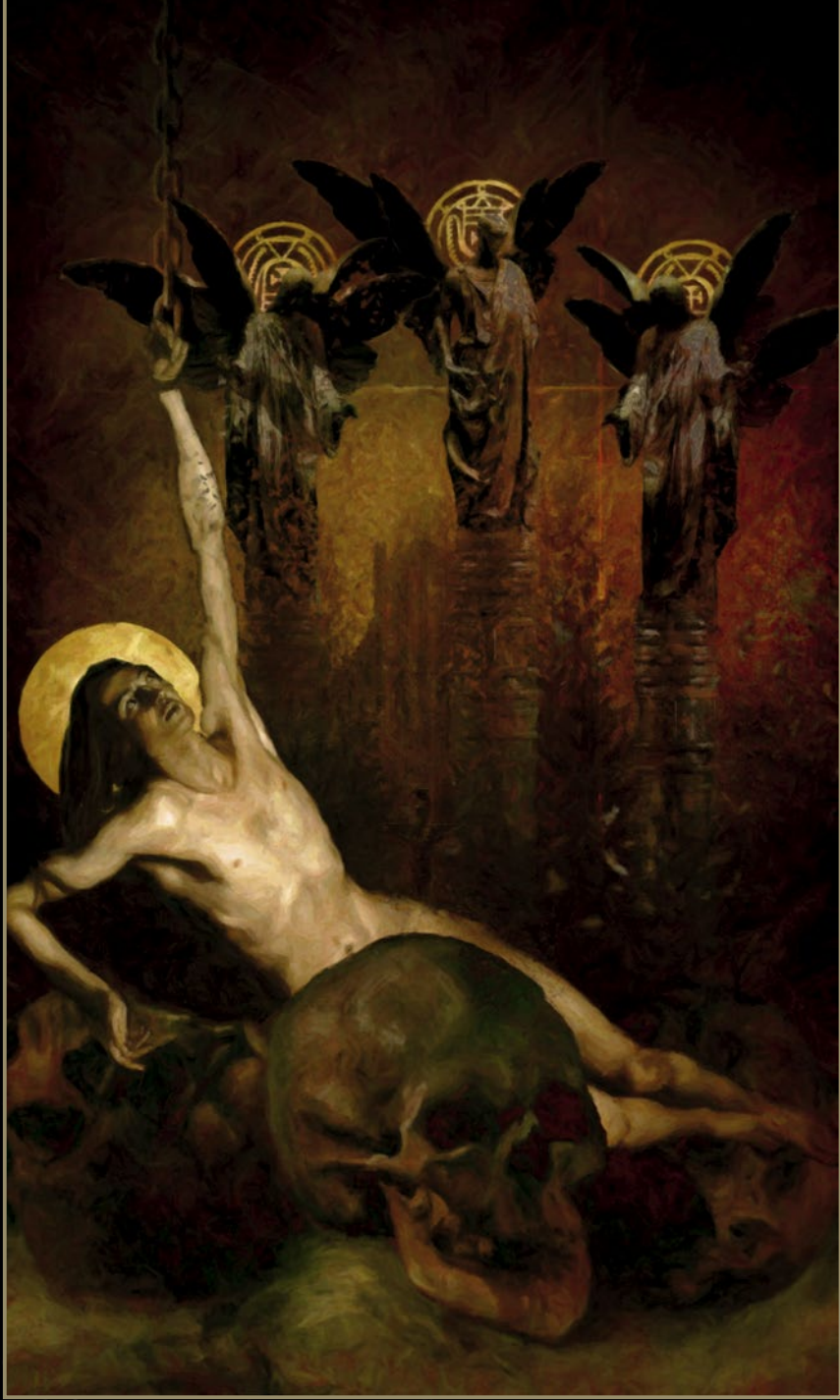
As stated above, the Center's infernal manifestation retains much of its general layout and architecture. However, aspects of Vauquelin's purgatory transmogrify random locations, adding hallways, rooms, urban and natural spaces, and even entire landscapes. The GM should avoid railroading the PCs during each Scene, allowing for a free and natural progression as they explore and experience the purgatory's landscape. Even so, the longer they remain, the more prominent – and dangerous – these changes become. The GM may impose a strict time-limit in conjunction to the *Threat Escalation* (see above), although the players will likely be unaware of it.

### SCENE 1: PARIS & MONTMARTRE

While exploring, the characters encounter a collapsed crumbling wall, a profound darkness lurking beyond the opening. Once illuminated, the space appears to be an ancient ossuary, the limestone walls lined with moldering human remains stacked with fine precision. Etched above the opposite archway are the words, "Arrête, c'est ici l'empire de la mort!" – *Stop. This is the empire of death!* Strains of gypsy jazz and laughter emerge from the tunnel, sensual and invigorating. Some twenty feet beyond the archway, a cracked stairwell leads upward onto a cobblestone street, perpetually slick with rain, the air thick with scents of smoke, coffee, and musk. Neon lights reflect in the oily puddles, casting the malformed buildings in vivid colors.

Characters find themselves in a twisted version of 1950s Paris, specifically the Montmartre district where Vauquelin spent most of his early life. The neighborhood consists of a complex

maze of cafes, nightclubs, cabarets, and apartments, all coiling around Montmartre butte. Sporadically, burned-out buildings smolder in the rain and bomb craters serve as algae-choked charnel pits. Hunched figures drift through the twisted streets like smoke, gaunt revelers staggering drunkenly from shadow to shadow. In a darkened doorway, a prostitute coos and gestures to the passersby – her flesh ripe with fungal rot. Music pours from a sex club, an intoxicating mesh of piano and bass.



*Three Angels:* A dying man chained atop a pile of skulls reaches up toward three stone angels, representing the Imprisonment in the Illusion.



The famous Rue Foyatier rises up toward the Montmartre's summit; the perilously uneven stairwell lined by rusted lamp posts, each adorned with fluttering ribbons of flayed skin. Along one side of the street, a funicular railway runs ceaselessly, powered by a system of blood-filled cisterns – decay and grease thick in the air. Stylishly dressed corpses wait for the tram cars, shambling inside when the grimy doors open. Occasionally, one tumbles onto the tracks and is crushed, oiling the gears and chains with their viscera.

The Sacré-Cœur Basilica (Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Paris) crowns the butte's summit, erupting from the ground, as if born from it. The architecture possesses an organic appearance, Romano-Byzantine features glistening like polished bone. A ring of robed pilgrims circles the Basilica, their faces hidden behind masks of calcite. They chant and supplicate themselves, ceaselessly begging forgiveness for their sins. Occasionally, one cries out in ecstasy and press themselves against the building, their body merging with its stone, leaving little more than a vague impression behind. Two bronze statues flank the main entrance; each one depicting Death astride a fleshless steed, bloodied scythe raised high. Their eyes radiate with an unholy awareness whenever approached.

The Basilica's grandiose exterior belies the cramped interior. Stuffy and stagnant, the three rooms reflect Vauquelin's old studio apartment while living in Montmartre. Canvases, sketches, and crushed tubes of paint are scattered everywhere. The walls are painted with increasingly insane graffiti, hinting at the artist's frustration and fragmenting mind. Wine bottles are stacked in crazed patterns, catching the neon light that oozes in through the broken windows. Obscene rats snuffle at spoiled food in the kitchen area, fearless of humans. In the cluttered bedroom, a life-sized human model doll lies atop a filthy mattress, its feminine form posed lewdly. It shifts and moans, as if in ecstasy, whenever someone gets close.

Vauquelin's younger aspect is found in the study, sitting amongst an ocean of crumpled sketch paper and torn canvas. Naked, his body is an open wound, every inch scarred and battered. He ceaselessly draws on a sketchpad, tearing sheet after sheet off in frustration, muttering to himself in French. Rusted chains loop through his flesh, connecting him to the imposing figure standing behind him. Dressed in a barrister's clothing, the stern man berates Vauquelin through sharpened teeth, his skin stretching tighter over sharp bones. Every curse opens another wound on the artist's tortured body. Amongst the vile curses, French-speakers recognize the words, "You'll fade away. You'll be nothing. You'll be forgotten. You are not my son."

A *Purgatide* of moderate strength, the gaunt figure represents his father's disappointment, as well as his inner doubts. While it can be physically killed, characters can also debate the creature – proving its son's success dispels it. Destroying the creature breaks its psychic hold over Vauquelin, the chains falling away from his ruined back. These chains can be utilized as a talisman against the true Vauquelin either as a weapon or to strengthen ritual magick. In addition, its destruction temporarily weakens the true Vauquelin mentally and physically, robbing him of his underlying purpose.

*GM Note: This section of Vauquelin's purgatory reflects his experiences in Paris and the beginning of his obsession with Immortality. The city itself offers dark temptations, always luring him away from his art with its nihilistic pleasures, and punishing him for succumbing. The Bastille represents his inner struggle against his desires and moralistic upbringing. Its corruptive influence affects the players over time, as well; their base needs manifesting mentally and physically. This is in addition to the real dangers posed by the city's undead inhabitants, who will eventually turn on the living.*

*Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the PCs' exploration. Suggested encounters include:*

- ◆ *The Pilgrims attempt to 'bless' an unlucky PC by feeding them to the Basilica. True ecstasies, they ignore everything else, even to the point of their destruction.*
- ◆ *Planes and the whistle of bombs are heard, accompanied by the cry of air-raid sirens. A moment later, the street erupts in a series of savage explosions, likely killing anyone foolish enough to not seek shelter.*
- ◆ *A sickly woman plays her violin in a street café; smooth, dead skin replace her eyes. She addresses the PCs, asking them to free "mon coco" (my rooster) from the "Tyrant's Chains." This is a reflection of Vauquelin's mother.*
- ◆ *The characters find themselves swept up in a Dance Macabre of skeletons and corpses; a motley crew of artists, musicians, prostitutes, and bohemians. If they remain, they'll be dragged into this bacchanalian orgy, perhaps forever, devolving into one of the immortal celebrants.*
- ◆ *The purgatory physically manifests one of the character's Dark Secret and/or Disadvantage; usually in the form of a person or creature. The manifestation tries to lure the PC away from the group.*
- ◆ *Howls erupt from the alleyways, accompanied by a thick, stinking fog. A pack of surrealistic canines emerge from the shadows, eager to dine on living flesh and blood.*

## SCENE 2: ITALY, MILAN

Vauquelin's obsession with the artist Caravaggio brought him to Milan, where he found himself swept up in the turmoil of the Years of Lead. Marked by terrorism and street warfare, this period of sociopolitical turmoil deeply affected him, revealing the transitory nature of society. Mimicking Caravaggio's style, his painting depicted the conflict in hyper-realistic portraits of life and death. This insight manifests itself in the purgatory as a painted representation of Milan and its chaos.

As the Scene begins, characters hear the sounds of civil unrest up ahead, including gunfire, explosions, screams, and angry chanting and shouts. The air thickens with the acrid mix of gunpowder and smoke, barely covering the scent of sunbaked corpses. Gaining color and vibrancy, the corridor acquires a surrealistic appearance, its shadows and contrasts exemplified. The smoke thickens, surrounding and blinding them temporarily. When it retreats, they find themselves in the ruins of Piazza Fontana in central Milan.

The piazza's normally tranquil and beatific appearance are marred by endless conflict. Charred trees stand like lonely sentinels, their blackened limbs reaching out to snare the





**Fool's Wisdom:** A disemboweled man offers his entrails to a seraphim in exchange for divine insight, representing the Instincts.

unwary. Once idyllic gardens now serve as mass graves for Living Dead too injured to fight, their broken bodies crying out in pain and hatred. Trampled pamphlets and signs litter the ground, spouting political rhetoric and profanities, stained dark with blood. Anarchists run rampant, attacking virtually anything in their madness, butchering each other with guns and knives, throwing Molotov's indiscriminately. Unless directly interfered with, the combatants ignore the characters, as if unaware of their presence.

Everything possesses a surreal perfection to it, the colors and shadows unnaturally vibrant in their intensity. Artistically-inclined PCs recognize the Naturalist appearance of this world, as if they're

inside a painting. Upon closer examination, the observer notices the use of anamorphosis – *the image with the image* – everywhere. Recurring vanitas symbols are revealed depending on the angle at which things are viewed; skulls, decayed flowers and fruit, musical instruments, and time pieces being the most common. These symbols reflect the triumph and inevitability of Death, the transitory nature of life. In such prevalence, they create an unconscious effect on the viewer, slowly weakening their inner resolve. Prolonged exposure can induce depression, violence, and suicidal tendencies.



From the moment the characters arrive in this chaos, they sense a haunting presence that intensifies as they explore. At first, it's an ephemeral feeling, as if someone is watching them. As time goes on, they catch glimpses of a shadowy figure in the distance, tall and imposing. Dressed in Tunisian fashion, he appears to get closer and closer. His face never becomes visible, a hole of pure darkness. Yet, he never actually reaches the PCs nor can they reach him, always remaining separated somehow. Power and authority radiate from the man, a crushing aura like the inevitability of Death. This is a manifestation of Togarini – the Death Angel.

Away from the fighting, this aspect of Vauquelin has created a home for himself in the ruins of the National Agrarian Bank. It is little more than a makeshift bed, kitchen fire, and collection of wine crates, covered in dust and crumbled mortar. Scattered amongst the rubble are sketches and portraits of the shadowy figure stalking the streets. There are also sketches of Djeraba and the surrounding desert, as well as its terrifying inhabitants (see *Scene 3*). Vauquelin is a hollow version of himself, crippled by endless nightmares. He tries to empty the images out onto paper or any surface he can, using charcoal, pencils, and even his own blood. Otherwise, he is on the bed, writhing in torment.

Utterly mad, he'll likely attack anyone disturbing his sanctum, claiming they are putting the images in his head. However, persuasive PCs can temporarily calm him long enough for a broken conversation. He can be drugged or intoxicated to suppress his dreams; liquor and medication can be found in the surrounding city. Characters skilled in Dream magic recognize his affliction, and can possibly quell his nightmares.

*GM Note: As in Scene 1, freeing this version of Vauquelin from his mental torments temporarily weakens the 'true' one, removing some of his inner strength and purpose. Killing him is a simple option, but clever PCs should be rewarded for their ingenuity.*

*By studying the sketches and drawings, PCs potentially gain insight into Djeraba's location, as well as create an unconscious connection to Togarini. At the GM's discretion, a character suffers from continual nightmares, beckoning them to Djeraba from this point forward. The sketches can also be used to strengthen Dream magic against the true Vauquelin, as they are directly connected to his nightmares.*

*Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the characters' exploration. Suggested encounters include:*

- ◆ *The PCs are caught between Living Dead police and anarchists, both sides fighting indiscriminately. They must escape before they're slain in the relentless combat.*
- ◆ *A crazed anarchist starts screaming at the PCs, thrusting bloodied parchments into their hands, and demanding they reveal their allegiances. No matter their answer, the anarchist attacks them until incapacitated.*
- ◆ *The street opens up into a square lined with crucified protesters. Undead police guide innocent and guilty alike toward their punishments. If the PCs help save the prisoners, they may gain useful allies.*

- ◆ *Curled into a doorway, a stinking beggar calls out to the characters, offering his services as a painter. PCs skilled in art history recognize him as the infamous Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio – Vauquelin's revered idol. He can help the characters deal with Vauquelin, breaking through his madness.*
- ◆ *Characters stumble onto an arms cache, filled with rifles and explosives; more than enough weapons and ammunition to sustain the group through the scenario.*
- ◆ *Graffiti begins to peel itself free from the stone walls, taking on horrid shapes. These strange Purgatides try to pull the characters back into the stone. If successful, the victim becomes nothing more than a painted figure permanently frozen in agony.*

### SCENE 3: DJERABA

A dry, hot wind wafts down the hallway, raising the temperature and parching the skin. Sand billows around the characters' feet, pooling in the corners. Harsh sunlight blazes ahead of them, growing brighter with every step. The concrete walls crumble away, the tunnel (or room) opening onto a desolate landscape of sand dunes and scrub brush. Other than the wind, everything is silent, sterile, as if every aspect of life has been drained from it. A cracked road disappears behind some dunes, winding its way toward a sheltered valley. Stone markers are scattered across the shifting sands, worn smooth by the relentless wind.

Some distance from the road, a stone house stands amongst a grove of dead date trees. In a paddock of bleached wood and sinew, several horses paw at the cracked earth; bones and dried muscle showing through their rotted flesh. A dozen undead riders wait out the blistering heat inside the building, standing silently in a circle. If disturbed, they relentlessly hunt down the offenders, dragging them into the desert for ritualistic tortures.

Eventually, the road ends inside the shaded valley, where a tiered village of brightly painted houses of clay and stone rises up to the sheer rock-face. Well-kept, the labyrinth of homes and mosaic-tiled courtyards is a luminous display of aquamarine and white walls, accented by prismatic doors and latticework. Large doors lead to workshops of every artistic talent, including painters, sculptures, and textiles. Palm and orange trees surround an oasis of murky waters, its banks lined by oddly shaped reeds. Fountains and gardens decorate the village, providing it a cool, serene aura. Occasionally, a lone figure dressed in Tunisian garb passes along the street, their bodies transparent and nimbus as any mirage. Otherwise, no life can be found here. Everything possesses a quiet sterility, as if frozen in one endless moment.

The longer the characters remain, the more the mirage fragments. At first, spidery cracks appear in the clay walls and tiled floors. The bright paint surrenders to inky darkness, while the flowered gardens decay and grow feral. Several homes descend into ruin, yet others remain untouched. Sacrifice poles appear throughout the village, decorated with hair, teeth, and skin. An overbearing stench of decaying bodies chokes the streets. The ghostly figures become more substantial, taking on the appearance of mummified corpses, followed by clouds of black flies. In time, Djeraba comes to 'life,' a bustling community of necromancers and undead servants.





*Autunno Caldo*: A crucified Vauquelin stands before burning ruins, while anarchists dance in the background, representing the Force of Life.

A series of caves cut into the sheer rock face, containing store rooms and other homes. Protection signs are carved and painted around the largest; a coying miasma of incense and rot wafting from its ragged mouth. The air itself feels stagnant, heavy, possessing substance the deeper one goes. The PCs feel the oppressive aura of Death pressing down upon them, as if their bodies are becoming a prison. An icy wind washes down the tunnel, dispelling the heat from outside.

The tunnel opens into a cavern-like temple, occupied by a silent congregation of Living

Dead. A collection of tomes and parchments sits in a circle of human-tallow candles, which cast oily light over the otherwise spartan interior. *Vauquelin* crouches upon a mildewed prayer mat, lost in his ritualistic chanting. Several protection runes surround him, coating the floor and walls. Before him are a rusted crown, a tarnished knife, and a wand carved from bone. Lost in his studies, he ignores virtually any external stimuli up to the point of physical damage. However, if harmed, he reacts violently. Empowered by this realm, he proves a formidable opponent, using magick and his ritual blade.



*GM Note: As above, if this version of Vauquelin is killed, it weakens the true version physically and mentally, as well as dampens some of his magical powers. Persistent PCs can also interact with him, playing to his various personality traits. Disrupting his faith and/or inner belief will also destroy this version of Vauquelin – with similar effect. If the runes are destroyed, the Living Dead descend on Vauquelin and tear him apart.*

*His ritual tools (the crown, knife, and wand) can act as talismans, empowering anyone utilizing them for Death magick. Also, the numerous notes and books provide the reader with deep insights into Death magic, including whatever rituals the GM wishes to provide.*

*Djeraba is made for the Dead, and this is reflected in its entropic aura. If the characters remain too long in Djeraba, they begin suffering physical ailments and pains.*

*Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the PCs' exploration. Suggested encounters include:*

- ◆ *A sandstorm rises up unexpectedly, blinding the PCs, erasing their tracks. They must seek shelter or be consumed by the storm.*
- ◆ *The PCs find themselves hunted by the Sand Riders and their undead mounts. If captured, they're dragged to Djeraba to be remade into Living Dead.*
- ◆ *Characters encounter several Berbers standing around an open grave, conducting funeral rites. The body, wrapped in a tarp, squirms and moans, begging for release. The body and villagers are Living Dead. If engaged, they speak broken French and talk about the dreaded Djeraba, asking that their loved ones be freed from the Necromancer.*
- ◆ *A mummified Berber woman is found wandering aimlessly through sand-worn headstones. Senile and missing her tongue, she uses skeletal hands to 'talk.'*
- ◆ *Inside the village, one of the Initiated – skilled necromancers – recognizes the PCs don't belong to their ranks. However, jealous of Vauquelin's power, they betray him – informing them which cave he can be found in.*
- ◆ *Characters sense an aura of impending doom, the shadows around them deepening, even in the blistering sun. The air thickens with flies and the scent of rotting meat. A moment later, a tall, dark man walks into view, casting an undulating shadow behind him – its darkness filled with rotted bodies writhing in agony. This is the purgatory's manifestation of Luigi Cantorre – the Death Angel, Torgarini.*

#### SCENE 4: SIDIBOU SAID

This section of the purgatory manifests without warning and at any time. Characters simply open a door and find themselves inside the entrance salon of a small villa. The tiled room is decorated with art from Vauquelin's inspirations; Bosch, Caravaggio, and Dali. It leads to an open-style studio with kitchen, bedrooms, and study off of the main room. Atop a cliff side, the building overlooks the wine-dark Mediterranean. The muggy heat is oppressive, making the jasmine-scented air stick to the skin. A haze of cigarette smoke lingers, heavy with cloves and spice.

Caught in perpetually twilight, each room is a nest of shadows, decorated in a mixture of French colonial and Tunisian styles, all elegance and comfort. Signs of celebration are everywhere; discarded clothes, empty wine bottles, and half-eaten food. Fleishy forms twitch and writhe out of the corner of the eye, echoes of pleasure and lovemaking lingering like sensual music. Black and white images play sporadically across the walls and furniture, projected from some unseen source, playing out moments from Vauquelin and Marielle's sordid past.

The study is a wild mess of paintings and sketches, pigments speckle the furniture, charcoals crushed on the floor. A wood frame for a triptych lies on a table, smelling of drying stain. The characters realize these pieces are the preliminary versions of the Atrocity Exhibition.

With its four-poster bed and Moroccan headboard, the boudoir furnished bedroom once offered the comforts and pleasure of an opium den. Now it resembles an abattoir, blood and viscera paint every surface, torn sheets and pieces of skin scattered like leaves. In the ruined bed, two corpses writhe in endless congress, heedless that their flesh has been peeled away and ropes of intestine mingle and merge with each passionate thrust. Huge, black feathers speckle every surface, each as stone.

A flutter of wings fills the room, the scent of rot and perfume wafting over the PCs. Before they can react, one of the shadows detaches itself from the wall, towering over them. It is Marielle, remade into *The Grieving Angel*, returned to her old home. Covered in gore, it quickly becomes evident that she's inflicted the destruction upon the purgatives.

Depending on how the characters react, they may be able to talk to her before she attacks them in her insanity. Playing to the semblance of her remaining humanity (or vanity) assists the PCs tremendously. Indeed, if convinced they can free her, Marielle may ally with them. She cannot act directly against Vauquelin, but she can provide them with insight, as well as her obsidian feathers, which act as talismans. If angered or threatened, she attacks in a mad rage until completely incapacitated.

*GM Note: Destroying (or otherwise dealing with) Marielle at this point prevents her appearance during the final conflict. Also, the pieces of her body – the feathers, in particular – can be fashioned into weapons or talismans against Vauquelin. If presented with evidence of her destruction, he loses all control – immediately breaking his concentration and disrupting any ritual magick.*

*More importantly, the characters discover several collections of arcane notes, as well as initial sketches of the Atrocity Exhibition paintings in various stages of creation. Most of the notes are in French and a smattering of Tunisian Darija, containing arcane formula. Once deciphered, they provide insight into the paintings and how they function. With these notes, even a novice magician can create a Dispel Death ritual, reversing the power of the paintings.*

*Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the characters' exploration. Suggested encounters include:*

- ◆ *A PC walks 'into' one of the black and white images, finding themselves trapped on the other side, looking back out at the apartment. Unless they can escape, they'll become part of Vauquelin's twisted memories, transformed in mind and body.*





**Feast of Ignorance:** Deep within the Parisian catacombs, haloed figures examine the stigmata of an emaciated corpse, representing the Will.

- ◆ The apartment alters its physical layout, adding rooms, hallways, and courtyards. If standing in different rooms, the PCs risk being separated by these changes.
- ◆ Inside one of the rooms, the characters encounter a living woman named Philippa. A former art collector, she was pulled into the painting and has struggled to survive ever since. She may be able to assist the characters, although her prolonged time here has driven her to the brink of madness. She'll warn them of the 'Angel,' which recently arrived.
- ◆ Entering a door, the PCs discover themselves outside in SidiBou Said, an abstract maze of alleys, streets and blue and white buildings. They must find their way back to the apartment through the haunted city.
- ◆ Characters enter a harem of exquisite corpses, men and women, naked and writhing. They invite the PCs to join their festivities, alluring at first, and then forceful, if denied.
- ◆ The apartment's garden is overgrown with vines and flowers. Human-shaped plants are hidden within the miniature jungle; bodies that have ripened and sprouted. The pollen from these flowers lulls the unlucky to sleep. Vines and roots soon burrow into slumbering victims, adding them to the garden.

## SCENE 5: THE FINAL ACT

This section of the purgatory can be encountered at any time, but should be presented last. The PCs turn a corner or pass through a doorway, only to find themselves trapped at the end of a long, arching hallway. Constructed from smooth plaster, it resembles the inside of some great snail shell, slowly spiraling inwardly. Cracks and gouges appear in its surface, increasing in number the farther one goes. Greasy light trickles through these openings, serving as windows onto the purgatory's various locations, as well as glimpses of Inferno. Graffiti and protection symbols stipple the walls, growing increasingly frantic and less coherent. Shadows paint every surface, flowing and shifting like oil. With every step, the world continues to lose its cohesion.

After countless rotations, the hallway opens into a small, barren room. Candles flick in pools of melted wax, barely illuminating the chamber. The air reeks of sweat and linseed, stagnant heat leeching from the walls. In the center, a naked and paint-speckled *Vauquelin* kneels reverently before *The Tears of Djeraba*. The other eight paintings float around him in a circle, suspended in the air. As the PCs arrive, he adds the final brushstroke to the triptych, joyful tears streaming down his grimy face. The painting shimmers, rippling organically, radiating with power.



## Act 4: The Triumph of Death

Sensing their arrival, Vauquelin turns his head to the characters, smiling euphorically. "Do you see?" he says through parched lips. So saying, he plunges the sharpened end of the paintbrush into his left eye, followed by the right. It takes him some time to die, the body finally growing still. His blood spreads in thin rivulets, drawn into the paintings, which darken as they drink their fill. Empowered, they radiate with malice, weakening the resolve of anyone looking at them – urging them to join the artist in death.

*GM Note: Connected to his True Death, the paintbrush is Vauquelin's greatest weakness. Despite its normal appearance, the brush automatically inflicts mortal wounds on the nepharite, bypassing all his defenses (3 Harm per hit). The first strike blinds his one eye, and then the other. The third wound will be mortal, dispelling the nephrite – and, thusly, returning the Center to Elysium.*

Clever characters realize that the paintings here are intrinsically connected to the ones in the gallery. Destroying this version of the Atrocity Exhibition weakens the real version's connection to Elysium.

The realm's true dangers stem from the characters themselves. The purgatory's entropic effect strips away their minds and spirit the longer they remain. They begin noticing aspects of Death behind everything; in the light, the shadows, and the sounds. Their Disadvantages and Dark Secrets manifest visually and audibly, reminding them of life's futility and the eternal punishment awaiting them. Eventually, their sins physically manifest, trying to drag them into Inferno. This mental degradation is temporary, but the GM may inflict **Nightmares** and/or mental Disadvantages from this harrowing experience.

Due to the purgatory's extensive and ever-changing nature, the GM can introduce minor encounters during the PCs' exploration. Suggested encounters include:

- ◆ Turning the corner, the PCs see dozens of corpse-like statues standing in the hallway ahead, silently swaying to some unheard rhythm. The light suddenly fades, plunging the PCs into complete darkness.
- ◆ The walls, floor, and ceiling crumble away, revealing the horrors of Inferno beyond. Things horrid and shapeless scuttle in the burning shadows. They may notice the characters and come to investigate.
- ◆ Someone important to a PC physically manifests, calling to them, begging them to save them. If denied, their bodies are inflicted with terrible wounds and sores, tortured by an unseen force. If the player heeds to call, the image drops away to reveal a razide (or similar creature) eager to drag them off.
- ◆ Artistically-inclined PCs recognize themes within the graffiti, realizing the artist's fear of inadequacy and being forgotten.
- ◆ The walls and floor become a hideous tapestry of rotted flesh; hands, feet, genitals, mouths, breasts, and blinking eyes. PCs crossing this surface must avoid being bitten or grabbed, as the Living Dead attempt to pull them down into this organic carpet.
- ◆ Characters encounter a hunched pilgrim, wrapped in befouled barrister's robes, surrounded by human-tallow candles and law books. The Living Dead is Vauquelin's father. Seeing the PCs, he begs them to put his son's soul to rest.

*GM Note: This Act occurs whenever the characters decide to face Vauquelin directly. However, they're encouraged to prepare prior to this encounter, as the nepharite's initial power would undoubtedly result in a grim result. The GM should determine how their activities elsewhere have weakened him.*

Vauquelin transforms the main gallery into his horrifying workshop; the Atrocity Exhibition at its grim heart. Inferno's Black Sun trickles in through the skylight, bathing everything in inky light, causing the paintings to shimmer like mirages, drinking in corruptive power with each moment. Several Living Dead stand around paintings, swaying in time to some ceaseless prayer.

Having surrendered to Inferno's influence, the main hall possesses a naturalistic quality, its architecture resembling brushstrokes and oils rather than brick and mortar. Protection runes and summoning symbols decorate virtually every surface, Living Dead mindlessly working to complete the complex incantations. Others are lost in a grotesque dance macabre, their butchered corpses circling the room over and over. A group of Living Dead guard the remaining humans in the Center's main office. Occasionally, one of the prisoners is pulled out for use in Vauquelin's designs.

Vauquelin directs the proceedings like a puppet-master. He no longer views people as humans; only instruments for completing his next masterpiece. He's converted several Living Dead into 'paint-pots,' severing their limbs and hollowing out their chests. He fills the helpless victims with blood, oils, and pigments, using this colorful slurry to paint the complex summoning circle. Severed hands scuttle around his feet like pale crabs. At his direction, they attack en masse, swarming over their victim, choking and tearing them apart. This serves as his last line of defense, hoping to incapacitate or tire his opponents before engaging them personally. This will be vitally important if he has been weakened himself (see *GM Note*).

Vauquelin allows his minions to defend the room while he continues with his work. Attacking him directly immediately breaks his concentration, disrupting whatever ritual he is performing at the time.

If freed, most of the surviving *Patrons* become a hindrance, more than a help. They flee and hide, completely unbinged by the experience. Some assist the PCs, but few are martially trained and stand little chance against Living Dead.

If the characters have somehow won over Marielle, she may intervene on their behalf. As *The Grieving Angel*, she wades into the Living Dead, tearing them limb from limb, heedless of her own injuries. Eventually, she'll be



overwhelmed by their numbers, but serves as the perfect distraction, drawing guards away from the Atrocity Exhibition and Vauquelin.

Killing Vauquelin's physical form or dispelling him through death magic immediately dispels his purgatory. Destroying the physical Atrocity Exhibit has the similar effect (see below). Other methods of returning the Center to Elysium are possible, limited only by the player's ingenuity. However, anyone transformed into Living Dead at this point remains such.

Once the purgatory collapses, Elysium returns like a tidal wave of sound and prismatic light. Paint and rot rain down on the characters, crushing them with its weight and fury. Blinded, deafened, they stumble through the tempest until it finally dissipates like ferid smoke. They'll find themselves back in the Center, which appears virtually untouched. Even the bodies have faded into nothingness, leaving behind no sign of the recent violence. If the Atrocity Exhibition survives the final encounter, the paintings stand in a circle in the lobby – as if waiting for their next unveiling.



*Triumphator:* A haloed Death stands triumphant over above Adam and Eve, who slip blissfully into the churning chaos of Purgatory, representing the Consciousness.



# ENDING

Once the Center is pulled into Vauquelin's purgatory, the threat may appear insurmountable, pure survival initially taking precedence. Nepharites possess god-like powers, able to manipulate a purgatory's 'reality' as they see fit. As such, facing *Vauquelin* directly early on proves difficult at best. However, as powerful as Vauquelin may be, he suffers several weaknesses the characters can exploit.

Spiritually connected to the Atrocity Exhibition, Vauquelin suffers any physical damage done to its components. In particular, solvents and other caustics inflict tremendous harm to the paintings, which is reflected on the nepharite. Furthermore, if enough paintings are destroyed or defaced, their connection between Elysium and Inferno is lost. For this reason, Vauquelin keeps them under heavy guard.

Also, the various talismans in his purgatory can be used against him (see above), and the 'deaths' of his various reflections weaken him considerably. However, at the GMs discretion, Vauquelin becomes aware of this interference and sends his minions to find and kill the offenders. Characters with arcane skills may be able to dispel Vauquelin, once his power wanes.

Killing other *Patrons* prevents them from being used in Vauquelin's ritual; a morally questionable, yet effective method for disrupting the final summoning. However, this does not help the PCs return to Elysium, perhaps even condemning them to Inferno.

Upon the Center's return to Elysium, Lictors immediately cover up the incident, citing terrorists releasing a nerve agent with hallucinogenic properties. Alano is crucified in the press, much of the blame falling on his shoulders. The PCs endure intense interrogations, but are released shortly. Even with press coverage manipulation, Vauquelin's infamy increases, lending more power to his legend.

The characters may discover Vauquelin's connection to Djeraba and Togarini. They could potentially have plenty of materials available to them, thanks to *Marielle* and the Atrocity Exhibition. Following these leads could involve them in Togarini's continued plans to destroy all life in the Mediterranean countries.

Characters disrupting the final ritual gain the attention and ire of Vauquelin, as well as the Death Angel, Torgarini. These two enemies can return later in the campaign, especially Torgarini – who has influence across the world. Any surviving Living Dead still under their control could make excellent recurring villains.

A truly grim conclusion would have the PCs and NPCs being trapped within Inferno, and Vauquelin triumphant. This ending offers ample opportunities for exploration and harrowing experiences as they struggle to find their way back to Elysium, presenting a campaign-length endeavor.



## NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

### Guy Vauquelin (Nepharite of Togarini)

*Standing nine-feet tall, Vauquelin resembles a desiccated corpse with spidery limbs and leathery flesh. A white funerary shroud wraps around his body, stained with putrefaction and pigments. The parchment-like skin on his torso pulses and stretches obscenely; his victims' agonized faces struggling beneath the taunt surface. His eyes are ragged holes, perpetually oozing ichor down his skeletal face. He wields a hooked, utility knife caked in blood and pieces of skin.*

#### Background

Guy Vauquelin grew up in Paris-La Chapelle during World War II, witnessing many of its horrors. This included nearly being buried alive in the catacombs during an Allied bombing raid. These early experiences with death and destruction defined his life, infusing him with an obsession to attain immortality. He strove to achieve this goal through art, desiring to create the perfect masterpiece. This brought him into continual conflict with his domineering





### *The Tears of Djeraba*

father, an avocathonaire (barrister). He studied with the free-spirited School of Paris in Montmartre. However, his excessive and morbid nature offended even their bohemian sentimentalities. Desperate to escape several scandals, he fled Paris along with his pilfered inheritance.

Vauquelin traveled the globe to continue his studies, sparing no expense to hone his skills. He also studied death in all its forms and presentations, desperate to unlock its mysteries. Most of his fortune funded his bacchanalian excesses, craving to live life beyond its limits. And yet, the tormented artist felt perpetually incomplete, unfulfilled, as if something called to him from just beyond his perceptions. Nothing filled the void inside him.

Vauquelin ended up in Milan, following in the footsteps of Michelangelo Caravaggio (1573–1610) – the “Antichrist of Painting.” Destitute, he lived on the streets and in hovels, capturing the violence of the Years of Lead in paint and charcoal. By chance or providence, he discovered the writings of Luigi Cantorre, a Death Magician. From that day forward, he suffered relentless nightmares, images of death and a hooded figure beckoning to him. Drawn by this torturous calling, he found his way to Djeraba, an artist’s colony south of Tunisia. There he encountered Cantorre, who revealed himself to be an Incarnation of Togarini – the Protector of Death Magicians.

Under Cantorre’s tutelage, Vauquelin became a skilled death magician, incorporating the arcane knowledge into his art. After several years, the Death Angel sent Vauquelin to Tunis to recruit new disciples and expand its circle of influence in the mortal world. While there he encountered Marielle Cavey – the future Ms. Dubois. Through her wealth and influence, Vauquelin insinuated himself into high society, gaining the fame and notoriety he’d always craved.

However, having witnessed the ‘true’ meaning of death, Vauquelin became increasingly unhinged by the experience. His excessive indulgences couldn’t alleviate his apocalyptic visions. Driven to madness, he created the Atrocity Exhibition, so Death could be unleashed upon the world as a liberator. Having completed his masterpiece, he removed his eyes with the end of a paint brush, bleeding to death from the injuries.

Death offered him little relief. Bound to Togarini, Vauquelin discovered himself reshaped into a nepharite and trapped in his personal hell. Ever since, he has subtly influenced the world through his paintings, trying to bring them together so he might escape his purgatory. When Marielle contacted him, he recognized the perfect opportunity to achieve this freedom. He began mentally guiding her, inspiring her to reassemble the Atrocity Exhibition.



*GM Note: As a nepharite, Vauquelin possesses nearly god-like powers inside his purgatory. He can read memories, auras, and emotions through telepathy, as well as mentally control people through possession. He can distort and alter the purgatory's physical laws and appearance by concentrating, as well as change his own appearance – including healing wounds. Extremely resilient and physically powerful, he is formidable in combat. Finally, he can utilize any Death magic spell.*

*However, by destroying his various manifestations inside the purgatory, he gradually loses these abilities and becomes vulnerable to attack. For each of the four manifestations destroyed, he loses 25% of his normal powers, until he becomes effectively 'human.'*

**Home:** Inferno.

**Creature Type:** Nepharite under the Death Angel Togarini.

#### Objectives

- ◆ *Spread the Living Death:* Devoted to Togarini's Principle, Vauquelin desires to spread the Living Death throughout Elysium. He intends to empower the Atrocity Exhibition, by any means available to him, thus opening a permanent gateway to the Death Angel's hellish realm.
- ◆ *Extend the reach of his art:* Vauquelin's vanity still drives his goals. In addition to protecting the Atrocity Exhibition, he will form a pact with any artistically-inclined person. If they continue his art, he allows them to live – thus connecting him to Elysium.

#### Abilities

- ◆ *Bound to Inferno:* If Vauquelin is annihilated in Elysium, he will be recreated in Inferno.
- ◆ *Domain (purgatory):* Vauquelin remains intimately bound to his domain and immediately becomes aware if anyone intrudes on it, even if the creature is elsewhere.
- ◆ *Pact-binder:* Vauquelin can make pacts with humans.
- ◆ *Shapeshifter:* Vauquelin can alter his physical appearance and form at will.
- ◆ *Perform Rituals:* While still human, Vauquelin was a Death Magician of considerable prowess. His extensive arcane knowledge has carried over into death, allowing him to perform complex rituals.

**Combat** [4], **Influence** [4], **Magic** [5]

#### Combat [Powerful]

- ◆ Grapples and hold victim.
- ◆ Torture victim.
- ◆ Invokes purgatides/Living Dead.
- ◆ Attacks several creatures simultaneously.

#### Influence [Powerful]

- ◆ Leader of Living Dead and purgatides.
- ◆ Manipulate and corrupt someone.
- ◆ Inspire someone's artistic talent.
- ◆ Spread the Principle of compulsion.

#### Magic [Exceptional]

- ◆ Create and reshape Living Dead.
- ◆ Reshape surrounding rooms, halls, and stairs.
- ◆ Manifest someone's fears.
- ◆ Gaze into someone's soul.
- ◆ Possess weak-willed individual in Elysium.

#### Attacks

*Unarmed:* **Grapple & Hold** [1] [Distance: arm, the victim is held tight]; **Crush** [3] [Distance: arm, victim must be held tight]

*Utility knife:* **Flay skin** [**Serious Wound**] [Distance: arm, victim must be held tight]; **Sweeping slashes** [2] [Distance: arm, strikes numerous targets around the nepharite].

*Magic:* **Warp surroundings** [–] [**See Through the Illusion** to orientate yourself]; **Incite Compulsion** [–] [**Keep it Together** or be overcome by negative impulses, –1 **Stability**]; **Reshape flesh** [3] [Distance: arm, victim must be held, their body is mutated].

#### Wounds & Harm Moves

*Wounds:* ○○○○○○○○○○ ☠

- ◆ Ignores the injuries, flashing a smug grin.
- ◆ Momentarily pauses to savor the pain.
- ◆ The blow causes him to drop whatever he's holding.
- ◆ An arm or leg bone shatters, rendering the limb useless.
- ◆ Vauquelin's shroud rips away, along with strips of dried flesh.
- ◆ Vauquelin's skull fractures, momentarily staggering him.
- ◆ Enraged, Vauquelin violently and randomly reshapes the room (via *Warp surroundings*).
- ◆ His torso slips open and Alano's semi-digested, yet living body spills out from the chest cavity [**Keep it Together**].
- ◆ Vauquelin collapses to the ground in a pool of pigments, pus, and moldering bones.



## Marielle Dubois

Even in her late fifties, Marielle puts women half her age to shame. Tall and elegant, she is a raven-haired beauty with angelic features and forest-shadow eyes. She moves with a predator's grace, dressed in the most sophisticated fashions. Her voice flows like water, the lilt of her French accent adding to its exotic nature. However, her recent bout with cancer has left its mark – hollowing her cheeks and eyes.

### Background

Marielle Dubois is a woman with a past, but no future. Recently diagnosed with terminal cancer, she's desperate to avoid death at any costs, even that of her own soul.

Through much of her youth, Marielle Cavey shirked her aristocratic family's demands of her, rebelling against the status quo. She flitted across Europe and Africa, never settling down too long, always chasing the next dream. For her, life was meant to be savored and indulged in to its fullest, without regrets. This mock-philosophy made the infamous Guy Vauquelin far too intoxicating to ignore. Despite their age difference, the pair became inseparable lovers, indulging heedlessly in every excess her money could provide. She recognized his mad genius, learning from him everything she could. They lived together for over a year in the small town of SidiBou Said, testing the limits of morality each day. But, no matter how much she provided him, his yearnings could not be sated. In time, he drifted away from her, drawn by some calling only he understood. Abandoned, the young woman reluctantly returned home to Paris, marrying the first man that showed her attention – Anthony Dubois.

Although she assumed the role of dutiful wife and socialite, Marielle still yearned for her former lover. After learning of Vauquelin's suicide, she fell into a cycle of depression and anger; much to Anthony's dismay. He consoled his wife as best he could, but she continued to slip away from him. Some months later, she received a package containing Vauquelin's notes and journals, as well as several of his sketchbooks. Unable to face the loss, she hid these away, unread.

At least until many years later.

After receiving a prognosis of pancreatic cancer, Marielle became increasingly desperate. Recalling Vauquelin's fascination with immortality, she poured over his writings and soon discovered his powers over death. Any doubt she might have in their validity was stripped away when she opened a window into Vauquelin's purgatory. She communed with her undead lover, falling under his sway, her fear of death blinding her to his grotesque form. He directed her to reassemble the Atrocity Exhibition, promising that she'd be rewarded with immortality.

Marielle did as he asked, using money, blackmail, theft, and even murder to acquire the paintings. Although she suspects the horrors awaiting the viewers, she considers it a small price to achieve true immortality.

## The Grieving Angel – Marielle Dubois Remade

This terrible beauty resembles an Angel of Grief – the decorative statues found in numerous cemeteries. Marielle's face is permanently frozen into a mask of pure sorrow, yet her eyes remain horrible alive and aware. Her stone flesh is virtually invulnerable, but moves supplely and without resistance. Raptor talons replace her hands and feet, while vast wings cling to her back, every feather sharpened obsidian. Although bereft of a mouth, her unsettling voice invades the mind.

### Background

Upon Vauquelin's released from his prison, he rewards Marielle with everlasting life, but not as she ever could have dreamed. He grants her with the Living Death; immortal but continually decaying. In an act of cruel irony, he remade her into an Angel of Grief, permanently beautiful. Marielle becomes little more than Vauquelin's puppet, encased within a sepulcher of her own stone flesh. She hunts down as many victims as possible, either to be used in Vauquelin's art or to feed her crippling hunger. Eventually released from his power, she returns to their former apartment, descending into self-destructive rage.

**Home:** Purgatory.

**Creature Type:** Purgatide.

### Abilities

- ◆ **Stone Skin:** Firearms and edged weapons do **-1 Harm**.
- ◆ **Massive:** Cannot be grappled or knocked over in close combat.
- ◆ **Wings:** Can fly short distances or violently buffet the air.

**Combat [4], Influence [-], Magic [1]**

### Combat [Powerful]

- ◆ Trap victim inside wings.
- ◆ Violently buffet air with wings.
- ◆ Rend victim to shreds with claws and talons.
- ◆ Attacks several creatures simultaneously.

### Magic [Novice]

- ◆ Speak telepathically

### Attack

**Bladed wings:** **Cut [2]** [Distance: arm]; **Buffer [1]** [Distance: room, small close group all hit at once, victims must **Avoid Harm** or be **knocked down**]; **Enfold [3]** [Distance: arm, victim is trapped until they escape].

**Claws/Talons:** **Cut [2]** [Distance: arm]; **Rend [4]** [Distance: arm, victim must be trapped or *knocked down*].

### Wounds & Harm Moves:

**Wounds:** ○○○○○○○ ☠

- ◆ Ignores the injuries.
- ◆ Wing snaps and hangs down loosely.
- ◆ Chips of stone break off, reveal the wet meat beneath.
- ◆ Face cracks like marble, uncovering Marielle's screaming mouth [**Keep it Together**].
- ◆ Flies away to escape the pain.
- ◆ Becomes dazed and confused, battering air with her wings.
- ◆ Folds wings around her and becomes immobile stone.



### Anthony Dubois

*In his sixties, Anthony's grey hair matches his eyes, smoke upon smoke. He wears tailored suits that hug his impressive body, the result of constant workouts. His French accent betrays his origins, speaking in confident, measured words.*

#### Background

Anthony Dubois comes from old money, his family being heavily invested in textiles. Much of his life has been spent learning and expanding the family business, establishing its presence in Asia, Europe, and the United States. He also developed a deep fascination with African culture and fashion. So, when his sister introduced him to Marielle Cavey – fresh from her time in Tunisia – he found himself entranced by her stories of the exotic country. Despite her aloof nature, he set himself to wooing and charming Marielle, eventually winning her affections. They were married in short order; their first few years a whirlwind of passion and travel.

However, reality soon set in. Marielle became increasingly distant, and Anthony began spending more time focusing on the business. They drifted apart, sometime not seeing one another for months at a time. This separation did not cool his affections for her, however. If anything, his feelings for her continued to deepen, verging on obsession. He did everything to please her, showering her with gifts when he could not do so with affections. While not unfaithful, Marielle's yearning nature persisted, as if nothing could fill a dark wound in her heart. Unable to fill this hole, Anthony's obsession intensified ever more, until the pair found themselves wrapped in a cycle of codependency.

Anthony has noticed a remarkable change in his wife's sullen nature. She's become increasingly involved in the public, specifically the arts. He's supported this renewed passion, but has begun to suspect that her joy stems not from the work, but from the affections of another man. Blinded by jealousy and suspicion, he has hired William Reeves to follow her. He knows she had been involved with Guy Vauquelin before their marriage, but has no idea of the dark connection between her and the undead artist.

### William Reeves

*Handsome, tall, and well-dressed, William strikes an imposing figure, carrying himself with unwavering confidence. Blonde, short hair frames his face, accenting his magnetic blue eyes. He holds a person's gaze when speaking, and is highly attentive to every detail.*

#### Background

A private investigator, William is a professional and intelligent man, best known for his discretion. Accustomed to high society, he easily moves through cosmopolitan and affluent circles. From his appearance, most believe he comes from new money, accepting him as one of their own. He's also feared by many, as he is an unofficial keeper of secrets, possessing potential blackmail material on the city's power players. Fortunately, he maintains an unwavering stance on confidentiality, never sharing his knowledge, no matter the price.

For the last two weeks, he's been failing Marielle Dubois on the behest of her husband, Anthony, who believes she's having an affair. As he's been looking for evidence of infidelity, it's taken some time for William to realize her activities are of a far darker nature. He's observed her trafficking in stolen art, hiding large expenditures, and other suspicious activities, including bribing Alano Tosef. He's learned of Ms. Dubois's illness, which has stirred some sympathy for her – his sister passed after battling cancer. As such, he has not provided her husband with the report yet.

He intends to watch her at the midnight showing to learn more about this apparent obsession with the Atrocity Exhibition, possibly confronting her and/or Alano.

### Meri Janson

*Slightly round in the belly and face, Meri is a reserved woman with a perpetual frown. Her brown eyes hide behind wire-rimmed spectacles, while her silky hair is tied back with a purple ribbon. She wears clothes two sizes too large, hiding her form.*

#### Background

Daughter of Yugoslavian immigrants, Meri Janson raised herself from abject poverty to become one of the country's most prestigious art conservators. She acquired her fascination for the Arts from her father, as well as her appreciation for the past. Having witnessed the burning of the National Library during the Siege of Sarajevo, Meri now strives to preserve art of all kinds. After completing her education, she interned at the Cecil Thorne Art Center. This internship became a permanent curator position, and she now oversees the entire collection.

Quiet and reserved, Meri is more comfortable dealing with paintings than people. She works incredibly long hours, sometimes spending the entire night at the gallery, sleeping her in basement office. Few aspects of the Center's operations escape her attention. As such, she's become increasingly troubled by the secrecy surrounding the Atrocity Exhibition. Unlike most Exhibitions, she's been denied full access to its installation; the duty of which has been given over to private contractors. She's also noticed Alano Tosef's odd behavior, as well as unsettling sounds and lights coming from the Dubois Gallery. When she sleeps at the Center, she is plagued by recurring nightmares of her time in Sarajevo.

One late evening, she snuck into the Atrocity Exhibition's gallery. At first, everything appeared normal, if somewhat morbid. But within moments, the entire room shimmered, shadows stretched, and the angles and geometry of the walls lost their coherency. Voices whispered to her from the darkness; the voices of dead friends and relatives, calling for her to join them. She ran for her life, never entering the hall again.

She's tried to convince herself that the experience was simply the result of long hours and stress. However, Meri cannot shake the feeling that something terrible will take place at the midnight show of the Atrocity Exhibition. Her love of the art center outweighs her fear, and she intends to protect her collection from this threat, whatever it may be. She enlists close friends (player characters) toward this end.



### Alano Tiset

*Spanish-born, Alano's blockish features and body resemble a bronze sculpture; a barely contained strength straining his uniform to the limits, belaying his advanced age. His olive complexion has grown sallow, his dark eyes losing their luster. His wrinkled skin sloughs in places, as if ready to fall off.*

#### Background

Alano Tiset died of heart failure some weeks ago, poisoned by Marielle Dubois. However, this hasn't prevented him from continuing his duties as head of security at the Cecil Thorne Art Center. Possessed by Guy Vauquelin, Alano suffers the Living Death, trapped inside his slowly putrefying corpse. In this nightmarish existence, he's been forced to prepare the art center for the midnight showing of the Atrocity Exhibition, hiding ritualistic symbols and objects through the facility. He's also helped Dubois provide her forged transfer documents for *The Tears of Djeraba*. Worst of all, Vauquelin utilizes him to murder transients and inflict them with the Living Death, in preparation of the midnight showing. Trapped inside his skull, he can only watch his decaying body commit these horrid acts of violence.

Having worked for the Cecil Thorne Art Center for over thirty years, he knows the building's every nook and cranny. Recently, he's found Vauquelin's control slipping. If possible, he will try to escape his grim fate in an act of self-sacrifice.

Alano was once a vital, exuberant individual, impressively strong for his advanced age. Now, his skin has grown sallow and discolored, his eyes sunken and clouded. Clothing hangs slightly from his frame, but is tight around the belly, which is bloating with gas. He wears too much cologne; masking the smell of decaying flesh.

If one of the characters knows him, Vauquelin's control slips long enough for Alano to send them a cryptic message, warning them of the terrors to come at the Atrocity Exhibition.

### Brahim Nasra

*Ebony skinned and bright eyed, Brahim has a large smile and louder laugh. His freckled cheeks are accented by an immaculately trimmed beard. He dresses in colorful suits, meshing Tunisian and modern fashions.*

#### Background

A Tunisian art dealer, Brahim Nasra operates a small trade company in village of SidiBou Said in northern Tunisia. He continually trades between local galleries and London, maintaining a collection of rare and specialized pieces. Recently, Marielle Dubois approached him regarding Vauquelin's centerpiece, *The Tears of Djeraba*. Already contracted to another gallery, he refused her offer – even after she tripled the amount. Later that week, *The Tears of Djeraba* mysteriously disappeared from his warehouse. His business contacts soon informed him that Dubois would be hosting the Atrocity Exhibition, featuring the pilfered painting. Despite his attempts to retrieve the painting, he's been stonewalled by Dubois's lawyers, who've somehow produced documents of ownership in her favor.

He's traveled to the Cecil Thorne Art Center to publicly confront Dubois and demand the return of his property. Hoping

the threat of public scandal will sway her, Brahim has involved Samantha Church, a society columnist. Through contacts, he's acquired both of them tickets to the midnight showing. Depending on their background, one of the characters may know Brahim and be invited to the Atrocity Exhibition to aid him during his confrontation with Dubois.

Educated at the Edinburgh College of Art, he speaks French, Arabic, and English fluently. Generous to a fault, he is extremely loyal to his friends, family, and clients. When confronted with Inferno, he remains calm and stalwart, empowered by his deep faith in Allah.

### Samantha Church

*Samantha resembles a prim, shore bird; tiny with long legs and sharp features. Her blonde hair comes from a bottle, while her excessive makeup sharpens her cheek bones and accents her hazel eyes.*

#### Background

Samantha Church works for local newspaper as a society columnist, both feared and respected by the city's socialites. Her gossip page can raise people to the pinnacles of high society or utterly destroy livelihoods. Having grown up from poverty, she possesses a deep grudge against the new 'aristocracy,' and constantly tries to tear them down. Recently contacted by Brahim Nasra, an art dealer, she's found the opportunity to humiliate the Dubois Family. She's uncovered Marielle's sordid history with Guy Vauquelin, tying her to the artist's illegal and immoral activities back in the 1950s. Accompanying Brahim to Cecil Thorne Art Center, she intends to photograph his confrontation with her, as well as reveal the woman's past. Depending on their background, one of the characters knows Samantha and is informed of her 'big scoop.'

Samantha's manner is brusque and too-the-point, rarely shirking from a confrontation. Unforgiving and driven, she'll do anything to get her story. When faced with her own fears, however, she quickly crumbles under the strain, begging to be protected.

### Cecil Thorne Art Center Patrons

The midnight showing of the Atrocity Exhibition has attracted roughly one hundred patrons. Most of these are socialites and debutantes, eager to be seen at this gathering. Others are art collectors and curators, local officials, academics, and the morbidly curious. Also, there are caterers, security, and gallery staff amongst the crowd. The GM is free to create as many – or as few – of these individuals for the characters to interact with during the scenario. Many should die during this scenario, most transformed into the Living Dead or torn apart by the monstrosities of Inferno. This helps establish the severity and danger of the situation, as well as offer an ever-growing threat to the characters.



## Togarini

The Death Angel Togarini is the Protector of Death Magicians. Feeding off our fear of death, he seeks to imprison humanity in putrescent flesh, forever denied their reincarnation. The distorted reflection of Tiphareth, he inspires the darker aspects of beauty in Elysium. As such, in addition to countless death magicians, he has amassed a loyal following of artists, musicians, and writers. Most of these disciples worship Togarini through his Incarnation, Luigi Cantorre.

From his stronghold in Djeraba, Tunisia, Cantorre's influence stretches throughout the Mediterranean, as well as internationally. He utilizes this network of artists and death magicians toward his unwavering goal of destroying all life; although most remain ignorant of his true intentions.

Although, it is unlikely that Togarini (or his Incarnation) will be encountered, his machinations play a vital role in this scenario. Cunning and ruthless, the Death Angel lends Vauquelin whatever assistance he can, usually in the form of death magic, Living Dead, and Inferno creatures. He hopes that the Atrocity Exhibition can create a permanent portal from Elysium to Inferno.

## Living Dead

The Living Dead are condemned to imprisonment within their animated corpse. It continues to putrefy as normal, slowly reducing the victim to little more than a mummified skeleton – completely aware of its surroundings. However, prior to this, their undead bodies are incredibly resilient, ignoring most wounds. Each body part possesses its own 'life,' acting independently if separated from the whole. Each severed limb will attempt to reunite with the whole, and attacks anything preventing it from doing so. Only complete incineration will destroy the body (or the separate pieces).

### Abilities

- ◆ *Undead:* Firearms and crushing weapons do **-1 Harm**.
- ◆ *Inhuman:* Can't be reasoned with.
- ◆ *Slow:* Players suffer **-2 on their rolls** to **Avoid Harm**.

**Combat** [3], **Influence** [-], **Magic** [-].

### Combat [Considerable]

- ◆ Ignore horrible wounds.
- ◆ Grapple someone with inhuman strength.
- ◆ Tear someone apart.

## Attacks

The living dead doesn't react to pain and damage as living creatures do. Their limbs try to re-attach to their bodies when cut off. They try to tear their opponents apart.

*Natural weapons:* **Grapple and hold** [1] [Distance: arm, **Act Under Pressure** to break free]; **Tear apart** [2] [Distance: arm, victim must be held]; **Hit** [1] [Distance: arm].

## Wounds & Harm Moves

*Wounds:* ○○○ ☠

- ◆ Shallow wounds.
- ◆ A grave wound, it doesn't stop the creature.
- ◆ A limb is amputated, but slowly crawls back to the creature.
- ◆ Appears defeated but the body parts will reassemble later. [It recovers **1 Wound** after reassembling].
- ◆ The creature is cut, smashed, or torn to pieces.

## Purgatides

These trapped souls have served Vauquelin since his transformation into a nepharite. Most are victims unlucky enough to be pulled through one of his paintings and into his domain. Once there, they've been used to feed his unquenchable desires, their flesh and minds tortured and ravaged. Each has been transfigured into a grotesque work of art, their putrefying bodies both beautiful and terrible in design. Trapped in this living death, they've gone completely mad and wish to inflict this fate upon anyone they can sink their claws into. They may be slow and clumsy – due to their deteriorated bodies – but the purgatides are incredibly strong and nearly invulnerable. They're extremely dangerous in groups, herding their victims like wild dogs. Some of them have special rules in (parentheses). Examples of unique purgatides include:

- ◆ A skeletal man and a Rubenesque woman melded together in a lewd mockery of *Death and the Maiden*; their rotting bodies are interwoven monstrously, every shared movement cause them pain and pleasure.
- ◆ A plague doctor wielding a smoking censer; its raven mask has been bonded to its face, while feathers erupt from its pocked, oozing flesh. (Dizzying smoke: **-1 on all rolls until free from the smoke**.)
- ◆ Dressed in fine vestments, this cadaverous cardinal wields a pastoral staff decorated with writhing snakes.
- ◆ Several bal-musette musicians, their gaunt forms waltzing and playing to gypsy music. Their instruments are built from hollowed bones, desiccated flesh, and innards. (Maddening tunes: *Everyone that hears the melody must roll **Keep it Together** or **-2 Stability***.)



- ◆ Cadaverous woman dressed in Middle Ages finery, wearing a crown of bone. Her torso is hollowed out; serving as the nest for a skeletal dwarf that ceaselessly gnaws at her innards. (Regal aura: Roll **Keep it Together** to not obey her commands. +2 on the roll if the command is the dangerous to the PC or someone it cares for.)
- ◆ A taxidermied wolf of nightmarish proportions, its claws and teeth replaced with rusted metal. Three human heads have been grafted to its shoulders, each screaming and begging for release. (**Bite** [3] [Distance: arm].)
- ◆ A woman completely denuded of her skin, exposing the glistening anatomy beneath in perfect relief. She leaves a perpetual trail of blood and embalming fluid with every pained step. She screams ceaselessly from the pain of every movement.
- ◆ Resembling a moving charnel pile, this collection of severed limbs and rotted heads – animal and human – lumbers forward, trying to add new pieces to its mass. (Resistance to injury: All attacks against this abomination do **-2 Harm**.)
- ◆ Remade in a Daliesque nightmare, this femme-coccyx (tall bone woman) moans and whimpers behind its featureless face. Drawers have been inserted into its body, while tarnished crutches impale its back and limbs.
- ◆ Dressed in bohemian fashions, these exquisite corpses are perfect in every regard, except for the plague sores hidden beneath their clothing and the sickly smell that accompanies them. Their mouths are filled with broken glass.
- ◆ A man in chains, his limbs broken and reset so he scuttles like a crab. His spidery fingers allow him to climb and adhere to any surface. A slit-like mouth quivers obscenely, hiding rows of teeth. (Quick: All attacks against the creature has **-2** on the rolls.)
- ◆ Hooded figure that reeks of rotting meat, surrounded by swarms of flies. Beneath the hood, the monk-like creature is a mass of roiling maggots. (Stench: **Keep it Together** to not get nauseous in the creature's presence.)
- ◆ Woman with her face bisected, each half held apart by wire and rods – her eyes bulging and moving like a chameleon's. Her thick, ropy tongue dangles out of the cavernous mouth.
- ◆ A blackened skeleton wreathed in fire, its flesh crisping and boiling like bacon. Its eyes are hollow pits of hatred and pain. (Immune to injury from firearms and fire. Its grip causes 2 Fire damage.)

## Purgatide

### Abilities

- ◆ **Fanatical:** Cannot be reasoned with.
- ◆ **Resistance to injury:** Firearms and edged weapons do **-1 Harm**.

**Combat** [3], **Influence** [-], **Magic** [-].

### Combat [Considerable]

- ◆ Surround someone.
- ◆ Natural weapons.
- ◆ Torture (and make the victim a part of its art).

### Attacks

These strange and twisted creatures have weapons shaped out of their bodies. A piece of the artwork. These may differ greatly depending on the purgatide.

*Light weapons:* **Cut/break/pierce** [1] [Distance: arm].

*Bite/Claw:* **Cut up** [2] [Distance: arm].

*Heavy weapons:* **Brutal slashing** [3] [Distance: arm].

*Grab hold of and choke:* **Choke** [0] [Distance: arm, **Act Under Pressure** to get loose].

### Wounds & Harm Moves

Wounds: ○○○○○ ☠

- ◆ Ignores the injuries.
- ◆ Lose control of something.
- ◆ Erratic behaviour that is part of its art [+1 on the next attack].
- ◆ Part of the body and art is destroyed.
- ◆ Destroyed.