

Une petite intro', avec le texte pour démarrer le scénario **en gras**...

The Immortal Principality of Ustalav is a fog-shrouded realm of countless gothic horrors, home to vampires, reclusive nobility, and a once-proud realm that was shattered by the clawed hands of the Whispering Tyrant - who is now imprisoned here.

The city of Karcau is the only major population center in the land of Sinaria in northern Ustalav, on the banks of Lake Prophyria. It is renowned as a shining light of civilisation in a region of dark, dreary wilderness. The city, an opulent and decadent metropolis filled with baroque museums, and manors, is most famous for the Karcau Opera and has a reputation as a place that both produces musical genius and fosters it, it is this reputation that has lead to Karcau's nickname of the Village of Voices. Karcau is nestled on the banks of Lake Prophyria and its waters cut their way through the city, criss-crossing it in various canals. These canals mirror the situation below the city as Karcau was built atop an underground lake and its foundations are shot through with underwater tunnels creating a mostly submerged labyrinth, a vast network of subterranean lakes and rivers cuts a labyrinth into the bedrock, allowing horrors from the deep to penetrate the city's defenses.



It isn't every day that one receives an invitation to the Karcau Opera House, with the ticket prices being what they are—not to mention the cost of seats in a private box. Of course, as soon as the usher leads the PCs to their seats, it becomes obvious why the Society has sent them to enjoy a night at the opera.

Already seated within the private booth, a lean Ustalavic noblewoman waits, watching the show with detached enthusiasm. She turns slowly, the crimson of her elegant gown a contrasting starkly with her dark hair, pale skin, and sharp features. She motions to nearby seats and dismisses the attending usher.

*“Thank you for coming. I am Venture-Captain Basia Kalistoff, currently without a home lodge. The Decemvirate requested that I speak with you here, in private, to discuss a problem that needs sorted out. I trust you’ve heard of Skeldon Miregroid?”*

Regardless of how the PCs answer, Venture-Captain Kalistoff continues:

*“Miregroid is a disreputable and duplicitous rogue of my own, noble, Ustalavic blood—my second cousin, in fact, though I’m loathe to admit it. He’s also quite renowned in our little Society, though again, few would boast of associating with him. When his father passed, Skeldon invested most of his sizable inheritance in illicit trade operations with the dark denizens that dwell below this city. Though he is valuable as a font of knowledge about the subterranean passages below—and the Darklands in general—he’d sell out his dying mother if he thought he could profit from it.*

*Despite my personal warnings, the Decemvirate granted him permission to open a lodge in Karcau, though this grant came with several stipulations. As I’d suspected, none of these conditions have been met. The Society requested Skeldon send them his research notes along with some samples of a rare mineral he’s being experimenting with called aureolyte. Neither the notes nor the samples ever arrived. Furthermore, it’s been a month since Skeldon contacted the Decemvirate, who are increasingly concerned about the additional nances they granted him to conduct his research. Other sources have led us to believe he has squandered this money for his own purposes and owes significant sums to one of Karcau’s most influential crime families.*

*“That’s what we need you for. Make your way to the Karcau Lodge and present Skeldon with these transfer orders.” She slides a stack of sealed envelopes across the table. “Once inside, try to collect whatever information you can about Skeldon, his side deals, and the kind of trouble he’s in. It would be even better if you could procure copies of his research and a sample of aureolyte. The Manor sits on a sizable hillside property just south of town. Any questions?”*



Before you leave, Venture-Captain Kalistoff leans forward and in a hushed voice says: “On a personal note, I was the initial candidate for venture-captain of the Karcau Lodge. Behind my back, Miregrold went to the Decemvirate and bid me out of the position while his agents traveled throughout this city, slandering my reputation. I would love to restore the damage he’s done to my tarnished family name, but he precluded this through his bribes and blackmail. Thus, I have a strong personal interest in seeing the Decemvirate bring him to his knees. If you succeed in this endeavor, you will earn my eternal gratitude. I hope to soon be in a position to make it worth your while. Godspeed.”

Karcau		Karcau Opera	
(City)		(Organization)	
<b>Titles</b>	The Village of Voices	<b>Type</b>	Arts complex
<b>Nation</b>	Ustalav	<b>Leader</b>	Headmistress Calmadra Vhalikackos
<b>Region</b>	Sinaria	<b>Headquarters</b>	Karcau, Ustalav
<b>Size</b>	Large city	<b>Goals</b>	Pre-eminent arts school and performance venue
<b>Population</b>	10,240	<b>Scope</b>	Local (practically); Regional (influence)
<b>Demographics</b>	9,650 humans, 375 elves, 175 halflings, 40 other	<b>Members</b>	Musicians
<b>Government</b>	Overlord		
<b>Alignment</b>	Neutral		
<b>Ruler</b>	Countess Sasandra Livgrace		
<b>Leader</b>	Vennel Endronil, Zeffiro Lesiege		