

# Session 41: Escape from the Cathedral

**Date:** Feb 3rd, 2026

## Summary

The party found themselves in the lower levels of St. Vitruvio's Cathedral as a massive battle raged above. The rhythmic marching of the Silver Order echoed through the stone corridors, accompanied by the muffled roars of multiple armies clashing in the halls overhead. The Falling Fire had encircled the sacred brazier to defend it, while the Queen's Men looted gold and silver from the walls, and the Hooded Lanterns methodically cleared rooms with their crossbows. Most terrifying of all, the Silver Order wielded flamethrower-like devices called flaming lances, filling the cathedral with thick black smoke as they blasted back waves of Garmir.

The party knew they had to find a way out before being caught in this deadly meat grinder. Tark pressed his ears to the stones and peered through arrow slits, filtering out the roar of battle to track specific rhythms. He discovered that the Hooded Lantern snipers at the East Rose Gate were distracted by a massive Garmir packlord, leaving the maintenance scullery exit unobserved. Ned surveyed the battlefield and realized the Queen's Men and Falling Fire were about to clash in the cloisters, which would create enough noise to mask the party's movement. However, when Ned attempted to find an alternate route through the preacher stairs—a narrow spiral meant for bell ringers—disaster struck. An elder blast had sheared off the top half of the staircase, turning it into a smoke-filled chimney. The party became trapped in the vertical stone tube, taking fire damage and suffering lung irritation before Yazzy performed an acrobatic stunt to help everyone escape.

Emerging into the cathedral's main hall, the party witnessed what could only be described as a mosaic of violence. The Falling Fire formed a human ring around the brazier while Queen's Men stripped precious metals from the walls. Hooded Lanterns moved with military precision, and the Silver Order's magically enhanced flames created a hellish landscape of fire and smoke. Xakarium manipulated the air currents to push the flames away from the party's path, while Tark led them through the shadows of massive stone pillars, timing their movements perfectly to avoid a patrol led by Elias Drexel, the head of the Hooded Lanterns. Syndle then climbed the statues to reach the iron rot balcony over the organ pipes, and the party traversed the nave from thirty feet up, bypassing the skirmishes below.

The exit was finally in sight, but the massive oak doors opened onto an even more chaotic scene.

The plaza outside had become a warzone where the Silver Order and Hooded Lanterns had established heavy shield walls and kill zones, while Garmir and Haze Dregs added to the carnage. Yazzy mimicked the distinct whistle code of a Hooded Lantern and shouted confusing orders about flanking maneuvers, causing the perimeter guards to turn their heads in confusion. Syndle took advantage of the distraction to slide down the blood-slicked grand staircase banister, leaping over defenses and even using the backs of distracted Garmir as stepping stones. Finally, Tark used the thick soot and rolling fog as cover to lead the party across the open plaza, avoiding snipers on the rooftops until they disappeared into the haze.

Their relief was short-lived. As they made their way toward Champions Gate, the party found themselves in an unfamiliar flooded quadrant where ankle-deep sludgy water covered the ground. They heard flittering noises behind them and caught glimpses of grotesque sprite-like creatures that looked like diseased fairies hovering just above the water. These Cadaver Sprites were corralling them, and when the party rounded a corner, they realized they had been herded directly toward a massive, ugly postuloid cadaver corpse eater blocking their path.

Tark drew Ignatius from its sheath, and the sword erupted in a forty-foot radius of bright light. He charged forward and struck down one of the Cadaver Sprites instantly, then severely wounded another, lobbing off its wing and arm. The wounded creature turned invisible and reappeared behind Tark, biting his neck with corrupted fangs. More Cadaver Sprites attacked Ned and Oiroa before turning invisible and fleeing. Ned teleported onto a nearby balcony but his counterattack missed its mark. Xakarium unleashed a devastating bolt of lightning at the postuloid, channeling divine energy to maximize the damage and leaving the massive creature bloodied. The postuloid retaliated by exhaling a cone of putrid gas that engulfed Syndle and Xakarium, then lashed out with its tongue and tentacles.

Oiroa granted Syndle enhanced freedom of movement, and Yazzy elevated herself with her magical boots before paralyzing the postuloid with powerful magic. The creature stood frozen, unable to defend itself as Syndle unleashed devastating attacks against it. Tark rushed forward and delivered the killing blow with Ignatius, causing the postuloid to explode in a burst of foul acid that splattered everyone nearby. The remaining Cadaver Sprites attempted to flee, but the party hunted them down one by one. When Tark fried the last one with Ignatius, the sentient sword sniffed the burning waste and declared, "Smells like victory."

After Oiroa tended to everyone's wounds, the party made their way to Champions Gate where Brad the Deva escorted them through. Saren, the cleric who had accompanied them, said her goodbyes and mentioned she would need to inform Lucretia Mathias about the phylactery and sword the party now possessed, though she believed they were worthy of wielding such powerful artifacts. The party continued to Emberwood Village and found both the bridge and barracks completely unmanned—the battle at the cathedral had drawn away all the guards. They spent time removing the contamination from their bodies, and Xakarium visited the blacksmith to order oversized arrows for future battles. One party member attuned to Saint Vitruvio's Phylactery and discovered it could store powerful magic for later use. As they prepared to rest and recover, the party began planning their next moves, discussing whether to investigate the Kleinberg Estate, learn more about the Six Seals of Drakenheim, or discover what had become of St. Vitruvio's Cathedral now that the battle had ended.

# Memorable Moments

Yazzy casts Hold Monster on the massive postuloid cadaver corpse eater, paralyzing it, allowing Syndle to unleash devastating critical hits before Tark delivers the killing blow with Ignatius, causing the creature to explode in a burst of foul acid.

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The party coordinated perfectly to take down a dangerous monster in spectacular fashion

The party successfully completes a complex multi-phase skill challenge to escape St. Vitruvio's Cathedral through a chaotic four-faction war, with only one failure, navigating through smoke-filled stairwells, a violent main hall, and a deadly plaza.

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A tense escape sequence where every skill check mattered and the party worked together strategically

"Smells like victory"

— Ignatius

Ignatius the sentient sword commenting after Tark used it to fry a Cadaver Sprite, causing it to burn

## Scenes

### Escape Planning and Skill Challenge Setup

The party prepares to escape the lower levels of St. Vitruvio's Cathedral while a massive battle rages above between multiple factions.

- The party hears the rhythmic movements of the Silver Order and muffled roars of various armies clashing upstairs in the cathedral.

- The Dungeon Master introduces a multi-phase 'gauntlet skill challenge' for the escape, explaining that three successes are needed per phase to advance, and each failure will have consequences.
- Rules are established: for each skill check, one primary character rolls with one other character able to provide assistance through a help action.
- Players discuss their character's strengths, with Tark highlighting his high stealth, survival, and acrobatics bonuses.
- The Dungeon Master presents initial options for the first phase 'Reconnaissance and Route Selection': Investigation, Perception, Insight, Religion, and History.

## Phase One: Finding an Escape Route

The party uses various skills to scout the battlefield and identify potential escape routes from the besieged cathedral.

- Tark successfully uses stealth to scout the perimeters, identifying the East Rose Gate's maintenance scullery exit as an unobserved path due to distracted Hooded Lantern snipers focused on a massive Garmir packlord.
- Ned successfully uses insight to read the battlefield, realizing the Queen's Men and Falling Fire are about to clash in the cloisters, which could mask the party's movement.
- Ned attempts to survey exits using investigation but fails, leading the party into a collapsed spiral preacher staircase that has become a smoke-filled chimney.
- The party takes fire damage from the trapped staircase and suffers lung irritation, incurring disadvantage on the next check.
- Yazy successfully performs an acrobatic stunt with Oiroa's assistance to escape the trapped spiral staircase, completing the first phase.

## Phase Two: Crossing the Main Hall

The party emerges into the cathedral's main hall, a chaotic battlefield filled with multiple warring factions, and must navigate through it.

- The party observes the main hall as a 'mosaic of violence' with the Falling Fire forming a ring around the brazier, Queen's Men looting gold and silver, Hooded Lanterns clearing rooms with crossbows, and the Silver Order using flamethrower-like 'flaming lances' against Garmir.

- Xakarium successfully uses Arcana to manipulate the magically enhanced flames of the Silver Order, pushing them away from the party's path.
- Tark successfully uses stealth with Yazzy's assistance to lead the party through the shadows of massive stone pillars, timing movements to avoid an Elias Drexel-led Hooded Lantern patrol.
- Syndle successfully uses athletics with Oiroa's assistance to climb statues and traverse the iron rot balcony over the organ pipes, bypassing skirmishes below and completing the second phase.

## Phase Three: Breaching the Perimeter

The party reaches the cathedral exit and must navigate through a multi-faction war zone in the plaza outside.

- The party finds the massive oak doors splintered, revealing a plaza that is a three-way warzone between the Silver Order, Hooded Lanterns, Queen's Men, Garmir, and Haze Dregs.
- The Silver Order and Hooded Lanterns have established heavy shield walls and a kill zone in the plaza.
- Yazzy successfully uses performance/deception with Ned's assistance to mimic a Hooded Lantern whistle code, shouting confusing orders about flanking maneuvers that distract perimeter guards.
- Syndle successfully uses acrobatics with Oiroa's assistance to slide down the grand staircase banister, leap over defenses using distracted Garmir as stepping stones, and land safely in a pile of refuse.
- Tark successfully uses stealth with Xakarium's assistance to lead the party across the open plaza using thick soot and rolling fog as cover, avoiding snipers and disappearing into the haze, completing the escape.

## Ambush in the Flooded Quadrant

After escaping the cathedral, the party is ambushed by grotesque sprites and a massive corpse eater in an unfamiliar flooded neighborhood.

- The party finds themselves in an unfamiliar flooded quadrant with ankle-deep sludgy water, hearing flittering noises behind them.
- They are being chased and corralled by disgusting sprite-like creatures called Cadaver Sprites that flitter above the water.
- A large, ugly postuloid cadaver corpse eater appears in front of them, blocking their path.

- Tark draws his sword Ignatius, which erupts in a 40-foot bright light, and smites a Cadabrisprite, destroying it instantly.
- Tark attacks another Cadabrisprite, severely wounding it by lobbing off a wing and an arm.
- The wounded Cadabrisprite turns invisible, reappears behind Tark, and bites his neck, dealing piercing and necrotic damage.
- Two more Cadaver Sprites turn invisible and bite Ned and Oiroa, dealing damage.
- Ned uses Misty Step to teleport onto a balcony but misses with a firebolt attack.
- Xakarium casts Lightning Bolt, using channel divinity to maximize the damage, severely wounding the postuloid and leaving it bloodied.
- The postuloid exhales a cone of putrid gas, forcing Syndle and Xakarium to make saving throws and dealing necrotic damage.
- Oiroa casts Freedom of Movement on Syndle, granting him a free weapon attack.
- Syndle throws a javelin at the postuloid, hitting it.
- Yazy elevates with her boots and casts Hold Monster on the postuloid, paralyzing it.
- Syndle attacks the paralyzed postuloid with advantage, dealing massive critical damage and knocking it prone.
- Tark attacks the paralyzed postuloid with Ignatius, causing it to explode in a burst of foul acid that damages nearby party members.
- Four Cadaver Sprites bite Oiroa, then turn invisible and move away.
- Oiroa shoots one of the invisible Cadaver Sprites as it flees, making it visible and killing it.
- The party systematically eliminates the remaining Cadaver Sprites through various attacks.
- Tark uses Ignatius to fry the last Cadabrisprite, ending the combat.

## Return to Emberwood Village

After the combat, the party heals and makes their way to Champions Gate, then returns to Emberwood Village to rest and plan.

- Oiroa casts Aura of Vitality to heal the party over the next minute.
- The party arrives at Champions Gate, where Brad the Deva escorts them through.
- Saren, the 'pocket cleric', says goodbye and states she will inform Lucretia Mathias about the phylactery and sword the party possesses.
- The party decides to head straight to Emberwood Village rather than checking the Silver Order camp.
- Upon reaching the bridge into Emberwood Village, they find it completely unmanned, as are the barracks.
- The party discusses their contamination levels, with Xakarium casting Purge Contamination on himself and Dave.

- Xakarium visits the blacksmith to order a dozen oversized arrows, which will be ready in a few days for 25 gold.
- Ned and Xakarium plan to use the teleportation circle to travel to the Amethyst Academy to offload items and potentially receive Greater Restoration.
- One party member attunes to Saint Vitruvio's Phylactery, discovering it functions like a ring of spell storing, providing access to spells.
- The party plans to gather intel on various locations including the Kleinberg Estate, Saint Vitruvio relics, and the Six Seals of Drakenheim during their rest period.

## NPCs

### Silver Order

A military faction whose rhythmic movements are heard from the upper levels of the cathedral. They use flamethrower-like 'flaming lances' with magically enhanced fire to combat Garmir, and establish shield walls in the plaza outside.

### Queen's Men

A faction seen looting gold leaf and silver chalices from the cathedral walls during the chaos, and engaging in skirmishes in the plaza.

### Falling Fire

A religious faction forming a human ring around the brazier in the cathedral's main hall to protect it.

### Hooded Lanterns

A military faction methodically clearing rooms with crossbows in the cathedral and establishing kill zones in the plaza with snipers.

### Elias Drexel

The head of the Hooded Lanterns, seen leading a patrol through the cathedral's main hall that the party avoids during their escape.

# Garmir

Monstrous creatures being fought back by the Silver Order's flaming lances. A massive Garmir packlord distracts Hooded Lantern snipers at the East Rose Gate.

# Haze Dregs

Creatures forming part of the horde in the plaza outside the cathedral.

# Brad the Deva

A celestial being who escorts the party through Champions Gate after their escape from the cathedral.

# Saren

A 'pocket cleric' who accompanies the party and says goodbye at Champions Gate, stating she will inform Lucretia Mathias about the phylactery and sword the party possesses.

# Lucretia Mathias

A leader of the Falling Fire faith whom Saren plans to inform about the phylactery and sword. The party considers potentially meeting with her.

# Locations

## St. Vitruvio's Cathedral Lower Levels

The lower levels of the cathedral where the party begins their escape, hearing the sounds of battle from above as various armies clash.

## Preacher Stairs

A dizzying, narrow spiral staircase meant for bell ringers that bypasses the main halls. An elder blast sheared off the top half, turning it into a collapsed, smoke-filled chimney that trapped the

party temporarily.

## St. Vitruvio's Cathedral Main Hall

A large interior space described as a 'mosaic of violence' where the Falling Fire forms a ring around the brazier, Queen's Men loot gold and silver, Hooded Lanterns clear rooms with crossbows, and the Silver Order uses flaming lances against Garmir. The air is thick with black, choking smoke.

## East Rose Gate

A gate with Hooded Lantern snipers whose attention is distracted by a massive Garmir packlord, creating an unobserved maintenance scullery exit.

## Cloisters

An area within the cathedral where the Queen's Men and followers of the Falling Fire are about to clash.

## Plaza Outside St. Vitruvio's Cathedral

The area outside the cathedral's massive splintered oak doors, a chaotic multi-faction warzone where the Silver Order and Hooded Lanterns have established heavy shield walls and kill zones, while Garmir and Haze Dregs also fight.

## Flooded Quadrant

An unfamiliar neighborhood with ankle-deep sludgy water where the party is ambushed by Cadaver Sprites and a postuloid cadaver corpse eater.

## Champions Gate

A fortified entrance where Brad the Deva escorts the party through after their escape from the cathedral and combat.

## Emberwood Village

The village where the party returns to rest. The bridge and barracks are found completely unmanned upon their arrival.

## Amethyst Academy

A location accessible via teleportation circle where Ned and Xakarium plan to rest, offload items, and potentially receive healing.

## Items

### Ignatius

Tark's sentient sword that erupts in a 40-foot bright light when drawn and awakened. It can smite enemies with radiant damage and creates a zone of truth when unsheathed. When used to deliver the killing blow to the postuloid, it caused the creature to explode in foul acid.

### Flaming Lances

Flamethrower-like devices used by the Silver Order that are magically enhanced, used to blast back Garmir and fill the cathedral with thick black smoke.

### Saint Vitruvio's Phylactery

An editorial item requiring attunement that functions like a ring of spell storing, providing access to spells once per day. Saren mentions she will inform Lucretia Mathias about the party possessing it.

### Shield Dragon Scale

A shield that makes the wielder more comfortable being in the middle of a fireball, providing fire resistance or protection.

### Twilight

A sentient sword that Tark carries as a 'ride-along' on his back, used infrequently during the session.

# Geode of Delirium

A geode containing delirium that the party successfully acquired and plans to ransom or bargain for credit.

# Elixir of Health

A potion the party possesses and plans to ransom or bargain for credit.

# Potion of Mind Reading

A potion the party possesses and plans to ransom or bargain for credit.

# Mirrored Shields

Three shields from the cathedral that the party possesses and plans to ransom or bargain for credit.

# Royal Wills and Legal Documents

Documents the party acquired from the cathedral.

# Blood of the Royals

An item the party acquired from the cathedral.

# Books and Journals from Saint Vitruvio

Writings from Saint Vitruvio that the party acquired from the library.

# Special Lights

Five special lights from the library that the party acquired.

# Oversized Arrows

Arrows larger than normal size that Xakarium orders from the blacksmith for 25 gold per dozen, to be ready in a few days.

# Spells

## Misty Step

A bonus action teleportation spell used by Ned to reposition onto a balcony during combat.

## Firebolt

A cantrip spell attempted by Ned against a Cadabrisprite, which missed but singed the target.

## Lightning Bolt

A powerful spell cast by Xakarium, with damage maximized using channel divinity, severely wounding the postuloid cadaver corpse eater.

## Freedom of Movement

A spell cast by Oiroa on Syndle, granting enhanced mobility and a free weapon attack.

## Hold Monster

A spell cast by Yazzy on the postuloid cadaver corpse eater, paralyzing it and making all attacks against it have advantage with automatic critical hits from within five feet.

## Aura of Vitality

A healing spell cast by Oiroa to restore hit points to party members over the course of a minute after combat.

## Purge Contamination

A third-level spell cast by Xakarium to remove contamination levels from himself and Dave.

# Greater Restoration

A powerful healing spell mentioned as a way to remove contamination and exhaustion, which the party hopes to receive at the Amethyst Academy.

# Transmuted Spell Meta-magic

A meta-magic technique used by Xakarium to alter spell damage types, mentioned in the context of turning the Silver Order's hot flames into cold.

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