

Red Table Quest - Visceral

WEAVER:

*In a brief flash followed by a radiant heat and the buzzing bend of light and space you arrive in what appears to be a dusty gold and marble vestibule framed with bronze and brass piping threading the walls, floor, and ceiling. Floors above you, you can hear the hungry roar of a raucous crowd cheering for death. Your Death. From their vigor and desire alone you can feel an intense spirit radiate throughout the building, which you recognize as the ambient magical energy from hundreds of impassioned Red Vein holders. It is in that realization that you finally recognize this place. **The Towering Crimson**. The industrious city within a crowned spire which serves as the central Red Vein seat of power; A notoriously isolationist bastion of conquest broken up into one-hundred and one floors stacked atop each other - separated only by a single enormous, and heavily guarded, brass elevator lift in the center. Each of the one-hundred and one levels are entirely isolated from the others - and nearly every level is crammed with people in its entirety. Those on the top and bottom layers are the very lucky few who are able to leave - everyone else is born into and dies inside the cold stone walls of this monument to subjugation.*

As you scan around you see a labyrinthine maze of marble hallways and archways decorated only with unpolished gold and steaming brass pipes. Racing down the curved edge of the tower you bolt trying to find any source of outside light, only coming across a tiny brass bar covered window barely large enough to fit your arm through after minutes of searching. Squeezing to peer through it - you see that you must be 600 feet or more in the sky above a desolate crag of rocky mountains. Your mind begins to spin as you attempt to make sense of why you might be here when you are alerted to the sound of approaching footsteps.

*Walking towards you with the assertive stride of many battles won, a confident woman wearing a calculated knot of braided hair, dressed in a deep silvery maroon hakama, salutes you as she enters. Her robe is adorned with multiple high revolutionary honors from factions in nearly every vein, and sprawling up her left arm and through her combat robes is bronze machinery which hisses and shutters as it pumps magically enhanced blood into her veins. You have heard stories of a fearless champion of the people who matches this description; you are certain this is **Captain Armani Brass**, a famous Revolutionary and Dissenter of the Towering Crimson. Before you can even get a word out she speaks to you with a stern tone of unquestionable command and unshakable authority - causing the blood in your veins to prickle.*

Captain Armani Brass:

*"Formal greetings soldiers - you must be the collective of adventurers and mercenaries I have been told of. I have summoned your presence for a matter of great importance relating to the coming war at hand against chaos. I was informed through my intelligence network that your party contains the necessary skill and resources to recover one of my own, and as such I made the necessary arrangements to urgently apparate you all here. The mission I seek your assistance with involves the discovery and rescue of my chief engineer and spy, **Priya Navit**.*

Earlier this week Priya was investigating the involvement of The Towering Crimson with King Declan when he was abruptly captured by the Hemoatrament. I have since discovered that today he is to be sentenced to trial by combat - and therefore might be found in either the Death Row bunks, or the Gladiatorial Arena itself. His brilliance has won us countless battles - and without his operative proficiency and tactical knowledge I fear the coming war against ruling forces may already be lost. As such, it is of utmost importance you retrieve Priya and return him to me. I would undertake a mission of this importance myself if I were not to be executed on sight for my revolutionary status. To that end I implore you to use stealth, cunning, and caution - for if you are caught the Hemoatrament will likely track you back to me, and my cover will be blown entirely - ensuring both our deaths.

Should you prevail in this matter you can expect the full support of the Carcer Revolutionaries to follow behind you towards whatever end you seek. Should you fail - and we might all find our ends inside the sodden earth of this wretched tower. Good luck, soldier."

WEAVER:

Captain Brass leads you through dozens of winding hallways before finally arriving at a large copper and bronze platform elevator beneath a tunnel, flanked by two Guards. Captain Brass flashes her revolutionary medals to the Guards, who recognize and greet her with a Carcer revolutionary salute - before instructing you to step onto the bronze platform. Above you the sounds of bloodthirsty cheering are far louder - far clearer than before as they echo down through the elevator shaft. The circular dais is trussed with elaborate wiring and piping, and every so often hisses angrily with the pressure of steam. As you step atop it, the structure wobbles slightly before quickly jerking, and then slowly beginning to rise. As Armani fades from view below you she pounds her fist into her heart - a symbol of respect and honor amongst Carcer revolutionaries. Steadily the vicious cacophony that is the sadistic clamor of a crowd numbering in the hundreds to thousands becomes louder and louder as you rise through what must be at least sixty different floors. With the lift rising each floor - so does too your heartrate.

As the light above you crescendos towards apex - you notice that the platform you are standing on encounters a brief mechanical snag, stopping to a halt in front of a deep marble corridor. In a snap moment choice - you are given the opportunity to either wait for the elevator to continue and look for Priya during the gladiatorial match, or dive into the marble corridor and look for Priya inside the hallways beneath the arena.

The party needs to find Priya Navit, rescue them, and escort them back to Captain Brass. They must also ensure that Captain Brass's cover isn't blown. The party has two main avenues to go about these goals, each with its own benefits and deficits. The party may choose to look for Priya by participating in the coming Gladiator Fight [Part One, Option One: Gladiator Fight], or by Exploring the Carcer Colosseum [Part One, Option Two: Explore the Carcer Colosseum]. They also may choose to explore the Carcer Colosseum, but at any point up to finding Priya, may leave and engage in the Gladiator Fight. However, once engaged in the Gladiator Fight, the Carcer Colosseum can no longer be explored.

Part One, Option One: Gladiator Fight

WEAVER:

Your platform reaches a small enclosed alcove with a shuddering stop. Outside you hear jovial announcements and declarations from kingdom elites of all veins and gilded stewards welcoming you into the coming fray. Standing across the arena battlefield you see six gladiators, one of whom is, unbeknownst to you, Priya Navit; the engineer Captain Brass had sent you for. Each gladiator is clad in masked armor, disguising their faces. Within moments a robed figure at the head of the mezzanine signals the beginning of festivities; at which point the Gladiators of the Carcer Colosseum are released - and start to take swing on each other, and you.

Initiate Combat with 6 Gladiators (stat-blocks below). Each time a party member damages a Gladiator until they find Priya, they may make a **Portent Check.**

Epic Success	This Gladiator is Priya Navit.
Partial Success	This Gladiator is not Priya Navit. If every other Gladiator is also not Priya Navit, then this Gladiator is instead Priya Navit.
As Intended	You are unable to detect if this Gladiator is Priya or not.

Partial Failure	You are unable to detect if this Gladiator is Priya or not.
Epic Failure	You are unable to detect if this Gladiator is Priya or not and you cannot make this Portent Check again until the end of your next turn.

After 3 Gladiators get knocked out, **2 Carrionettes** burst from the walls and begin attacking the closest creatures. If already found, Priya should be under constant threat during this time.

Once discovering Priya the party may choose to finish the combat, or choose to **Flee**. Finishing the Combat is achieved when all of the Gladiators and Carrionettes are defeated, after which players may proceed to **[Part Two: The Hypogeum]**.

Skill Check | Flee: Fleeing is achieved when each player uses their actions in a round to attempt a skill check relevant to escaping - aiming to get a **Partial Success** or **Epic Success**. They will be allowed to use any skill they want as long as they describe the actions. A **2/3** player divide (round up) on Partial or Epic Successes is necessary to succeed on a middling success.

- **Full Party Success:** The party flees into Hypogeum. **[Part Two: The Hypogeum]**.
- **Middling success:** As above - but Armani Brass receives disadvantage on their *Sneak (Social)* check to avoid being caught **[See Side Plot: Captain Brass]**.
- **Failure:** The party is unable to Flee into the Hypogeum. They may try again in the next round.

Part One, Option Two: Explore the Carcer Colosseum

WEAVER:

You sneak your way into a labyrinth of rooms, ultimately aiming to find Priya and reach the Hypogeum underneath the Colosseum. The decor of the architecture is marble-esc and as gaudy as money can buy - with respective furnishings to fit. Within the tangle of hallways some rooms have guards searching for the party while other rooms contain supplies for various forms of artistry and craftsmanship associated with the arena's patrons. As you skulk and peer through the collection of chambers the secrets of the colosseum reveal themselves to you.

As the party begins to explore the Carcer Colosseum roll a d20 and consult the **Chamber Table** below regarding the number rolled; the party then immediately enters that room. Once the party finishes the room, they may roll the d20 again and repeat the process until they have rolled a new number. They may also choose at any point to leave, instead engaging the Gladiator Fight **[Part One, Option One: Gladiator Fight]**. If they do so - they will not be able to return.

Once the party finishes a room they may instead return to a room they have already visited without needing to roll again. Once the party has found Priya hidden amongst the rooms, and found the exit, they may proceed to the Hypogeum whenever they'd like, or may continue spelunking until all rooms have been explored.

Chamber #	Chamber Table
1-2	Death Row: Decrepit bunking quarters meant to house gladiators moments before their violent demise before the elite. Stale musty air and rotten cots are the closest things to 'comfortable' in this space.

	<i>The hiding location of Priya Navit.</i>
3-4	<p>Orchestra Pit: A long since scavenged and ransacked storage space for orchestral instruments. A small collection of Guards are taking a smoke break in this room, and attack you for trespassing on sight.</p> <p><i>Contains 3 Guards (use gladiator stat-block). Initiate combat.</i></p>
5-6	<p>Sculptor's Studio: Destroyed ceramic shards litter this collapsed and muddy artist's studio. While on immediate glance the space seems useless and ruined, closer investigation reveals forgotten Red Vein magic was at play in this room. Muttered with clay and muck - old diagrams of ancient rituals to create Golems using blood magic and mud are spread throughout the room. It seems like these Golems were used to build the Towering Crimson itself. Discovering a small preservation of this 'Blood Magic Mud' buried in the hidden drawer of a desk - you take it in case it becomes helpful later.</p> <p><i>When making a clay tower, the party may consider any tower taller than three inches a success, rather than only towers taller than four inches [See Part Three: Aortic Exit].</i></p>
7-8	<p>Painter's Study: A battered and dilapidated Room filled with broken Easels and painting equipment. Inside you find alchemical instructions for the creation of body paint bolstered by ancient Red Vein blood magic. Spending a short time to bloodlet and concoct this mixture - your party creates and applies this body paint to themselves.</p> <p><i>The party may roll Visceral checks with advantage for the rest of the quest.</i></p>
9-10	<p>Training Room 1: A rotting but still in use weapons Training Room equipped with straw training dummies and heavy combat mats. Inside are three armed Guards currently practicing sword forms - who attack you on sight.</p> <p><i>Contains 3 Guards (use gladiator stat-block). Initiate combat.</i></p>
11-12	<p>Ballet Studio: A shattered mirror and balance bar are the only remnants of what this room once was. Inside a small gaggle of guards are examining an ancient Red Vein blood magic scroll. Upon sight, they attack you.</p> <p><i>Contains 3 Guards (use gladiator stat-block). Initiate combat.</i></p>
13-14	<p>Costumer's Wardrobe: A tattered set room cluttered with colorful torn garments blocks your way. In this room everything from disguisewear to exotic ritual clothing can be found - and you feel confident that some of the attire in this space could definitely help keep your allies safe and hidden.</p> <p><i>Armani Brass receives advantage on their Sneak (Social) check to avoid being caught [See Side Plot: Captain Brass]</i></p>
15-16	<p>Training Room 2: A well maintained but lifeless weapons training room filled with exotic stage and combat weapons. Astute weapon historians would recognize some of the daggers in this room as Red Vein bloodletting ritual knives as well.</p> <p><i>The party may roll melee attacks with advantage for the rest of the quest.</i></p>
17-18	<p>Gladiatorial Choral Pit: A trashed proscenium chamber which has been evacuated and abandoned save for a small collection of chatting Guards. While previously relaxing, upon seeing you they immediately attack.</p> <p><i>Contains 3 Guards (use gladiator stat-block). Initiate combat.</i></p>
19-20	<p>Exit to Hypogeum: A cold and dank tunnel providing passage deep into the depths of the tower.</p>

The ambient magical pressure emanating from this corridor is immense. Traces of Red Vein blood magic run thick here - and its effects cause the hearts of the party to begin pounding furiously.

Once finding Priya, the party may at any point begin [Part Two: The Hypogeum].

Part Two: The Hypogeum

WEAVER:

*Finally finding and fleeing with the engineer - you at last gaze upon Priya's face. He has messy black hair paired with spectacles and a permanent five-o'clock shadow. You can tell he is young - but nevertheless has an attitude and perspective which makes him seem much older. Underneath his prisoner's garb he wears a thick leather apron stained with oil atop threaded cotton slacks. As you escape the more populated areas of the colosseum, Priya thanks you emphatically while guiding you deeper into the bowels of the structure towards a collection of dark, dank, and tangled paths he calls the Hypogeum. As you push forward, Priya explains that he was one of the engineers who dug the tunnels through which you are currently skulking; and how they are now used as hallways for a secret organization called **The Prismatic**.*

Priya Navit:

"Even before Declan my friends, The Towering Crimson always had a tumultuous relationship with authority. Some say it is the nature of Red Veins - some say it is just the nature of power itself. Regardless, wherever there is authority there is also bound to be resistance. A natural result of that relationship is subterfuge; which is where I come in. To that end about seventeen years back Armani, myself, and a number of other revolutionaries dug out these tunnels within the walls of the Towering Crimson to be able to move large groups of soldiers without political oversight. Doing so allowed us to secure a strategically important chokehold point which in turn enabled hundreds of civilians to flee The Towering Crimson for good.

*Unbeknownst to us, this victory would also put Armani and I in the sights of The Prismatic - an underground government cabal acting in the interests of the God Vein. After some intense litigation, followed by a few years of recruiting, Armani was promoted as the Red Vein representative of the organization, and I was decorated as her counsel. Shortly thereafter we agreed to revisit and repair these tunnels for use by the Prismatic for covert operations. Thanks to some path-altering wards and enchantments provided by our blue vein Prismatic comrades, these tunnels are now more secure than ever. Someone who stumbled upon these paths would get lost quickly - but by using the impressions within the wall we can decode our way through to the Aortic Exit. **The keycode is: as long as there's Priya, Armani, and the Prismatic itself - there will always be three Red Veins left.**"*

As the party begins to decode the route towards the Aortic exit - they are to take an **empty piece of paper** and lay it flush atop the surface of the **God Vein Quest Chest Box**. They are then instructed to, with the **provided red crayon**, gently rub against the paper while it is atop the Box to impart the Box's texture onto the paper.

Once this process has revealed the hidden map, players must then use it to agree on a choice of path, signified by a chosen number, between 1 and 7, determined by their selection of tunnel from left to right. If the players chose path 4, they may move on to [Part Three: The Aortic Exit]. Any other choice of number and each player then takes 2 damage and must choose again until they select the correct path.

Part Three: The Aortic Exit

WEAVER:

Having used the impression map you etched from the walls of the Hypogeum to traverse your way through the winding tunnels - you begin to reach a stretch of path with much taller ceilings than before. The air in this length of tunnel is far more damp - and you find that the earlier stone flooring has now become thick mud. Before long you find

that the once pitch black tunnels begin to sport small twinkles of light coming from above- which you realize to be stars in the night sky. While walls of enormous basalt brick still encase you deep within the Tower, you are now able to see your means of escape. A rediscovered ember of hope burns within your chest - and you now understand the passion behind Priya and Armani's anarchy; this feeling of freedom and escape is the fuel of revolution.

Priya Navit:

"My friends, we've finally reached our exit. If everything goes as planned - Captain Brass should be waiting atop the Bailey for us. All that remains at this juncture is to scale our way up. While I would love for us all to just climb up the brickface here - I imagine after the first sixty feet or so the majority of us will eat mud. In lieu of that potentially fatal end we will instead engage in a traditional practice of Red Vein incantations - Blood Magic.

Modern scholars note that before the rise of coal and oil powered industry as the dominant form of Red Vein technology, much of everyday convenience was accomplished through minor blood sacrifices of the self. While much of this magic has been phased out on a practical level in favor of more palatable displays of Red Vein arcana, its remnants lie dormant in the very mud beneath our feet. That, my friends, is how we will escape. Using ambient traces of blood magic within the clay below us, we will create platforms to raise us up the wall."

Using the separated wads of clay, each player must attempt to create a tower which can stand on its own, that is at **least four inches tall** (measured using the provided ruler). Once players begin their attempt - start the **timed music playlist** attached to the quest. They may try as many times as they like, however they may only do so within the designated timed music. **A player who successfully creates a four inch tower does not have to roll the associated skill check below and instead is considered to have rolled an 'epic success' on the check. After the timed music playlist finishes, all players who could not make the tower instead make the following skill check below.**

Skill Check | Blood Magic: Blood Magic is successfully accomplished when the entire party each uses their action to attempt a skill check relevant to performing Blood Magic. They will be allowed to use any skill they want as long as they describe the actions (otherwise default to **Visceral**). A **2/3** player divide (round up) on **Partial Successes** or **Epic Successes** is necessary to succeed on a middling success.

- **Full Party Success:** The party escapes The Towering Crimson (**Quest Ending: Escaping the Towering Crimson**) and **Priya Navit** will be an ally to the party in the **final fight**.
- **Middling success:** The party escapes The Towering Crimson (**Quest Ending: Escaping the Towering Crimson**) - but due to injuries sustained from the Blood Magic, **Priya Navit** will not be an ally to the party in the **final fight**. This does not affect the success status of the current quest.
- **Failure:** The party is unable to escape The Towering Crimson. They each take **10** falling damage and may try again - restarting (**Part Three: The Aortic Exit**) from the start.

Side Plot: Captain Brass

Regardless of how the party finds **Priya** and makes their way out of the Colosseum, **Captain Brass** will be hiding, waiting for the party to return with the soldier.

If the party chose to engage the Gladiator Fight, and finishes the combat, Captain Brass will not need to make a Sneak (**Social**) check.

If the party does not choose the Gladiator Fight, or chooses the Gladiator Fight but **Flees**, Guards will begin searching the premises. Brass will need to succeed on a Sneak (**Social**) check (**as intended, partial success, or epic success**) to maintain her cover during the search. Should she not succeed on that check (**failure or epic failure**), the party will overhear guards discovering her as she begins to teleport the party back to the festival. **Roll this check at the end of the Quest, and include any relevant modifiers from events during the Quest.**

Quest Ending: Escaping the Towering Crimson

Success: (Priya retrieved and Brass's cover intact)

Gain access to the **Battalion of Towering Crimson Revolutionaries** and **Armani Brass** as allies in the **final fight**.

Partial Success: (Priya retrieved, but Brass's cover is blown)

Gain access to the **Battalion of Towering Crimson Revolutionaries** as allies in the **final fight**. Armani Brass will continue to command the army, but will not assist you in any other capacity.

Failure: (Priya is not retrieved)

Return to the castle empty handed. No revolutionaries, no engineer, no captain. You've failed fellow adventurers.