



A DRAGON AND A VASE

A ONE-SHOT ADVENTURE FOR THROUGH THE BREACH

By: LIAM TENNANT

Welcome brave souls to another new adventure in Malifaux. This adventure will send your Fated into new territory and have a closer look at the mysterious Little Kingdom, perhaps even understand a little more about the exotic east.

The adventure presented below can be a standalone adventure for your party or tie into a larger narrative. There will be some story points and minor plot hooks that can be explored as complications in future sessions and no matter what the outcome, the Fated can attempt to be the masters of their own destiny.

If you are not planning on running this story now would be the time to turn around and avoid any spoilers.

THE GAME

Estimated time to play: 4-5 hours for 4 players.

Tarot Tie-ins: CRNC 9X “for not all treasures glimmer in the light” relates to you seeking the missing Ornamental Vase a treasure Quelch is willing to pay handsomely for.

Summary: An eccentric Doctor named Ferman Quelch has taken a great interest in the Three Kingdoms after his first visit to Little Kingdom where he became fascinated with eastern medicines. From that point on he almost obsessed over the Three Kingdoms and all aspects of their culture – not just their medicine – he sought to acquire trinkets and objects of as well. His minor wealth and stature enabled him collect all manner of objects, but so far his most prized possession is still the first artefact of significance he obtained: a Jade Dragon.

Lately instead of venturing into Little Kingdom himself, he has in his employ an oriental man servant Kinkuro who represents his interests in the transactions. The latest purchase, that of a large ornamental vase, did not go as planned and the vase was stolen in an ambush and Kinkuro injured.

As a result of this ambush Mr Quelch has put the call out for any groups interested in recovering his stolen item (as the Guild has little interest in these affairs, *especially* when they occur within Little Kingdom).



PROLOGUE

The Fated have seen the reward poster that Quelch put up in, one of their usual haunts. It calls for individuals to track down and recover an item of personal significance to the owner. The party responded and Kinkuro has set up a meeting with Quelch and the Fated in a private room at the establishment. The room has a table in centre of it enough for 10 people to sit and have a meal the furnishings are not opulent but are a little more refined compared to what is in the common area. The room is dimly lit with gas lamps.

"Welcome friends. I am so glad that you responded to my request, I was beginning to doubt that anyone would. You know the Guild isn't interested in these types of matters; if it doesn't concern them directly we citizens are left to fend for ourselves.

"Oh, I'm sorry, how rude of me. I am Dr Ferman Quelch the unfortunate victim of this horrendous crime and this is my companion Kinkuro.

"The Three Kingdoms fascinate me, the way the people approach their lives is so very different. I think we have a lot to learn from them."

Kinkuro stares solemnly at Quelch as he digresses from his point. Quelch notices and shifts in his seat.

"I do apologise, I can get side-tracked from time to time. Where were we? That's right! I need a group of individuals like yourselves to retrieve an ornamental vase that was stolen from me... or rather it was stolen from Kinkuro in an ambush as he was on his way back to me with the vase. It is so very important to me, but no one could be expected to stop an ambush of this magnitude..."

The Fatemaster is to read or paraphrase the following after setting the scene from above:

Dr Quelch will embellish the ambush to ludicrous proportions while Kinkuro sits silently. The Fatemaster is encouraged to just drone on and on with details, continuing to "remember" new parts of the story until one of the Fated stops him.

At that point, Quelch will ask if the Fated will accept the job and when they agree he offers a round of drinks for all and asked how he and Kinkuro can be of further assistance for them to begin their investigation.

Additional information that can be revealed at the introductory meeting based on questions the Fated ask Quelch and Kinkuro. Quelch is forthcoming, but Kinkuro is not. If Kinkuro does speak, his English is somewhat broken and awkward.

- ◇ Reward is substantial (this is flexible and up to the Fatemaster to decide depending on experience of the party and if this is part of an ongoing adventure as Quelch is a man of means he may have access to other items the Fated may be looking for. At the very least the reward is for several Guild Scrip each
- ◇ Kinkuro has worked for Quelch for a few years
- ◇ Quelch stopped venturing into Little Kingdom himself after a bad experience in an Opium den (he insists it was for medical research)
- ◇ Subsequently hired Kinkuro to pursue his continued trade as Quelch wasn't sure how safe it was for him to be alone in Little Kingdom now
- ◇ Kinkuro was initially a very enthusiastic employee but has recently showed less drive but still carries out his work diligently
- ◇ Kinkuro is unable to give exact descriptions of his assailants limiting it to they were all definitely natives of the Three Kingdoms, their faces were covered with cloth and Oni masks
- ◇ Kinkuro has an elaborate tattoo up the right side of neck (symbol of clan Katanaka, though it is unlikely the Fated will know that). To spot this a member of the party must have *Scrutiny* and *Notice* skills and be focussing their attention on Kinkuro. They will see he is slightly uncomfortable on a *Scrutiny* test TN 8 and if that is successful they will be able to make out part of the tattoo as he fidgets with his collar at a TN of 12
- ◇ Quelch recalls the Qi & Gong as a very nice place to stay in Little Kingdom and always has a very diverse set of occupants
- ◇ The Katanaka Trading House is mentioned as another place that Quelch found fascinating and where he has got some of his smaller Three Kingdoms trinkets



- ◇ If asked about what his favourite piece in his collection is Quelch will describe the Jade Dragon statue and go into long detail about how gorgeous it is (it is about 3-4 feet long)
- ◇ What is special about the vase or distinguishing features: It depicts a vignette of dragon (much like his statue) above a temple that is at the crossroads of several rivers (It is about 2 feet diameter and 3 feet high)

Once party are happy with the info received, Quelch will organise lodgings for the night and come morning will arrange for transport to Little Kingdom for the party. Kinkuro will accompany them. He has arranged for rooms at Qi and Gong while investigation is underway to use as a hub.

SCENE 1 - INVESTIGATION

Upon getting settled in their rooms at the Qi & Gong the Fated will have to decide on where to focus their investigation. There is not a level of stress or tension yet in the adventure and the Fated should feel free to explore their surroundings and bounce ideas off one another about where to start.

Although it isn't yet a stressful situation the Fated should feel that there are risks involved in what they are doing. They are in a foreign environment where not everyone speaks a familiar language. Kinkuro can be played as a bad translator, although party members may pick up on it with a TN 10 Scrutiny check if he is being too obstructive. The Fated have already seen that he is not overly communicative from the initial meeting, but if he is being a hindrance to them they are likely to have to get forceful to have him cooperate.

The idea of this section is to lead the Fated into wanting to go to the Katanaka Trading House (although Kinkuro will not volunteer that as a place to head). Places of note other than the Trading House where the Fated can start investigating

- ◇ Qi & Gong
- ◇ Markets
- ◇ Opium Dens
- ◇ Gambling Houses

Skills of use in these investigations will be Scrutiny, Gambling, Intimidation, Bewitch and Carousing.

Qi and Gong

There is a mix of individuals here, but no one of particular note. There are some off duty Guild guard, so if the Fated get pushy they'll run into trouble with them.

The Fated can find out from other outsiders that a lot of trade (both legal and illicit) happens at the Katanaka Trading House. It is tightly controlled but is really the only place they know of that deals in anything like what the party is describing.

This scene is best set up as an Ongoing Challenge using TN 9 (which can fluctuate based on the Fated) Gambling and Carousing. The Fated need 5 increments to loosen others' tongues, and the Duration is 5 minutes. If the Fated get 4 or more failures before they succeed, the Guild guardsmen will take too strong an interest in the party.

Markets

People here will communicate through the language barrier, but the conversation will be broken and confusing. Wares being sold here are of the everyday with nothing exotic. If you try to intimidate the stall owners they will just scare without giving any information. The Market is essentially a dead end, but can provide plenty of flavour of the area.

Gambling House

It is possible to investigate here by asking the gamblers about trade in Little Kingdom, but Fated will have to loosen them up a bit and have them feel comfortable that they are not being hustled. Use the same Ongoing Challenge as at the Qi and Gong, but failure here is much worse. If the Fated fail, see the Ambush sidebar.

Opium Dens

The opium dens have the potential for gang interference as they are not happy about questions being asked. If the Fated's line of questioning fails quickly and they persist they will face the Ambush complication in the sidebar.



AMBUSH!

Depending on the outcome of questioning at the gambling houses and opium dens, a shadowy force may reveal its hand a little earlier than desired to stop this investigation cold. After all, who is going to miss a few mercenaries and outsiders in the Little Kingdom?

Minor Tarot Tie In

CRNC 1P *"but the people in the windows will greet you with terror" relates to the Fated as outsiders in the area.*

There will be Archers stalking the Fated on the rooftops. They are natives to the area so move nimbly, and they are armed with longbows. For the Fated to scare them off they will need to inflict 3 points of damage on at least half of the archers involved in the ambush. The archers are in the equivalent of hard cover with a Df of 4 and rank values between 5-6. They only have 6 wounds each, and there are about 4 of them. The Archers may fire off a shot or two, but at this point they haven't been given the order to engage.

If this event occurs a second time, then the Archers will fire at the players as their orders have changed.

The Katanaka Trading House

The Katanaka Trading House is not a singular building but rather a converted town square; walkways have been built around the entire perimeter to access where there were once building facades. The walls have been opened up so that instead of houses there are row after row of small traders.

There are 3 entrances leading into the trading house, each heavily guarded by men of House Katanaka. They bear their clan's tattoos and some are in heavily lacquered armour. Every person entering or exiting is checked by the guards at one of these stations.

At the centre of the square is a large open space that houses some of the larger and more unique items and is often used as an auction floor. All

forms of goods are processed through the Trading House from exotic spices to other materials much more illicit.

If Kinkuro's tattoo has been identified by any of the Fated earlier in the adventure they will notice that all the guards have very similar tattoos as to many of the traders.

Kinkuro will assist by directing the party to Oyama in his stall on the 3rd floor on the South East corner by saying that Oyama knows much of what happens in the Trading House. There the party may try to garner more information from him. The Fatemaster should read aloud or paraphrase the following:

"Who are these outsiders you bring to me Kinkuro? What do they want?"

Kinkuro replies in his native tongue, as Oyama looks increasingly angry.

"They are working for that fool Quelch and think I had something to do with you not getting that vase to your 'master'? I am an honourable man, and they mere mercenaries."

Intimidating Oyama will see the party attacked, beaten and kicked out from the Trading House. If the Fated attempt to go down this route try and caution them against it. There are far too many guards here for them to win the fight.

Oyama is a shrewd business dealer but also indulges in gambling. The Fated can play to his business side or reckless gambler to get more information from him. Use Gambling, Appraise, or Bureaucracy to deal with him.

Oyama has following information to reveal:

- ◇ Kinkuro was ambushed outside of grounds of the Trading House
- ◇ He thinks Quelch is a fool and troublemaker
- ◇ Various criminal gangs operate in Little Kingdom and deal in strongarm protection rackets, smuggling and weapons
- ◇ Most of the gangs have warehouses by the docks



As the Fated go to leave, have the Fatemaster paraphrase or read aloud the following:

Oyama clears his throat as you go to leave, inviting your attention.

“You will find, Outsiders, that information and secrets are things of value in Little Kingdom and can have value even greater than that which you seek. Have a care for what secrets you may discover, for many will not part with them as easily as I.”

SCENE 2 – NEXT STEPS

After getting everything they need to know the Fated should head back to the Qi & Gong. Here they should ask some more questions of Kinkuro and the political landscape of Little Kingdom.

Kinkuro will have the following information to reveal, depending on questions. He is more helpful than before, but he is still not forthcoming:

- ◇ Kinkuro agrees Katanaka Trading House is where he bought the Vase
- ◇ He will not elaborate on how he was ambushed based on this level of security
- ◇ The Ten Thunders are the largest of the gangs operating in the Little Kingdom and Malifaux
- ◇ They control several parts of Little Kingdom
- ◇ He has dealings with the Ten Thunders in the past
- ◇ He is aware of a storage warehouse they have in the dock area knows its general location

The Docks

As the Fated make their way to the docks there are lots of market stalls selling seafood and other perishables. Some are dealing in larger more permanent items. Many of the warehouses on the waterfront are boarded up.

With a TN 10 Notice check the Fated may see similar markings on some stalls to those they saw at the Trading House. They can check for the same markings on the warehouses to find the right one (TN 12).

If the Fated can't determine the warehouse by a Notice check, questioning the stall owners' will reveal that they are wary of identifying the warehouse. The Fated will pick up from their body language that they are paying for protection with the Ten Thunders in this area. Following up with a little hard intimidation (TN 8 – 11) will reveal the correct warehouse. The Fatemaster should vary the TN required for the intimidation check within the range given for each stall owner. Also keep in mind that a merchant might be wrong or purposefully mislead the players.

SCENE 3 – THE WAREHOUSE

Having identified the correct warehouse, the Fatemaster should paraphrase or read aloud the following:

The warehouse is 30 yards deep x 20 yards wide. The main door faces street and is open for anyone to see, and the building has a set of matching doors at the rear. These massive doors are 18 feet tall sliding doors made of metal. It is no small feat to get them open, but there is a normal size entrance on the front for workers to come and go.

Around the side of the warehouse there are only narrow gaps between this warehouse and the next. There is barely enough room for one person to fit through. Crammed into this tight space is a single sliding door.

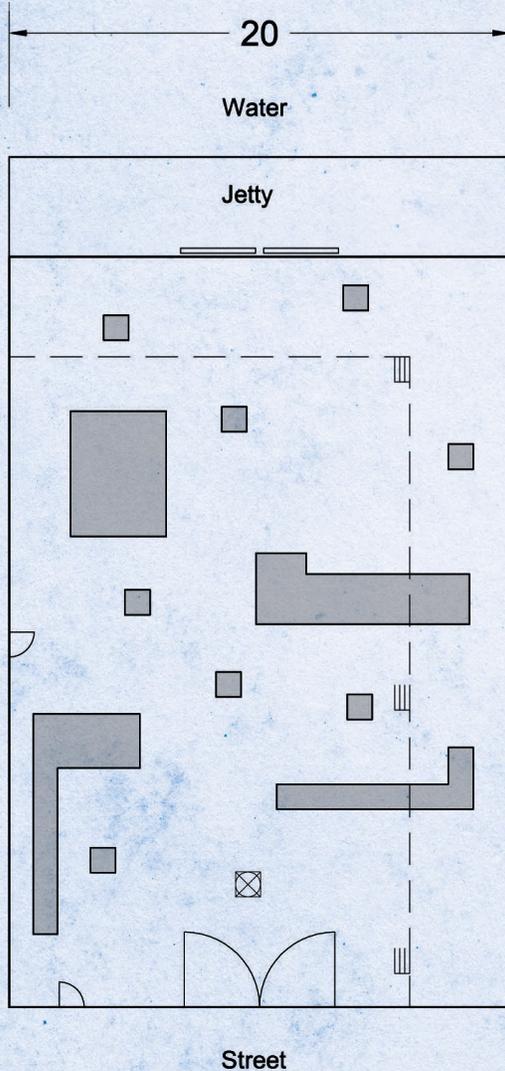
The street looks mostly empty of activity except for the stall owners.”

If the Fated stake out warehouse for activity it will be uneventful, but the Fatemaster is encouraged to incorporate the earlier Ambush complication if the Fated delay too long.

- ◇ The side door requires a TN 9 Lockpicking duel to open.
- ◇ The rear jetty doors require a TN 12 Lockpicking duel to open but the Fated will be exposed.



There are no windows to see inside the warehouse, and no easy roof access. The players will need to figure out exactly how to get inside, and preferably to do so, without the local stall owners alerting anyone to their presence.



-  Crates and boxes (individual crates 50mm markers)
-  Ladder to mezzanine
-  Vase in crate (50mm marker)

Showdown in the Warehouse

Once inside, paraphrase or read aloud the following:

Inside the warehouse is a dark open space. It is hard to see, as only a few beams of light fall down through a few windows in the roof. There are a few lamps glowing softly throughout the building. Along the rear wall and one of sides is a 4 yard deep mezzanine with 3 access ladders.

Near one of the lamps, you see a vase in an open crate that seems to match the description you have. It is not far from the main doors.

Out of the gloom steps Kinkuro, surrounded by several armed individuals.

"You do not realise what you have become involved with. I try to push from this, but now try again.

Ferman Quelch has no right to Dragon Vase. Its place is with us, House Katanaka. He sees Three Kingdoms as curiosity to be studied for amusement. It is insult. He has item of great importance: The Jade Dragon. It was taken and we must return to rightful owners.

"Your path goes no further. You leave now and we are harmony. You stay, and you see the power of Katanaka."

The Fated may choose to walk out, and if they do, the adventure ends (except for an irate Quelch, which they may confront or ignore). If they choose to stay, they must fight Kinkuro and the Ten Thunders Brothers.

Kinkuro gives the Fated 2 minutes dramatic time to decide before he makes the decision for them.

Using the *Fatemaster's Almanac*, you can use the following stats: Kinkuro (use the Executioner stats on page 155, using the official errata to make his damage 3/4/5). He will be accompanied by 3 Ten Thunders Brothers (use the Ronin stats on page 163) and 2 Ten Thunders Archers (use the Guild Rifleman stats on page 145, replacing the gun with a bow).

If Kinkuro is defeated and allowed to live, he will return another day to get what is rightfully theirs. If he defeats the players, he will not kill them, but he will cut them with the Katanaka mark, indicating to all that they are disgraced and defeated.