

## **Episode 7 Sworn Duty (Finale)**

Picking up from the last episode, Uriah and Isaac have been spotted through the curtain at the base of the stairs, thanks to Tenkrit's use of the Burn variant, Unity, granting him sight beyond sight. This 13x10 chamber is small arena for so many people so I'm going to clear out some poseurs first with a chance roll. I'll rule that at least the dancers and prostitutes will clear out and run past Sarah pressed against the staircase wall, which counts for 4 people. Tenkrit, and the two leather clad Anabaptists will stay to fight for their cause, which leaves 8 Scions undecided. I'm going to roll a d6 for each since it is a larger group. Any Success means they stay and any failure means they flee.

This roll normally relies off of PSYCHE+Faith / Willpower dice pool influenced by the Flight Factor table, which can be found in the Artifacts rule expansion book.

Okay, so 6 of the other 8 will stay for the fight. Keep in mind they are unarmed and naked except for one or two loincloths in the mix, which don't apply any armor bonuses. Now let's look at Initiative which gets refreshed each round. I'll rule that Uriah has already taken some flesh wounds, but no Trauma yet since he is so strong. However, he will be stunned and be in an Active Defense role on this first round of combat as he shakes off the effect of the Burn variant, Unity.

### **Round 1**

Uriah – Active Defense

Isaac – 7 + 2 actions

Tenkrit - 7

Pack 1 & 2 – 5

Sarah - 4

Mook 3 5 – 3

Mook 2 4 6 – 1

## Round 1

Isaac and Tenkrit rolled the same initiatives so they act at the same time. Isaac uses 3 ego points to boost his initiative order \*and\* he rolled two 6s, granting him an additional action during his turn! He moves to the nearest scion who bravely, but foolishly, puts his fists up en garde. Isaac thrusts with his sword and the scion dodges dumbly getting run through the ribs. Isaac pulls up the sword with a sickly meaty sound and brings it down again this time removing the scions guard arm with a clean slice. The scion collapses in a pool of his blood, mouth agape as the light leaves his eyes.

Isaac breathes in the copper scent of the blood mist and his eyes roll back in his head for a moment. He regains 1 Ego point for dealing 5 damage this round as indicated by his Potential, Pneuma. Potentials are like character specializations and features that give bonuses to combat, roleplaying and more. I'll dive into Potentials more in later episodes, let's keep focused on the fray for now!

Tenkrit brandishes his cutlass and runs in 5m to strike Uriah. Tenkrit will suffer a -2D penalty on his Action rolls, but gains +1 to his passive defense score. After all, it is harder to hit a moving target. Ah, but Tenkrit doesn't roll enough successes with his attack to surpass Uriah's base defense (1) plus his active defense for this turn (1). Tenkrit goes for a heavy chop with his weighty steel cutlass against the hunched over Uriah. Uriah comes to his senses at last second while holding his hand and weaves out of the way.

Josiah and Ethan move together with their huge Bidenhander swords gripped tightly in both hands. They will both take active defense stances as they move 3M to close the distance and yell out to Tenkrit, "Move out the way you stupid bastard! You're no good to us dead."

For Sarah's turn she will follow the escapees up the stairs with her full movement. Each round in Degenesis combat is 4 seconds and I'll rule that she is going to make sure the

whores and sycophants are funneled into Simeon, Brig, and Rebecca's grasp. She will also make sure that Simeon and the others can arrive for backup. Based on approximate distance to the outside of the bakery and back, I think this will probably take 5 rounds total. Let's see if the Father-son duo can hold out that long.

Another group of scions move closer to Isaac and Uriah, dead set on wrestling their weapons away from them or to die trying. I'm going to adopt a Dungeons and Dragons-style flanking rule for the scions as they surround Isaac or Uriah when the time comes. For now, they will bide their time and prepare to use all their Ego points.

## **Round 2**

Tenkrit 7

Isaac 7

Uriah 6

Pack 1 & 2 – 5

Sarah 3

Mook 3 5 – 3

Mook 2 4 6 – 1

Uriah looks down at his left hand as his vision pulses in time with his elevated heartbeat. His mind is clear, his intention righteous. He is back in battle focus and ready to claim some heads in the name of the Almighty.

Tenkrit pays no attention to Isaac as he strikes at Uriah again, this time with no movement penalty. His cutlass goes wide against the veteran Uriah who ducks the slash.

Isaac moves to strike another scion, fueled by his newfound rage. He slashes across the Scions belly, puncturing his diaphragm for 7 points of damage. The scion enters into

his trauma points, looking at the laceration across his abdomen with a small length of intestine poking out. Isaac gains 1 Ego point from his damage output Potential.

Uriah unsheathes his own Bidenhander longsword its blade singing sweetly across the room. His beef is with Tenkrit and so he will attack the Scion Supreme. The cumbersome blade incurs a -2D penalty for its heft but Uriah swings it expertly. He strikes Tenkrit across the reinforced leather trenchcoat dealing 9 points of damage with 3 points negated for 6 total.

Josiah and Ethan stalk closer, patiently waiting for an opening to strike. After seeing Tenkrit take a massive blow from the wounded Uriah, they implore him again. "Stand back you fool. You must be protected!"

Sarah decides to retrieve help. She is at the top of the hidden staircase and she sees new streaks in the floor on the floor as the others have escaped through the door next to the oven. It is only a matter of time before the second strike team will have apprehended them but she needs to continue another turn to warn Simeon of the dangers belowground.

One Scion faces down Isaac while another moves to flank Uriah. The scion on Isaac throws a wild haymaker to try and knock out the young Orgiastic. Isaac gets cuffed on the side of the head, leaving him dazed in the melee. Isaac suffers no Fleshwound damage but takes 2 points of Ego damage, lowering his pool to win Initiative orders. The other scion flanks Uriah and will receive a +1D to his attack rolls. He will try to disarm Uriah and I'm keeping the Difficulty at 1S since Uriah is missing some fingers. The Scion rolls a 6, 5, 3, and 1. As indicated by the Artifacts rulebook, the Defender, Uriah has a chance to resist and must roll at least 1 trigger to keep the two-handed weapon in his clutches. Woah, even with a 9D pool for Uriahs BOD+Force, he just barely ekes out 1 trigger! The Furor has a death grip on his sword in the fury of battle and it won't come out easily.

Another scion, a drunk, portly man who guzzled from the blood cup earlier tries to ferociously bite Uriah. A biting action normally incurs a -3D penalty but with two scion companions flanking Uriah, I'm going to rule that becomes just a -1D penalty. The scion chomps down on Uriah's bracer, causing no damage.

### **Round 3**

Tenkrit 10

Isaac 5

Pack 1 & 2 – 5

Uriah 4

Sarah 3

Mook 3 – 3

Mook 2 4 6 – 1

Tenkrit yells in anger and swipes again at the flanked Uriah, the wicked looking cutlass coming down to cleave him in two. Tenkrit shears through several woven plates on Uriah's pauldron carving into his collar bone for 3 points of damage. The Scion Supreme retreats 2m to the western wall, allowing the armored Anabaptists to come sweeping in.

Josiah and Ethan will take turns attacking Uriah. The thugs are large and muscular and they riposte their Bidenhander swords on the attack. Josiah strikes with the massive blade for 9 points of damage negated by Uriah's 3 points of lamellar armor leaving 6 damage to go through. Uriah grunts in pain but has had worse strikes. Ethan strikes as well doing another 6 total damage. Uriah didn't see the second strike coming and a deep cut is made across his left bicep, chunks of severed muscle showing through his skin.

]Isaac is next and hears his father's cry of pain behind him

"Father! Burn in hell you fucking bastards!" he says foaming at the mouth. His immediate target wears a grimace of terror as Isaac spins his sword deftly and slices up the scion's entire body cutting his sternum open. Isaac whips around to see his father faltering and moves to his aid.

Pain wracks Uriah's entire upper body. He becomes dazed. Memories of his children growing up before his eyes rapidly flash through his mind's eye. Sarah's face. Her hand in his at a ceremony. Flowers in her hair. She weeps blood from her eyes, staining her satin dress. The Purgan war enters his thoughts. He sees the faces of children, mutants, bathing in blood and feces, relishing every bite of their dead parent's flesh as he pries them off with his huge arms. A cottage is set ablaze and burns behind him as he holds mutants underwater in a nearby stream, unable to cut them down. They bite and chomp at his forearms as they expire. The water becomes murky with blood. A blinding light fills his vision as he sees only black and white. He shrieks like a wild animal.

Uriah activates his character potential, Unleashed. Using 3 ego points, he will now double the amount of triggers on his BOD+Melee rolls. He lumbers 1m forward and swings his 7 foot Bidenhander in a wide arc at Tenkrit, remaining aware of his positioning with the staircase and cloth banners above him. Tenkrit gasps as a swath of steel appears from behind his bodyguards and strikes him for 7 points of total damage.

Upstairs, Sarah climbs through the drop box and sees Simeon Brig and Rebecca tackling the escapees to the ground, nets thrown over them to bind them up.

"Damn these folk, you're needed inside! Follow me." Sarah yelled to Simeon. Brig and Rebecca kicked and punched the escaped scions into submission as the black-haired orgiastic shouldered his flamethrower and twisted it's gas valve to prime it. He raced after Sarah back through the bakery.

After seeing two of their brethren struck down, I'm going to make another flight roll for the remaining low-tier scions. The flight difficulty is now 3S for any cult member to stay, after adding 1d for each slain scion thus far. Ah, all but one is brave enough stay, and they clamber over each other near the staircase to escape the carnage. The one that stays cannot reach Uriah or Isaac yet as there are too many bodies in the way. Time for another round of combat.

#### **Round 4**

Uriah – 11 Fisherman's blood

Tenkrit – 10

pack 1 & 2 - 5

Isaac – 4

Sarah – 4

Mook 4 – 1

As bit of clarification here, there is another potential Uriah has access to. I'm combining it with Unleashed to not only make it more potent, but also to simplify stat tracking and spice up the narrative flair for our hero. I'm a kid at heart, hopefully you get a thrill out of it like I do.

Once a character has taken more than 50% of their Fleshwounds in combat, they have access to the Fisherman's Blood potential. It has no restriction on the amount of Ego points the character can use for initiative in combat. However, in their frenzied, unleashed state, they become reckless similar to a barbarian and can no longer take an Active Defense option for additional defensive points. So, to sum up, Fisherman's Blood has been combined with Unleashed and will just be referred to as Unleashed in the future...if Uriah even has one.

Blood flows freely from Uriah's open gashes and cuts but he is still on his feet. He leaves a bloody footprint on the stone floor as he sweeps his Bidenhander up again. A twisted smile crosses his lips as he sees Tenkrit cowering in fear. The Scion Supreme's monochromatic outline gives off waves of black flames from his head, as if the Demiurge is trying to flee it's vessel before being smote into oblivion. Uriah deals another 7 points of damage to Tenkrit sending him well into his Trauma points. Now any action taken by Tenkrit will have -6D penalty. The Scion Supreme is knocked to the ground, bleeding profusely from his many stabs and slashes. He alive, but just barely.

Tenkrit's turban is soaked in blood, staining the formerly royal blue cloth a sickly looking henna color. He manages to speak only one word between coughing up blood and viscera from hemorrhaged organs. "M...Mercy" he said weakly.

While Tenkrit is gravely injured, Josiah will come to his aid to try and stabilize him with bandages. The other faces down Uriah. "Big mistake Furor. You damaged the Cartel's supplier of Burn. Can't say they'll look to kindly on that."

Uriah wiped spittle and gore from his face and mouth with a bloody hand. He was able to form a string of words between labored breathing, "And...what would you....know about it, brother?"

"Enough talk. Yargh!" The big brown-haired Anabaptist wielded his Bidenhander and brought it down on Uriah's already weakened shoulder plate, (6, 6, 6, 1) carving into his collar bone and dealing 6 points of damage and sending Uriah into his Trauma points. However, such a large cleaving strike left the towering sword stuck in Uriah's bulky frame. The Furor put a gloved mitt on the leather-wrapped fuller to keep the attacker from wrestling the blade free. The brown haired man gnashed his teeth in frustration but he has another trick up his sleeve. Bidenhander swords are massive almost to the point of impracticality, but in the pommel lies a hidden spring loaded knife that can pop out if the weapon is bent or dropped during battle as a last resort. Uriah spit up gore and his



coarse red sideburns took on a darker shade of red mixed with drying and fresh blood. He collapsed to both knees, struggling to stay conscious while his attacker taunted him with the short Knife.

Isaac is panting raggedly. The oils are and his Pneuma potential to regain Ego points are the only thing keeping his eyes open. If any characters deplete their Ego resources before battle is over, they are rendered unconscious from exhaustion. He takes quick strides to close the gap to his next target, moving quickly and silently to take advantage of the hubris of the Anabaptist looming over his father. Isaac has been stealthy before creeping through the Cross Quarter to tail his parents, and the Artifacts rulebook outlines the contesting rolls for sneak attacks. The evil anabaptists has combat awareness but his full attention is on defeating Uriah at the moment. The grit caked floor gives away Isaac's stealth as Ethan turns at the last second to see Isaac lashing out with his sword and will take a full strike for 6 points of damage.

Sarah is several paces ahead of Simeon as they both vault over the upturned baking tables and head directly for the uncovered staircase. Almost there...

The last brave scion moves to strike Isaac and take him off his feet for good with a Blow attack. Blows deal damage directly to Ego points, not fleshwounds. Isaac is currently sitting at 1 Ego point from his earlier turns, even after acquiring some with his Pneuma potential. A successful attack roll...The older scion tries to crumple Isaac with a smack from his elbow between the blonde Orgiastic's shoulder blades but Isaac's thick fur cape takes a lot of salt out of the blow and he shrugs it off. Had the scion had any more points in his Force skill, Isaac would've been knocked out cold.

#### Round 5

Uriah – 1

Tenkrit – 1

Pack 1&2 – 5

Sarah – 3

Mook 4 – 1

Isaac – 2

Josiah throws the soaked bandages against the wall with a splat in frustration.

“He’s too far gone, lets get out of here.” He said

Ethan is squared up with the young Isaac, wheezing from his sword stroke. “There will be hell to pay from Uptown.”

“Then we’ll pay it, but not with our lives.” Josiah said heatedly.

The two rogue Anabaptists shuffle to their feet and retreat up the staircase, Ethan dropping his hidden knife behind him in the scuffle.

“COWARDS!” Isaac yells after them, swinging his sword with fatigue at the air.

Sarah heard footsteps rapidly ascending from the cellar below and motioned for Simeon to hug a wall nearby. She withdrew her stiletto and held it to her chest. It was impossible to see who was coming but that meant she and Simeon would be hard to spot as well. Two men went past her, one hobbling under the arm of another. Their outlines didn’t favor the shape of her husband’s height and son’s build, yet their faces were cast in shadow. Even with a successful INST+Perception roll, she doesn’t have a high enough dice pool to make out any distinguishing features. The pair ran to the wood drop box hutch by the oven.

“They’ll be dealt with soon enough,” Simeon whispered as he leveled his Spitfire flamethrower down the staircase. A rush of gas filled the pipes coming from the fuel cannister on his back and a tiny blue flame sparked into existence out of the nozzle’s heat shield.

Below, Isaac stumbled to his father laying in a pool of blood beneath him, sword clattering at his side. Flaps of skin on Uriah's arm and shoulders reveal white bits of bone, shiny with blood. He cradles his father's head. He weeps gently and meekly calls out, "H-help...help please".

The last Scion of Nihil goes to Tenkrit and strips him of his turban headwrap, sword, and oil.

Tenkrit blankly stares up at his follower rummaging his body, blood running into his eyes. "Please...save me."

"No, my Scion Supreme. Welcome the Demiurge with open arms. "Your legacy will live on, I will make sure those who escaped learn of your routing of the Anabaptists who defy us," The scion said with hurriedly, layered with guile.

Isaac could hear the bare footsteps smacking the stone as the last scion fled up the stairs. Where there was once salacious, indulgent sounds and laughter, there was now silence as Uriah, Isaac, the exsanguinated young girl and Tenkrit were there only ones left in the cellar.

In between his sobs, Isaac could feel the labored rise and fall of his father's chest. Behind the curtain he could hear panicked voices and rustling on the staircase. He laid his father down softly and picked up his sword, the blade raking against the stone. He readied himself for whatever was to come and touched the flat of the blade to his forehead.

The partly clothed scion, wearing Tenkrit's unraveled turban as a cloth around his waist was walking backward with his hands up in the air talking to...someone...someones. The curtain parted around him and Isaac could see a thin dagger at his throat as his

mother brushed aside the loose drapes. Simeon followed closely behind, his Spitfire trained on the Scion. The old- soldier's jaw dropped at the massacre laid out before him and he kicked the scion square in the stomach, knocking him to the ground next to his vainglorious leader, Tenkrit.

Sarah gasped and attended to her slashed husband on the ground. Uriah's dry lips parted to form words and she leaned her head in closer. "Save...her. Burn..the rest," he squeezed out, and with a shaky hand pointed at the collapsed child at the alter, blood almost dried black at her wrists. The scion made a motion to speak but Simeon pressed further in the chamber and pointed it directly at his throat, the nozzle glowing a soft tangerine color from it's heat at the igniter. "Shhhhh..." Boot heels came down the stairs and Brig the sentry whipped the curtains open, dismayed at the grisly scene. "Brig, grab the girl and take her to Hospital across town,"

"She won't make it, they don't open public hospital until morning!"

Uriah grasped at the brooch on his fur cape. Sarah saw him struggling with it and unclasped it for him, tossing it to Brig. "Rouse the nearest alarm and grab a horse. Show them the symbol of the Hand!"

Brig caught the brooch and crossed the room to the alter, bending over to heave the young girl up and over his shoulders. He exited the room, charging up the stairs two at a time.

Sarah and Isaac each grabbed a tattered limb of their patriarch and heaved him up, straining under his weight but managing to walk with him for support. Uriah's eyes rolled freely in his head from the anguish and Sarah snatched Isaac's headband from his brow to stuff into the gaping wounds on her husband and the family made their way up the stairs.

Simeon never took his eyes off of the scion and Tenkrit, shallowly breathing on the ground. The scion was drenched in a cold sweat, his hands held up in a shaking surrender. The black-haired Anabaptist kicked over a footstool and threw a few cushions on top in a pile. The scion bolted for the staircase but was caught at the neck with the Spitfire nozzle, searing the flesh below his jugular. He screamed and fell backward again, clutching at his throat as Simeon pronounced over his cries for help.

"And I will strike down upon thee with great vengeance and furious anger those who attempt to poison and destroy my brothers. And you will know my name is the Lord when I lay my vengeance upon thee."

"NO!" the false scion screamed. It was drowned out by the fuel-air mixture combusting from the tip of the Spitfire enveloping everything in front in bright white flame. The man was immolated in seconds, collapsing on his side as the fire swept across the floor and flammable objects. Simeon incinerated the alter, making sure it was well caught before putting up a cloth gator around his mouth to avoid the fumes from any leftover Burn in the cellar. He turned around slowly and walked up the staircase, leaving the scorched earth behind him to spread upward to the timbers and joists of the floor above.

Tenkrit blinked his eyes at the purifying blaze. The Pscyhonaut skull collapsed from the heat, shattering on the floor in a dozen pieces. The smoke and ash grew thick in the confined space, and the Scion Supreme was left battered and broken at the foot of a patron that abandoned him. The Burn cusps hidden underneath the altar filled the air with a miasma as they burst from the intense heat and lysed spores floated into his mouth. The last thought he had was how afraid and alone he was. And then his vision went dark.