L O A A

# Quests of the Masked Ball

**S C R I P T**

2026-11-26



| | |
|---|---|
| MAIN QUESTS | *The Masked Ball* (Part 1) and *The Last Waltz* (Part 2) |
| SIDE QUESTS | Five |
| WHERE | Castel Notturno, Pržina, Ragosa |
| STORY | Act 2: The Masked Ball |
| LENGTH | About 90 minutes on the main line, about 60 more for the side quests |
| STATUS | **Proposal** for the full game (Act 2), *Unconfirmed — awaiting the director*; nothing built |

# Cast



**HERO**

*TLOAA's player character and the leader of the party: a mercenary who takes the mayor's contract to free Stara Luka with Vella and Stalvan.*



**STALVAN**

*The party's tank and its heart: a huge, bald barbarian from Meneferu, warm, simple and honest, who knows he isn't clever and doesn't mind.*



**MANFRED**

*Manfred, written Manfred by the director and on screen, is an inventor in Meneferu, distracted, enthusiastic and always in the middle of a project, who joins the party in Chapter 4 and drives them to Papyria in a car he built himself.*

G

**GASPARE**

M

**MIRA**

C

**COUNT**



**VELLA**

*The party's warlock and its mind: dry, curious and never saying everything she knows, with a pact mark on her hand that flares when something old is near.*



**ZANZE**

*A paladin and librarian-detective, the Keeper of the Library of Papyria (its lead librarian and sworn protector) and Manfred's partner, who joins the party in Chapter 5 of the prologue.*

N

**NANE**

R

**RUGGERO**

L

**LOVRO**

## THE STORY, AS YOU PLAY IT

The masked ball has two main quests and five side quests. The story is on Act 2: The Masked Ball.

**The Masked Ball.** You ride the Count's carriage up from Pržina, a fishing village, and spend the evening as a guest. You read the house for clues and move masks between guests. Then you dance with Vella, your companion, and the Count speaks to you each time his couple passes yours. After the last chord you get the guests in plain masks to a cellar door, hold a stair for two minutes, and run.

**The Last Waltz.** You follow a carriage out of Ragosa at midnight and go back to the ruins. Where the old waltz is heard, the enemies sway in place. Elsewhere they hunt.

**On the side.** A pianist's burned pages, a seamstress to sit with, the things left on a coachman's seat, the Count's mask room, and the families of the lost.

## HOW IT ENDS SPOILERS

The masks decide who is hunted first. Guests you fail to save come back in the ruins as enemies with their names. The givers you save feed the Count between the visits. The five pages let the pianist change the music in the boss fight.

**The quests of the masked ball** are the main line and the side quests of Act 2: The Masked Ball, in the redesign of 2026-11-17 (SYN-BALL). A proposal for the full game, never the prologue: nothing is built, rewards follow the low prices, and levels and items come from the Act 2 items plan. The full design is `docs/plan/full_game/act2_masked_ball.md`.

## THE MAIN LINE

| Step | Where | Tracker | What the player does | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| B1 | Valponte, the Castellani villa | *Attend the masked ball* | Reads the letter. | – |
| B2 | Pržina, the cliff road | *Take the carriage at Pržina* | Dresses; asks the coachman to wait (roll R1); rides up with Ser Gaspare. | Who rolls |
| B3 | The castle door | *Enter the ball* | Masks handed out; weapons let in. | – |
| B4 | The ball | *Enjoy the evening* | Fills the guest book, reads the clues, moves masks, opens the mask room, finds the cellar door. | Who gets a fine mask; which giver loses one |
| B5 | The ballroom floor | *Dance* | Dances with Vella, who teaches him the count of three; Manfred dances with Zanze, Stalvan with Mira. The Count, waltzing beside them with the lady in the silver mask, speaks at three passes (three turns of talk), then takes eight bars with Vella. | What the hero says |
| B6 | The ballroom | *Get the guests to the cellar door* | The first movement: while the music plays, the brood hunts plain masks only. | Guard the piano or the guests |
| B7 | The piano | – | The pianist's death (cinematic). | – |
| B8 | Ballroom, terrace, balcony stair | *Get the guests to the cellar door* | The second movement: the silence; everything warm is food. | Rosana and Gaspare |
| B9 | The cellar stair, the balcony | *Hold the stairs* | Two minutes while Manfred sets the charge. | Light it, or go up for the givers |
| B10 | Magazine, sea gate, shelf path | *Get out* | A 90-second run. | – |
| B11 | The cliff lookout | – | The explosion; Part 1 ends in the picture. | – |
| B12 | Ragosa, the land gate, the cliff road | *Find out who is taking people* | The saved, the families; a saved guest's lead to the land gate; the midnight watch at the gate and the tail up the cliff road, which shows which saved giver hands someone over; the crypt key. | Truth or lie to each family |
| B13–B16 | The ruins | *Return to the castle ruins* → *Find the Count* | Entrance hall, flooded magazine, crypt (the majordomo), portrait gallery (the giver on the stair). | The giver (roll R4) |
| B17 | The ballroom | *The last dance* | The boss. | The pages |
| B18–B19 | – | – | The final note; the epilogue in the picture. | – |



**The dance.** *The hero with Vella; the Count speaks across his partner's shoulder at each pass: three passes, three turns of talk (story picture, proposal).*

**B5, the dance.** The hero cannot dance and Vella can: *"One is the long step. Two and three are small. Count if you have to."* A pale ring pulses on the floor on every first beat; nothing is asked of the player and nothing can fail. The Count's three turns of talk are unchanged, and the hero's replies are still opened by the clues. What the dance leaves behind: Vella knows by touch that the Count has no pulse and keeps the piano's time (*"And when the piano stops?" "Then he hears ours."*), so guarding the piano in B6 makes sense; Zanze knows which couples have no heartbeat, and the guest book marks the Count's court; Manfred and Zanze end at the buffet door, nearest the way out. In B17 the same ring marks the Count's heavy strikes, he goes for Vella first, and the hero and Vella, standing close, see the ring one beat early (**In step**, numbers *Unconfirmed*).

**B12, the watch and the tail.** A saved guest's line is the lead, not the answer: *"I saw a carriage at the land gate at midnight. With someone in it."* The party waits at the land gate at midnight and tails the carriage up the cliff road on foot, under the noise ring from the Keeper of Ragosa (walking is silent; running, a fight or a dropped thing makes a ring, and the driver looks back). At the cliff lookout it sees which saved giver hands someone over to the Count's thralls. If the driver sees them, the carriage whips up and the party finds the hand-over late, by the wheel ruts and a dropped glove; the step moves on either way.

**The ball's clues** (Insight or Perception, the player picks the roller; a fail gives a weaker version): the portraits (Zanze), the stopped clocks (Manfred), the music that never stops (the hero, at the piano), the plain masks (Stalvan), the thick wine (Vella), the bandaged neck (anyone), and the great stair (Vella's sight, no

roll). Each opens something: a reply in the dance, Manfred's metronome, the meaning of the masks, the givers marked in the guest book, the servants' stair.

## THE TWELVE GUESTS: WHAT SAVING EACH TAKES



**The small mask is a place card.** *Who climbed, and who was left (story picture, proposal).*

The counter reads *Guests saved: X / 12*. An average player saves about 8.

| Guest | What saving them takes | If lost |
|---|---|---|
| **Mira** (gift) | A fine mask before the dance. Without one she is bitten in the first second and lives, turning. | Never lost; see S2 |
| **Silvio** (gift) | Roll R2 on Ruggero at the ball: he gives Silvio his mask and sends him home. Otherwise escort him. | A named feral in the ruins |
| **Tereza** (gift) | Take her arm and lead her: she cannot hear the warnings. The coachman's carriage takes her if he waited. | A named feral |
| **Neven** (gift) | Give him a display sabre from the entrance hall's wall; he holds the servants' door. | Dies holding it; a named feral |
| **Paola** (gift) | Find her in the powder room (Perception) before a courtier does. | A named feral |
| **Klara** (gift) | Reach her on the terrace balustrade in the silence. | A named feral |
| **Ruggero** (giver) | If he gave his mask away, he is hunted in the first movement: escort him. | The coachman gives the key instead |
| **Gaspare** (giver) | Fight Rosana, the Silver Mask, at the balcony stair. | Rosana carries him off |
| **Olimpia, Amadeo, Lidija, Fabijan** (givers) | The balcony run during the hold. | They fall with the balcony |

## SIDE QUESTS

### S1: THE PIANIST'S PAGES

- **Giver:** none; the first page lies on the piano's stand in the ruined entrance hall. Manfred: "Why would a blind man need sheet music?"
- **Do:** find five burned pages of handwritten music in the ruins, one per room, the last under the piano's lid; then take them to the pianist's sister, Anica, in Pržina.
- **The margins**, in his hand:
  1. "The Count pays four times Pržina's best. A physician for Anica by spring."
  2. "They tie the band before the carriage. I've played the room four autumns and never seen it."
  3. "The theatre at the end is very loud this year. I play through, as I'm told."
  4. "Anica coughs less. I wrote her a piece. Not in three. She says it walks instead of turning."
  5. "The Count says next autumn Anica may come and hear me play. She's never been to a ball." Signed: **Lovro**.
- **Reward:** *Lovro's Band*, a black silk blindfold (a trinket; effect *Unconfirmed*, from the items plan); in the last waltz's third phase Zanze can give him his name and he plays his own piece; and her line at the end, "Rest now, Lovro."



**Lovro's Band.** *The black silk blindfold, left on the keys (story picture, proposal).*

**S2: COUNT TO THREE**

- **Only if Mira was bitten. Giver:** Mira's mother, in Ragosa's lower town.
- **Do:** Mira sleeps by day and is cold; in silence the hunger comes, and only a steady count holds it. Stalvan sits with her three times and counts while she talks about the shop, the councillor's coats and the dance.
- **Decision:** on the third visit she asks: "If I go with him, don't let them bury me in a plain mask." Answer, or say nothing.
- **Reward:** nothing but her. When the Count dies, she goes with him; the epilogue shows an empty bed and Stalvan's one line.

**S3: THE THINGS ON THE SEAT**

- **Giver:** Nane, the coachman (opened by a crit success on him at Pržina, or by talking to him between the visits).
- **Do:** his seat holds thirty-one autumns of gloves, fans, a hat, a shawl and ribbons left by people who rode up and never rode down. Vella's sight matches four of them to the dead on the great stair (the figure that turns its head to the thing); take each to its family in Ragosa, Pržina or the camp.
- **Decision:** at each door, the truth or "lost at sea".
- **Reward:** small coin; fewer dead on the stair at the end; an empty seat in the epilogue.



**The things on the seat.** *Vella's sight matches four of them to the dead on the stair (story picture, proposal).*

**S4: THE COUNT'S COLLECTION**

- **Giver:** none: a locked door off the portrait gallery, at the ball (Manfred's lockwork or Stalvan's shoulder, quietly; a failed roll brings the majordomo).
- **Do:** two hundred years of masks on stands: take two fine ones for the brought; find the Gull mask from the dark west if it was sold (a courtier is wearing it tonight); and a very old plaster cast of a face under a portrait of the Count's hands.
- **Reward:** two fine masks; the portrait clue at a lower difficulty.

**S5: WHAT DO WE TELL THEM**

- **Giver:** the families of each lost guest, in Ragosa and on the farms by Valponte (the brief's "families of lost guests ask what happened").
- **Do:** tell each family. **Decision:** the truth (their child was brought, by a named giver) or a lie ("a fire at the castle"); the lie system's roll.
- **Reward:** none. The givers' names reach Ragosa before the guest books do.

## THE ROLL TALKS

**R1: THE COACHMAN AT PRŽINA (IN FULL)**

**NANE**
Up at dusk. Down at midnight. The horses don't like the road after.

**ROLL** The hero asks him to wait at the gate past midnight. One option per member:

> **HERO**
> Wait for us. We'll pay the night.
>
> (Persuasion 12)
>
> **VELLA**
> You drive more up this road than you drive down. Don't you?
>
> (Insight 12)
>
> **STALVAN**
> Your off horse is favouring the near fore. Rest her at the gate.

(Perception 11)

**ZANZE**
Every glove on that seat is a different hand. Whose are they?

(Investigation 12)

**MANFRED**
Your brake's worn to the iron. I'll fix it while you wait.

(Investigation 11)

**ROLL** Crit success, by the roller:

*Hero:*

**HERO**
We'll come back down. Wait and see.

**NANE**
...Nobody's said that to me before. I'll wait.

*Vella (opens S3):*

**VELLA**
How many?

**NANE**
Thirty-one autumns. I stopped counting heads. I kept their gloves.

*Stalvan:*

**STALVAN**
Near fore. She'll go lame on the hill tonight.

**NANE**
...You've driven. I'll rest her at the gate. Till you come out.

*Zanze (opens S3):*

**ZANZE**
Thirty-one different hands.

**NANE**
You count like I do.

*Manfred:*

**MANFRED**
Done. You'll stop now.

> **NANE**
> Then I'll stop at the gate.

**ROLL** Crit fail, by the roller:

> Hero (the majordomo watches the party at the ball):
>
> **HERO**
> Wait, or we'll take the carriage.
>
> **NANE**
> Then you'll drive it yourselves. The Count will hear how.
>
> *Vella:*
>
> **VELLA**
> You know what happens up there.
>
> **NANE**
> I know the road. That's my end of it.
>
> *Stalvan:*
>
> **STALVAN**
> That horse is lame.
>
> **NANE**
> She's old. So am I. We go down at midnight.
>
> *Zanze:*
>
> **ZANZE**
> Whose gloves?
>
> **NANE**
> Mine. Get in.
>
> *Manfred:*
>
> **MANFRED**
> Your brake's worn.
>
> **NANE**
> It's worn going down. Nobody minds going up.

**ROLL** Plain tiers:

> *On success:*
>
> **NANE**
> Midnight I go down. Tonight I'll go down late.

> (He waits at the lookout.)
>
> *On a fail:*
>
> **NANE**
> I go down at midnight. I always go down at midnight.

**GASPARE**
*(opening the carriage door (the rejoin))*
Our guests of honour! Get in, get in.

**R2: RUGGERO AT THE BUFFET (INSIGHT)**

*On success:*

**RUGGERO**
I bottle it. Forty years. I never brought anyone till my wife died and I started to feel it.

He gives his clerk Silvio his own mask and sends him home by the servants' stair, and is hunted in his place.

- On a crit success he adds where the Count sleeps: under the keep, and there is a key.

*On a fail:*

**RUGGERO**
Drink the white. That's all the advice I have.

- On a crit fail he goes up to the balcony early and the majordomo watches the party.

**R4: THE GIVER ON THE STAIR (PART 2)**

**ROLL** A saved giver comes up the portrait stair holding someone by the arm. Options: the hero, "Let go of him." (Intimidation 12); Zanze, "Your name is in the book forty times. Give me a reason it shouldn't be read out." (Investigation 13); Vella, "How many years did the last one buy you?" (Insight 12); Stalvan stands in the stair and says nothing (Intimidation 11).

> On success: the giver sits down on the stair, "I'm eighty-three. Do you know what eighty-three feels like, all at once?", and the party chooses to take him to Ragosa or leave him there.

> On a crit success he also says the Count cannot keep time without the piano.
>
> On a fail: a short fight with two thralls, and the giver runs into the ballroom.
>
> On a crit fail: he reaches the Count, who has fed and starts the fight a little stronger.

– Every tier frees the one he brought.

**THE END**

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*Sources: docs/plan/full_game/act2_masked_ball.md (SYN-BALL, 2026-11-17), the synopsis and sections 5.1, 7, 8, 9, 11; plan - act 2 masked ball.md (the director, 2026-10-08).*

*Last updated: 2026-11-18 (BALL-DANCE-1: step B5, the dance, is the hero with Vella; the opening block rewritten)*