

GALATEYA'S WILL

by *Luciella Elisabeth Scarlett*

CREATURE: *Pygmalion's Statue* | **LEVEL(S):** 10-12 |

CW: *Narcissistic abuse, domestic violence*

SYNOPSIS

For over a decade, the necromancer Malion has hidden in the wilderness, creating golems infused with spirits of the dead in his obsessive search for perfect beauty. At long last, he produced a doll that he knew it to be his final masterpiece, and, knowing there was no mortal soul pure enough to complete his work, Malion prayed to the goddess of love to bring his statue to life. Against all odds, his blasphemous prayer was heard, and the furious goddess sent her servant to bring Malion to justice.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The adventure begins with a meeting with Galateya within a mountain cave. Paladins, clerics, or others with a connection to the divine may sense something strange about the location and decide to investigate. Alternatively, the party may hear rumors that something was seen flying to this place, or may simply stumble across the angel while seeking shelter for the night.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The adventure can be placed anywhere with mountainous terrain. It assumes that the party are, at minimum, neutral, or preferably, good-aligned. Galateya accepts aid even from those whose motivations are less than pure, but not from evil beings who refuse to repent their ways.

Safety tools (e.g. lines and veils and the x and o cards) are highly recommended for this adventure.

STAT BLOCK ADJUSTMENTS

This adventure uses modified versions of stat blocks from the *Monster Manual*, as follows:

A **porcelain golem** (CR 4) is a **flesh golem** with the following adjustments:

- **APPEARANCE:** the golems take the form of women with unblemished skin, sleek hair, and perfectly symmetrical faces. Each has the same slender figure.
- **RADIANT AVERSION:** the golems are averse to radiant damage instead of fire damage.
- **NECROTIC ABSORPTION:** the golems absorb necrotic damage instead of lightning damage.
- **IMPERFECT DEFENSE:** remove all damage immunities except necrotic and poison. Increase AC to 15 (natural armor).

An **advanced doll** (CR 5) is a **porcelain golem** with the following additional changes:

- **ABILITY SCORES:** the doll has an Intelligence of 12 (+1), a Charisma of 14 (+2), and a Dexterity of 16 (+3). Its AC increases to 19 (natural armor).
- **LANGUAGES:** the doll is capable of speaking Common.
- **STEADY:** remove the **berserk** trait.
- **WEAPONS:** replace **slam** with a glaive attack as follows: Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Malion (CR 12) is an **archmage** with the following adjustments:

- **SPELLS:** Replace his 5th level spells with the following: *chain lightning*, *cone of cold*, *mislead*. Replace the 4th level spell *fire shield* with *phantasmal killer*.

- **ITEMS:** Malion is equipped with the following items as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*:
 An *amulet of health* (his HP becomes 153).
 An *amulet of proof against detection and location* (he is immune to divination magic).
- **LAIR ACTIONS:** on initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Malion can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; he can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

Malion summons two specters at a point he can see within 120 feet of him.

Two objects that Malion can see within 120 feet of him animate by way of the animate objects spell.

Malion speaks a command word to trigger *glyphs of warding* laid on the floor at a point of his choice within 60 feet of him. Roll 1d6 to determine the outcome:

1-3: The glyph erupts in a 20-foot radius sphere centered on the glyph. Each creature in the area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5d8 fire damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

4-5: Up to five creatures within a 30-foot-cube centered on the glyph must succeed on a DC 17 Charisma saving throw or suffer the effects of the bane spell.

6: The glyph releases the spell *Evard's black tentacles*.

The cave is roughly 20 feet wide, with only a front entrance. It holds an injured (reduce HP to 25) **deva**.

An angel lies sprawled against the back of the cave. Her wings are tattered, and her glorious steel and gold armor is dented and broken, allowing garish wounds to drip onto the cave floor.

The angel can be roused if spoken to or if offered magical healing. She introduces herself as Galateya, and explains the following:

"I was sent to this world with orders to bring down a necromancer who lives in these mountains. I found the order... strange. I am accustomed to fighting fiends and wicked spirits, not human men. Yet it appears I underestimated his strength. He wields powerful magic, and he is guarded by constructs fueled by spirits of the dead. I fought as best I could, yet in the end, I was forced to flee.

"By dawn, my injuries will have healed, and I can return to my mission. I sense that you are warriors of no small skill, and as such, I ask two favors: that you protect me while I recover, and that you accompany me tomorrow and aid me in this task. Can I count on your support?"

CHAPTER 1 — THE ANGEL IN THE CAVERN

Refer to the *Adventure Hooks* outlined on pg. 179, and then continue as follows:

The sun shines weakly in the morning, but as afternoon stretches into evening, rain begins to fall, gradually developing into a storm. Lightning flashes across the sky, answered by a roar of thunder. As your vision clears, one area continues to faintly glow. You cautiously approach the small cave, picking your way over the sodden ground, and as you do, the fury of the storm seems to subside and a calmness settles over you.

GALATEYA HAS THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- Malion's lair likely contains all manner of treasures. Galateya has no need of these.
- She is currently under orders by Sune, though she has worked for other gods in the past.
- There were at least twenty dolls in Malion's lair, perhaps more. Some were monstrous, while others seemed all too human. By law of Mount Celestia, undead are to be destroyed without mercy, but Malion comes first.
- DC 13 Wisdom (Insight): Galateya must abide by celestial law, but she secretly holds qualms about attacking intelligent — and perhaps innocent — beings.
- Malion's lair is about two hours away on foot or thirty minutes by flight, and lies in the cliffs alongside a swift-flowing river. Galateya knows of the main entrance, but there may be other ways in.

ROLE-PLAYING GALATEYA

Galateya's personality is calm, almost cold. She speaks politely and formally, with subtle arrogance. Magical healing closes her wounds, but she must rest before she can move again.

DEVELOPMENT

During the night, three porcelain golems track down Galateya's location. The golems attack viciously and without intelligence. They were ordered to take Galateya alive but have no qualms about killing her allies. Galateya herself is of little help in the fight; she can barely move.

- **INVESTIGATION:** the design of the golems is unfamiliar, but they hold traces of necromantic magic. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies that the porcelain is a combination of crystal, clay, and bone.
- By dawn, Galateya has recovered and is keen to return to her mission. Continue to *Chapter 2*.

CHAPTER 2 — NECROMANCER'S LAIR

From the outside, the only sign of the necromancer's lair is a small crack in an otherwise unbroken cliff face. If Galateya had not pointed it out, you may have missed the place. Looking closely, you can faintly see the shapes of figures waiting inside.

"This is the main entrance," Galateya explains. "The necromancer will be expecting me, I am sure. But perhaps there is another path..." She indicates the roaring river below, fed by a waterfall that gushes over the cliffs up ahead. *"I sensed something down there before, and now I am sure of it: there are dead creatures hiding in the mountain, some of them very close by."*

"What do you suggest? Should we enter through the front, or seek another way?"

1: FRONT ENTRANCE

The front entrance connects to Area 5 (Living Chambers) by a narrow stone passageway. It is guarded by four porcelain golems. If a fight breaks out, the noise draws two advanced dolls that arrive on the third

round: one with curly black hair and an olive complexion (Rhea) and a blonde doll with ivory skin (Phoebe). Rhea calls out a warning: "Leave now, if you value your lives."

- **NEGOTIATION:** Phoebe is nervous and shy. She follows Rhea's lead, and flees inside if left alone. Rhea is loath to trust strangers but has her doubts about Malion. Her closest friend, Laura, disappeared two weeks ago, and she knows nothing of her fate. Refer to Area 5 for further guidance.
- **TACTICS:** the golems attack without intelligence until ordered otherwise. The advanced dolls coordinate intelligently to bring down the adventurers one by one.

2: SIDE ENTRANCE

The place where Galateya senses another entrance is down in the ravine. If no precautions are taken, characters without a flight speed must succeed on a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check to safely descend, taking up to 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage on a failure. The entrance itself is a crevice half hidden beneath the waterfall, which connects to Area 3.

3: SCRAP HEAP

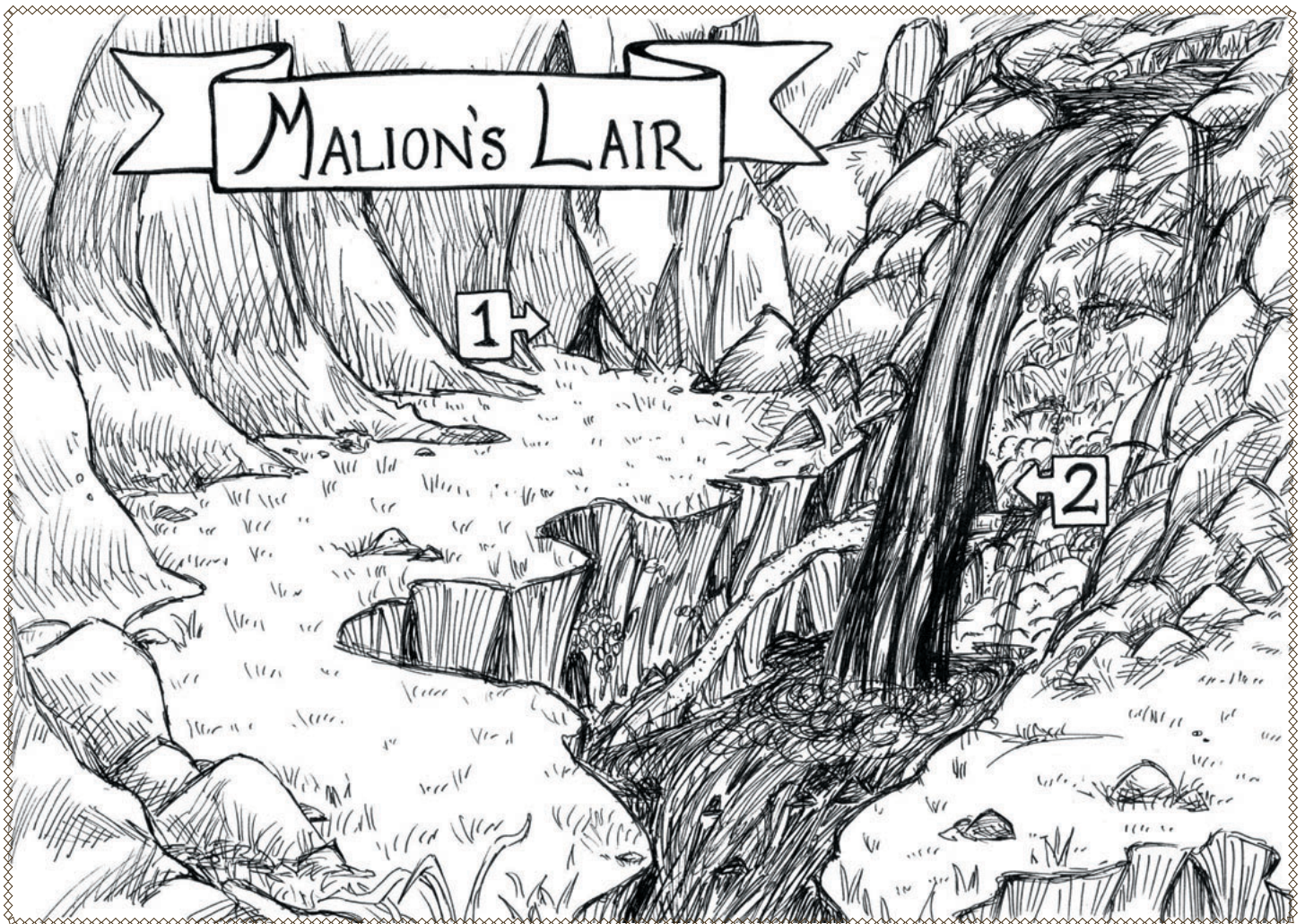
The room is dark save for the sliver of light peering in from Area 2.

The air is still and cold, with a faintly unpleasant odor of iron and decay. Dust swirls and spiders scutter away beneath your feet as you gaze upon the scene before you. Countless life-sized dolls are piled to the ceiling, some still perfect even beneath coatings of dust, others torn into pieces. Their empty eyes leer down at you, lifeless yet ever so lifelike. In between them you catch glimpses of other shapes—scraps of decayed skin and flesh and dried up puddles of old blood dotted across the floor.

This rough cavern is Malion's dumping ground for failed experiments. Occasionally, a porcelain golem enters from Area 4. Unless it spots intruders, it dumps its burden and returns the way it came.

- **INVESTIGATION:** There are no full corpses, only discarded dolls and remnants of bodies torn apart

- through Malion's experimentation. The dolls have been stripped of valuables aside from small personal trinkets. Hidden amongst the piles is a single advanced doll that still contains a shred of life, though her face and half her body is splintered and broken. She cannot move or speak without assistance. Divine magic is ineffective, but mending, prestidigitation, or creation can restore her broken tongue.
- **ROLEPLAY:** The doll's name is Laura. Her eyes are unfocused, her sanity in tatters. She alternates between curses and frantic, repeated apologies. She has the same information as the dolls in Area 5, plus the following:
 - 1. All the dolls were once human.** It is faint, but Laura can remember some of her former life. She and Rhea were sisters. They lived in a village further north.
 - 2. Malion lied.** He said that the dolls were his prized children, but they were merely experiments. All this time, he has been working to create a new, perfect doll. Eliza is nearly finished, and once she is, the other dolls will be thrown on the scrap heap.
- **EXITS:** this area connects to Area 4 by a staircase and an iron door barred on the other side. The door can be opened with a successful DC 20 Strength check, with relevant spells, or by waiting for the golem to pass through.



MAP BY LUCIELLA ELISABETH SCARLETT

4: WORKSHOP

Arcane light illuminates a set of workbenches scattered with spools of wire, boxes of spell components, loose pages of messy notes, and occasionally, a more ominous sign of the workshop's true purpose: scattered fragments of porcelain and blank resin eyes.

A single porcelain golem works inside, cleaning and carrying waste to Area 3. It attacks any who enter, including other dolls.

- **TREASURE:** by spending time to search the room, the party can find the following:
 - Various spell components, including gemstones to the value of 4,000 GP.
 - A mortar and pestle next to a box of desiccated human bones.
 - A diary of Malion's experiments, largely consisting of a list of his complaints about each failure, ranging from "too ugly" to "too argumentative." Names are included. On the last page of the diary, amidst a mess of arcane notation is another name: "Eliza."
 - Detailed instructions as to the creation of a golem. These are written in arcane notation, which takes several weeks to decipher and a year to master.
 - An old and well-worn copy of a religious text describing the worship of Sune.
- **EXITS:** a solid iron door connects to Area 3. This door has a locking bar on the inside. A second door connects to Area 5.

5: LIVING CHAMBERS

A palace of marble and gold stretches out before you, lit by cream-tinged driftglobes floating between tall pillars and lavish water features. Couches and coffee tables are scattered across the space, surrounded by porcelain women clad in silk and brocade, who chat and play card games.

This area houses twenty-five advanced dolls. If the party are allied with Rhea and Phoebe, those two introduce them. Otherwise, the dolls are unprepared and startled by the party's arrival. If combat breaks out, add

2d4 dolls per round. If, however, the party attempts diplomacy, use the following points:

- The dolls saw Galateya before, but only briefly: Malion emerged from his workshop, shouting for the other dolls to capture her, but the wounded angel fled swiftly. Malion's rage was terrible to behold, yet he quickly calmed and retreated to his chambers. He has not been seen since.
- For the most part, Malion treats them well, though he can be frightening at times. Many have been tempted to flee, but they have no reason to believe that the outside world is safer than their home.
- The dolls are proud of their strength and beauty and react poorly to suggestions that they are defective. They have no memory of being anything other than dolls.
- The lesser golems are failures, limited to menial tasks. The other dolls know they are superior and believe they have Malion's favor.
- Sometimes defective dolls return to Malion's workshop and are never seen again. The most recent doll to disappear was Laura, Rhea's closest friend. Laura had tried to stir rebellion amongst the dolls. Malion must have found out, one way or another.
- Unless summoned, the dolls are forbidden to enter either the workshop or Malion's chambers, on pain of death. This is no idle threat: both doors are trapped, and likely guarded by golems. No one has been invited into Malion's workshop for days now, which is unusual.

NEGOTIATION: the dolls are divided. Some are rebellious, others loyal, and many are simply frightened. The split depends on the specific arguments used, but regardless, the dolls must see or hear compelling evidence before they allow the party to enter Malion's chambers.

TREASURE: Area 5 is an open area broken only by marble pillars. It contains a range of amusements for the dolls, including cards, chess, and books, along with weapons that they can skirmish with (glaives, swords, shields, etc.). The area also holds fine dresses, perfumes, and jewelry worth a total of 10,000 GP.

EXITS: Area 5 connects to Areas 1, 4, and 6. A passageway connects to Area 1, shielded only by sets of curtains. The entrance to Area 4 is a stern iron door, and the entrance to Area 6 consists of double doors of polished wood. Both doors are trapped (DC 17)

with glyphs of warding that deal 31 (7d8) acid damage unless they speak the passphrase: “Eliza.”

DEVELOPMENT

On receiving evidence of Malion’s true nature, the majority of the dolls choose to fight alongside Galateya and the party, angrily shaking off any suggestion that they avoid implication. Meanwhile, a minority remains either frightened or unconvinced, and choose to remain apart from the fight and hope that Malion will be merciful if they do not succeed. A smaller group chooses to flee altogether.

Galateya says little of the alliance, save that her primary mission is to defeat Malion. Whatever comes next can wait.

Continue to *Chapter 3* when the party heads to Area 6.

CHAPTER 3 — FINAL SHOWDOWN

When the time comes to confront Malion at last, Galateya has no intention of hiding. She must face him head on. She asks that the others assist in whatever way they can.

6: MALION’S PRIVATE CHAMBER

A short passageway leads into a broad chamber only slightly smaller than the one you entered from. Two figures are seated at a coffee table at the center of the room. The first is a porcelain doll dressed in a pure white lace gown. Her face is expressionless, still, and impossibly, inhumanly perfect. Beside her is a man who seems almost hideous in contrast. His hair is carefully groomed, his clothes clearly expensive, yet the man beneath them is entirely average, and unmistakably human.

He watches curiously as Galateya strides forward. “*Necromancer Malion,*” she declares, “*I grant you one last chance. Surrender now and repent your crimes, or die where you stand.*”

Malion gazes past her to the dolls fanning out across the room. “*I see you have brought friends this time. Traitors, the lot of them. But it doesn’t matter anymore. Not now that I have you. Tell me, Galateya, do you know why your goddess sent you to me?*”

“*Only to destroy you,*” Galateya snarls, and rushes forward, swinging her mace. It flies straight through the image of Malion, which distorts and shatters as the sound of his laughter fills the room.

CREATURES: rows of porcelain golems stand at attention along the sides of the room. They attack on command, and Rhea leads the advanced dolls to counter. Treat this as part of the narrative rather than tracking attacks and HP. Malion has cast mislead on the party’s arrival. As Galateya searches for him, his words echo around the chamber:

“I once studied at your goddess’s temple. I was rejected then. They could not understand the beauty of my creations. But I remained faithful.

“I continued to study. My creations grew more and more beautiful, yet there was always something missing. What use was a perfect face without a perfect spirit to animate it? But the goddess heard my prayer. She sent a spirit of pure goodness and pure obedience—far purer than any wretched human soul.”

Tactics: Malion reveals himself by casting chain lightning on the party. He uses phantasmal force on whoever appears to be the greatest threat, and uses misty step and teleport to remain at a range. He avoids attacking Galateya and focuses on the party. Malion is ultimately unrepentant: if his fortunes turn, he tries to flee rather than beg forgiveness, though he does not count on Galateya's speed.

TREASURE: Malion's chambers contain 12,000 GP of gemstones, 500 PP, a carpet of flying, a crystal ball, and a copy of his spellbook.

DEVELOPMENT

Upon Malion's defeat, go to the *Conclusion*.

CONCLUSION

Stunned silence settles for a moment, until, just as swiftly, that calm breaks. All across the room, women begin to cry, to laugh with relief, and to spit curses. Some stand alone, shocked and silent, while others cling to each other for support as though they fear letting go.

Galateya watches it all, hand clenched tightly around her mace, until she sighs and lowers her weapon. Her radiant eyes dim, becoming more mundane as a slight smile graces her lips. "*I can't do it,*" she says aloud.

By divine law, Galateya must destroy any undead she encounters. By refusing to do so, she has lost her connection to Mount Celestia. She holds no regrets; if anything, she is grateful to Sune for showing her the meaning of free will. She intends to remain with the dolls to protect them and make sure that they find a place to call home. She knows that the adventurers have a different destiny and wishes them well on their journey.

REWARDS

Characters who complete this adventure may earn the following rewards:

XP REWARDS:

Add the total XP of creatures defeated by the party, then divide by the number of characters to determine individual rewards.

OBSTACLE	TOTAL XP
Deva	5,900
Porcelain golem	1,100
Advanced doll	1,800
Malion	8,400

Grant additional XP based on the roleplay milestones accomplished:

MILESTONE	XP PER CHARACTER
Alliance with Galateya	1,500
Alliance with the dolls	3,000

TREASURE REWARDS:

As described in the relevant section of the adventure text.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

In Greek mythology, Pygmalion created a statue so beautiful that he fell in love with it and prayed to Aphrodite to bring his statue to life. I wonder: what was the goddess thinking when she granted that wish? Perhaps we can see Galateya, the spirit she sent, as a gift to Pygmalion in appreciation of his hard work and artistry. Perhaps instead, we can see free will and independence as Galateya's own gifts.

Thank you to my playtesters: Jess Buttriss, Chris Booth and Jayden James, to all the Uncaged contributors who helped shape this adventure, and especially to Ashley Warren for bringing this incredible project to life!

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