

For such a large man, Jason Connors moved with practise, near silent amongst the bawdy antics filling the tavern.

As he approached the well-hidden room he could hear his targets well – jokes, laughter and mild arguments.

He ventured into the room sticking to the shadows as to not give away his pale skin and watching the trio carefully.

Seated at a round wooden table, the three thieves were playing some card game he didn't recognise – a mix of Toneton Hold-em and Shed by the looks.

He could see the scrawny unkempt James “the nose” Dakes, the leatherclad “procurement specialist” Hob Boskins and, sat on a stack of tomes to reach the table, the Havlin Menos “Mal” Lightfingers.

Simply locking the door and torching the place would certainly increase the honesty of Grand Sulis, but leave Connors no closer to his objective.

As he tried to figure out the situation he watched Hob play his cards, including an ace to match one in the centre of the table.

Mal followed by playing her hand of cards – including three aces.

No-one seemed to mind the 6 aces on the table but Hob laughed “You know the rules Mal!”

Picking up her cards he revealed an ace with a different back to the rest before dragging the pile of coins, gems and some interesting artefacts toward himself.

Mal sighed and reached for her stein of ale, eyes meeting Connors'

He saw her eyes widen as she sat bolt upright “Shit! It's the fuzz!”

While the two men leapt to their feet drawing arms, the Havlin was hurriedly gulping back her drink.

Hob let out a sigh of relief and sheathed his weapon “it's not the coppers, just Connors.” As he sat down and began shuffling the deck he gestured toward the albino “what're you doing here Captain?”

“Ex-Captain” Connors sighed stepping toward the table while Hob's fingers deftly began to deal cards out.

“I'm looking for No-Name Jack or Fingers McGee” Connors reached forward and put a stack of coins on the table.

“We're not snitches Captain” Mal barely glanced at the coins as she stood on the books to reach where Hob had dealt her cards.

“And certainly ain't that cheap” Hob added as he began arranging his cards.

“You offer better'n that, I may know summat” Dakes seemed to mutter to himself as he studied his cards.

At the other two's shocked looks he shrugged “I were s'posed to do a job wi' Fingers but he went wi' Steve instead, the barstud.”

“That's why I'm here. Looks like McGee stabbed Jenkins and made off with the loot.” Connor's gaze never left Dakes' face.

“Shanked? On the job?” Hob's eyebrows raised

“I liked Steeve” Mal pouted and raised her stein “rest well buddy”

“May I find your stash” the other two responded, lifting their own steins.

“We oughta send this guy to The Temple” Mal looked down into her stein

“You're kidding, right?” Hob put his own drink and cards onto the table

“What? This lug causes grief, Veronica'll smash him upside the head”

Hob paused and shrugged “Would be a laugh f'sure. Fingers should get what's coming to him.” as he gathered his cards again he grinned at the confused Connors

“How good are you at travelling in the wild, Captain?”

All three jumped slightly at Connor's barking laugh “I am rather fond of the wild...”