

Dresden

❖ Player

It is late at night on a Friday that happens to be the 13th of the month and Gilgamesh is walking alone on the streets of downtown Chicago enjoying the cool evening air when suddenly something unexpected happens...

Game Master: A cacophony of screeching tires and panicked shouts shattered the peaceful night, jerking Gilgamesh from his quiet contemplation. A delivery truck, its brakes clearly failing, careened down the street, aimed like a runaway missile directly at him.

The air itself seemed to crackle with raw panic, a tangible wave of fear rolling off the scattering pedestrians. The stench of burnt rubber filled the air, acrid and sharp.

Conversation at 2024-07-01 22:22:38.098710

❖ Player

Gilgamesh uses his athletics skill to dodge out of the way and gets a success barely. There is a complication.

Game Master: Gilgamesh reacted instinctively, adrenaline surging through his veins as he leaped aside with just a heartbeat to spare. The runaway truck thundered past, a metal behemoth that missed him by inches, its horn blaring its mechanical death knell. But his desperate maneuver sent him careening into a row of overflowing trash cans, the stench of rotting garbage assaulting his nose as he tumbled into the filthy alleyway.

Conversation at 2024-07-01 22:24:24.973443

🎲 Player

"Ahh! Gross" I get up and brush myself off. What happened to the truck? Did it stop, crash or keep going?

Game Master: Gilgamesh scrambled up from the muck and grime, the taste of stale beer and something unidentifiable clinging to his throat. He could hear the truck's engine roaring, its horn still blaring but the sound was fading quickly. It seemed the runaway vehicle was still going, a runaway metal beast unleashed on the city.

Conversation at 2024-07-01 22:26:10.784009

🎲 Player

"That guy is going to get someone killed." I look around to see if there is anyone nearby. Maybe a cop could run him down. I'm on foot. there isn't much I can do.

Game Master: Gilgamesh found himself alone in the narrow alley, the oppressive stench of garbage clinging to him like a bad cologne. The sounds of the city - car horns, distant sirens, the murmur of late-night conversations - seemed to amplify in the wake of the sudden chaos, but there was no sign of any police.

Conversation at 2024-07-01 22:33:40.798596

🎲 Player

In a rather surly mood now. Gilgamesh continues on his way home. He lives in a college housing with 3 other room mates, but has a room to himself. Does anything else happen on his way home?

Game Master: As Gilgamesh emerged from the alley, brushing the last of the grime from his clothes, the city seemed to settle back into its usual rhythm, the runaway truck already a fading memory in the collective consciousness. His own apartment, a dingy but affordable walk-up near the University of Chicago, was thankfully only a few blocks away. The familiar route took him past darkened storefronts and the occasional late-night diner, their neon signs casting an ethereal glow on the damp pavement. The only other sign of life was a lone figure huddled in a doorway across the street, their face obscured by a tattered hood. They seemed to glance up at Gilgamesh as he passed, a flicker of movement in the periphery of his vision, but they quickly retreated further into the shadows.

The unsettling encounter did little to improve Gilgamesh's already sour mood as he finally reached his apartment building. The flickering gaslight in the foyer did little to penetrate the gloom as he trudged up the three flights of stairs to his floor, the scent of stale cigarette smoke and cheap ramen clinging to the air.

Conversation at 2024-07-01 22:36:10.738126

🎲 Player

I arrive at my apartment -give a description of my three roommates-

Game Master: The familiar scent of stale pizza and burnt popcorn greeted Gilgamesh as he pushed open the door to his apartment. The living room, a study in controlled chaos, was dimly lit by the flickering light of a vintage lava lamp perched precariously on a stack of textbooks. Empty soda cans and pizza boxes littered the coffee table, a testament to a late-night study session turned gaming marathon.

On the floor, sprawled amidst a tangle of controllers and discarded headphones, lay his three roommates.

There was **Kevin**, his long limbs sprawled at an awkward angle, snoring softly with a half-eaten bag of chips resting on his chest. Kevin, a computer science major with a penchant for all-night coding sessions, was the quiet one of the bunch, his social awkwardness compensated for by his encyclopedic knowledge of all things tech-related.

Next to him lay **Marco**, a mountain of a man with a booming laugh and an even bigger appetite. He was the life of the party, a marketing major who could charm his way into - or out of - any situation with a disarming smile and a well-placed joke. Right now, he was sprawled on his back, a textbook covering his face, his chest rising and falling with each deep, rumbling snore.

Finally, there was **Ashley**, the resident free spirit. An art student with a rebellious streak and a closet full of vintage band tees, she was always surrounded by a whirlwind of creative energy. Right now, she was curled up on the couch, a sketchbook clutched in her hand, a tangle of brightly colored hair spilling over the armrest.

It seemed Gilgamesh was just in time for the after-party of a gaming tournament, judging by the empty pizza boxes and the triumphant grins frozen on his roommates' faces.

🎲 Player

I say hi to Ashley as I scrounge for a left over slice of pizza to take back to my room.

Game Master: "Hey Ash," Gilgamesh mumbled, picking his way through the debris towards the kitchen. "Anything edible left?"

Ashley, startled awake by the sound of his voice, sat up abruptly, her sketchbook tumbling to the floor with a soft thud.

"Gil! You're back!" she exclaimed, her voice thick with sleep. She blinked, her eyes adjusting to the dim light, and ran a hand through her tangled hair. "Jeez, what time is it?"

Her gaze fell on the empty pizza boxes and she grimaced. "Uh, sorry about that. Marco ordered a mountain of pepperoni and we may have gotten a little carried away."

She pointed to a half-empty box of cold Chinese takeout tucked away on the counter. "There's some sesame chicken left, I think. If you're brave enough to face it."

Conversation at 2024-07-01 22:40:55.484106

🎲 Player

"Thanks." I say as I begin to chow down on it. "Any messages come in for me?"

Game Master: Ashley yawned, stretching like a cat as she gathered her scattered art supplies. "Let me think... oh yeah, Mrs. Kravitz from downstairs

stopped by earlier. Something about a leaky faucet and 'that racket you kids were making last night'?"

She winked playfully. "I told her we were having a seance. She hasn't decided whether to call an exorcist or a building inspector yet."

Conversation at 2024-07-01 22:44:00.184142

🎲 Player

I smile and head back to my room. I open my foot locker and look through my collection of magic books and alchemy desiding on what one to study. I have been collecting these for a few years now from the shops I have found that sell such things.

Game Master: Back in the relative quiet of your room, you pull the heavy footlocker from under your bed. It's dented and scuffed, its hasps scratched with runes you painted there years ago in a fit of teenage rebellion. They don't do much, just a simple ward against unwanted attention. You flip open the lid, releasing a musty scent of old paper and leather. Inside, nestled amongst faded velvet, rests your most prized possessions – a collection of worn tomes on magic and alchemy, each one a hard-won treasure.

There's the well-thumbed copy of "Hermes Trismegistus: The Emerald Tablet and Other Works," its leather cover cracked with age, that you picked up for a steal at a flea market just outside of town. Next to it sits a more modern, but no less intriguing, volume entitled "The Practical Applications of Sympathetic Magic," a surprisingly insightful find from a dusty bookstore in New Orleans. And then there are the handwritten notebooks, filled with your own scrawled notes and diagrams, experiments both successful and disastrously messy.

The city outside might be oblivious to the hidden world of magic, but in here, surrounded by your books, you feel a sense of belonging, a connection to

something ancient and powerful.

Which book calls to you tonight?

Conversation at 2024-07-01 22:46:53.924987

🎲 Player

I settle on "The Practical Applications of Sympathetic Magic" and sit back and begin reading.

Game Master: You settle into your worn desk chair, the book's spine creaking in protest as you open it to a dog-eared page marked with a faded red ribbon. The air in the room seems to hum faintly as you begin reading, the words pulling at your awareness with a subtle magnetism. It speaks tonight of using personal items to establish a connection, of focusing intent to bridge the gap...

Conversation at 2024-07-01 22:49:38.335613

🎲 Player

I remember back to the encounter with the truck. It doesn't feel random. Is it possible someone was controlling it using sympathetic magic? is it possible they were targetting the driver? Or maybe they were tagetting me...

Game Master: The thought sends a chill down your spine, raising goosebumps on your arms despite the warmth of the room. Could the runaway truck have been more than just an accident? The driver's panicked face, the scent of fear that hung heavy in the air before the near collision - it all pointed to a loss of

control, but whose? And if someone was using sympathetic magic, what better focus than something personal to the driver, something kept close at hand...

You flip to a section on counterspells, your mind racing. If someone was targeting the driver, maybe there's a way to trace the magical signature back to its source...

Conversation at 2024-07-02 08:49:41.688622

🎲 Player

I use my research skills and get a strong success. What do I learn?

Game Master: As you delve deeper into the intricacies of sympathetic magic and counter-spells, a particular passage underlined in faded ink catches your eye. It speaks of residual echoes, faint traces of magical energy that linger in the wake of a powerful working, especially one involving a near-death experience. It's a long shot, the book cautions, but with the right focus and a bit of luck, these echoes can be followed back to their source.

You realize with a jolt that you still have a physical reminder of your encounter with the runaway truck – your clothes are still damp and slightly ripped from the fall. More importantly, your jacket still bears the unmistakable stench of the alley, a potent cocktail of garbage and something else, something vaguely metallic and acrid. It's not much, but it's a start.

Conversation at 2024-07-02 08:54:13.866243

🎲 Player

I strip off my jacket and close the circle of masking tape on my carpet I made for such an occasion. I reach for my power and feel the circle charge. I focus my energies on the jacket trying to follow the instructions for the spell. I use my spellcasting ability. I get a failure. What happens?

Game Master: The air within the circle crackles with energy, your intent solidifying the magical space. The scent of ozone mingles with the stench of the alley, amplifying it until your eyes water. You pour your will into the jacket, trying to grasp the echoes of magic the book described, to unravel the threads of intent woven into its fabric.

But something's wrong. The echoes are there, faint but undeniable, but they're... tangled. Chaotic. Instead of a clear line back to the source, you're bombarded with a jumble of impressions: terror, desperation, the grinding gears of a failing engine, the metallic tang of blood. It's overwhelming.

The power within the circle surges, a runaway current you're struggling to control. A wave of nausea rolls over you as the circle flickers, its energy threatening to spill out.

Conversation at 2024-07-02 08:57:31.627481

🎲 Player

The energy threatens to escape me, overwhelm me. I fall back on my previous training channelling the excess energy into the earth, grounding it out. It disapates just in time leaving me drained and exhausted.

Game Master: You slam your hand down on the circle's edge, gritting your teeth as you force the chaotic energy downwards, into the floorboards beneath the masking tape. The air thrums, a discordant symphony of magical feedback, before abruptly cutting out. The faint light show from the arcing energy fades,

leaving you in near darkness, the only illumination coming from the streetlights filtering in through the window. You slump back against your chair, your limbs heavy, your head pounding in time with your pulse.

The jacket lies limp in the center of the circle, its stench somehow even more pungent than before. Whatever magic clung to it, it's been scrambled beyond recognition. The book didn't prepare you for that, for the sheer chaotic force you'd encountered. It seems there's more to this sympathetic magic than the book let on – or more to the spellcaster who wielded it.

Conversation at 2024-07-02 09:01:00.730580

🎲 Player

exhausted I undress, climb into bed and fall fast asleep. Whatever is going on will have to wait until morning.

Game Master: Exhaustion pulls at you, a physical weight dragging you down. You manage to stagger to your bed, shedding your clothes on the way without even bothering to find the hamper. Collapsing onto the mattress, you let sleep claim you, the events of the night swirling into a kaleidoscope of half-remembered images and unsettling sensations. The city, for now, can keep its secrets.