

The King is Dead

— An Evening Star Playtest Scenario (v 0.1) —

The Hook

*King Llwyd has died. His family gather in the great hall to hear his will be known, spoken by his wife and stewardess, **Arian**. It is as many suspected, and as a few feared: all lands, fortunes, guardsmen, and powers are to be inherited **solely** by the king's youngest born — the teenaged prince **Ddu** — rather than being divided equally...*

*The reason for this sudden change in tradition? Ddu was **prophesied** by the king's witch, **Melyn**, many years ago "to be born under a full moon with eyes and hair as black as jet: who will befriend the Fair hound **Dormadd**, and will come of age upon the night of his father's natural passing, **and so will inherit all the world of Men.**"*

*So now each lord must now **choose**: whether to **follow** their father's wishes and swear fealty to their new king Ddu, **or to revolt** and fight against the tide of destiny and take what is rightfully theirs, **or perhaps to find a third option?***

Setup

- This is a one scene test scenario about family, feuds, and our role in the path of fate.
- It is not inherently built as a *player vs. player* type game, but ending everything in a duel or starting a civil war are definitely some possible outcomes of the session.
- It is intended to be played with **3-5 players**, who should each take a character sheet from the following list, in this order of importance:
 1. **Gwyn**, first-born — Jealous. Wants total rule instead of Ddu, and wants to prove the prophesy is false, that it's a conspiracy, or that Arian or Melyn are lying.
 2. **Oren**, twin of Rhudd — Austere. Feels robbed by the unorthodox changes made by their father in this late hour, and wants the will to be rescinded. Would fight.
 3. **Rhudd**, twin of Oren — Inquisitive. Will follow the prophesy only if it's true, but wonders about it's legitimacy and the timing of Melyn's claims. Wants answers.
 4. **Melyn**, court magi — Apprehensive. Wants their fortune to come true, peacefully.
 5. **Ddu**, the prophesied king — Naive. Doesn't understand what all the fuss is about.
- If you have fewer players, then Melyn and Ddu should be played as NPCs by the Facilitator (FC), along with **Arian**, the king's wife (the only other witness of the king's death), and **Dormadd**, Ddu's pet 'wolf' (who may or may not be a fairfolk monster).
- There are no other NPCs in the opening scene. The royal vanguard of each lordling await their orders in the outside the great hall. And there are servants in the back.

Potential Content Warnings: Death, Violence / Murder, Black Magic, The Faerie, Drugs & Alcohol.

Setting the Scene

The main characters are royals in an ancient line that supposedly leads back to **King Edder**. The game is set in the **Glass Hall on the Mound**, in **Dinas Olau** the city of light, in the *semi-mythical bronze-age Kingdom of Prydein*. It is a resplendent mead hall, with many rows of vertical green and blue window panes and a marvelous **central firepit**. Two long feasting tables line the walls, with pews either side, strewn with half-eaten food and spilled drinks. For today was supposed to be a day of celebrations: *Prince Ddu's coming of age party*. But king Llwyd had been sick for weeks, and has left the throne empty on this portentous night: only his **fabled iron sword** hangs on the mantel above it, *symbolic of his presence in spirit*.

The scene begins with the FC relaying the king's cryptic final words to Arian. All the players get to hear this speech, but only Melyn's and Arian are actually there in the moment.

"And so as my death comes, as I know it now shall... I see that Melyn's premonition was right all along..." and he side-eye's Melyn then coughs violently. "I should have killed that mutt when I first laid eyes on it, but now I have doomed us all to strife... curse those black eyes," he sighs, then slumps. "I bequeath all my worldly possessions and my powers as king of this goodly land to young prince Ddu. May he live long, and reign in peace... and may heaven and earth be once again united..." Struggling for breath now, he looks at Arian and says, "Tell me, do you look as lovely as the night we met, or am I slipping fast away...? Take care of our children please..."

Afterwards, once Arian has had a moment to grieve, she collects herself as is proper of a queen and enters the glass hall. She interrupts the festivities and bluntly announces the king's death. Then calls for the vanguard and servants to leave and await outside, so that **the will of the late king can only be heard by those of royal decent**. Curiously, the wizard Melyn is not asked to leave. With tears in her eyes, **she tells everyone that Ddu will be king** and bows to him, then sits down turned away and sobs quietly.

The game begins now, and turns progress clockwise.

Arian

Tall and lithe with silver hair and blue eyes, wearing a gray pencil dress and brown fur cloak. The dowager queen **cannot be consoled** initially, and will continue to cry for at least one round and until the conversation gets heated. Afterwards she remains reserved, but **generally supports her late husband's will**, and makes a bigger show of fealty if pushed.

The Ritual

If the players need more prompting, or if things get resolved too smoothly: Have Arian remember that a newly crowned king must perform the **Quelling of the Moon God** ritual.

Dormadd

Resembling a handsome wolf at first glance, but rounder. He carries the eerie light of an eclipse his fur, and his bark is the call of lightning. **His eyes are also black as jet, like Ddu's**. Dormadd is a fea creature, and truly the best of dogs. He can talk in single words, and supports Ddu's claim wholeheartedly. He will defend his master with his life, but he can't be slain except by the **touch of iron or flame**. If killed, his body rapidly rots into the sky.