# StoryTitle {"position":"1900,175"}

You Can't Save Her

# StoryData {"position":"1900,300"}

{  
 "ifid": "3831B6E9-E3BF-4D0B-9EB8-E35C776D54B4",  
 "format": "SugarCube",  
 "format-version": "2.36.1",  
 "start": "choiceless\_fight\_6",  
 "zoom": 1  
}

# Start [no-undo] {"position":"200,400"}

<div class="title">You Can't Save Her</div>\  
<div class="subtitle">by Sarah Mak</div>\  
<div id="menu"><<if Save.slots.has(1)>><<link "Continue">><<run Save.slots.load(1)>><</link>> · <<link 'Restart' 'restart'>><</link>><<else>>[[Start->content\_warning]]<</if>> · [[Options->options]]</div>

# options [no-undo options] {"position":"75,400"}

<span class="subtitle">''Options''</span> <span class="close">[[✖->Start]]</span>  
<<if setup.enableUndo.get()>>  
 ''Enable Undo'' is currently <<link "ON">><<run setup.enableUndo.toggle()>><<run Engine.play(passage())>><</link>>.  
<<else>>  
 ''Enable Undo'' is currently <<link "OFF">><<run setup.enableUndo.toggle()>><<run Engine.play(passage())>><</link>>.  
<</if>>  
When this option is ''ON'', an undo button will appear at the top of the game window.

# content\_warning [no-undo center options] {"position":"350,400"}

<span class="subtitle">''Content Warning''</span>  
This story contains depictions of violence, horror, and mild gore.  
Are you okay with continuing this story?  
  
[[Yes.->pre\_intro]]  
[[No.->its\_okay]]

# restart [center no-undo] {"position":"350,150"}

<<nobr>><<link 'It will always end the same way.'>>  
 <<for \_key, \_val range State.variables>><<run delete State.variables[\_key]>><</for>>  
 <<set State.expired.length = 0>>  
 <<goto pre\_intro>>  
<</link>><</nobr>>

# variable\_setup {"position":"200,200"}

<nobr>  
/\* STORY \*/  
<<set $dir to "north">>  
<<set $weapon to "greatsword">>  
<<set $cyclingResult\_weapon\_1 to "a greatsword forged from soulsteel">>  
<<set $face\_friend to 0>>  
<<set $face\_mc to 0>>  
<<set $gen\_dir\_desc to "in front of her">>  
  
<<set $shot\_friend\_1 to false>>  
<<set $shot\_friend\_2 to false>>  
<<set $shot\_friend\_3 to false>>  
  
<<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "step into a fold in space and reappear in front of her">>  
<<set $friend\_dodge\_2 to "sidestep">>  
  
/\* TRACK SEEN TEXT \*/  
<<set $goddess\_freedom\_seen to false>>  
<<set $wound\_heal\_seen to false>>  
  
/\* TRACK VISITS \*/  
  
/\* OVERRIDE FOR TESTING \*/  
</nobr>

# StoryInit {"position":"75,200"}

<<include "variable\_setup">>

# its\_okay [no-undo center] {"position":"350,275"}

[[It's okay.->Start]]

# pre\_intro [no-undo] {"position":"175,675"}

<<include "variable\_setup">>  
<<timed 2s t8n>><<goto "intro\_1">><</timed>>

# intro\_1 [no-undo] {"position":"300,675"}

[[You can't save her->intro\_2]].

# intro\_2 {"position":"425,675"}

[[This is what they told you->intro\_3]].

# intro\_3 {"position":"550,675"}

[[And this is what you tell yourself->chapter\_1]].

# chapter\_1 [center] {"position":"225,1050"}

<span class="number-heading">[[I->intro\_4]]</span>

# intro\_4 [no-undo] {"position":"800,675"}

/\* TODO: may want to reuse these three \*/  
When the children at the monastery come of age, they must complete a test.

# intro\_5 {"position":"925,675"}

When your friend left, you feared what your test would be.  
  
[[Your fears came true->intro\_6]].

# intro\_6 {"position":"1050,675"}

The nuns told you that you must [[kill her->weapon\_1]], for she had fallen sway to the other god.

# weapon\_1 [center] {"position":"275,850"}

So you start by preparing your weapon:  
<<include "cycling\_weapon\_1">>  
  
You pray that you are [[prepared->etching]].

# cycling\_weapon\_1 {"position":"175,850"}

<<silently>>  
<<if not $choices\_weapon\_1>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_weapon\_1 to -1>>  
 <<set $choices\_weapon\_1 to ["A greatsword forged from soulsteel", "A sabre carved from angel bone", "A rapier shaped from dreamsilver"]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $choicesCount\_weapon\_1 to $choicesCount\_weapon\_1 + 1>>  
  
<<if $choicesCount\_weapon\_1 >= $choices\_weapon\_1.length>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_weapon\_1 to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $cyclingResult\_weapon\_1 to $choices\_weapon\_1[$choicesCount\_weapon\_1]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace $choices\_weapon\_1[$choicesCount\_weapon\_1] t8n>><<include "cycling\_weapon\_1">><</linkreplace>>

# weapon\_des\_calc {"position":"575,100"}

<<nobr>>  
<<set $cyclingResult\_weapon\_1 to $cyclingResult\_weapon\_1.toLowerCase()>>  
<<if $cyclingResult\_weapon\_1 is "a greatsword forged from soulsteel">>  
 <<set $weapon to "greatsword">>  
<<elseif $cyclingResult\_weapon\_1 is "a sabre carved from angel bone">>  
 <<set $weapon to "sabre">>  
<<elseif $cyclingResult\_weapon\_1 is "a rapier shaped from dreamsilver">>  
 <<set $weapon to "rapier">>  
<<else>>  
 <<set $weapon to "sword">>  
<</if>>  
<</nobr>>

# etching [center] {"position":"400,850"}

<<include "weapon\_des\_calc">>\  
And you:  
<<include "cycling\_etching">>  
  
This is what you [[believe->weapon\_3]] in.

# cycling\_etching {"position":"500,850"}

<<silently>>  
<<if not $choices\_etching>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_etching to -1>>  
 <<set $choices\_etching to ["machine it with sigils of faith", "etch it with invocations of death", "anodise it with dreams of martyrdom"]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $choicesCount\_etching to $choicesCount\_etching + 1>>  
  
<<if $choicesCount\_etching >= $choices\_etching.length>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_etching to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $cyclingResult\_etching to $choices\_etching[$choicesCount\_etching]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace $choices\_etching[$choicesCount\_etching] t8n>><<include "cycling\_etching">><</linkreplace>>

# weapon\_3 {"position":"650,850"}

[[You put yourself into your work->weapon\_4]].

# weapon\_4 {"position":"775,850"}

You put yourself into your work, [[in the way that faith demands sacrifice->weapon\_5]].

# weapon\_5 {"position":"900,850"}

And you bring a blazegun.  
  
[[Even though she called it a coward's weapon->mc\_travel\_1]].

# mc\_travel\_1 [moon] {"position":"350,1050"}

<<timed 2s t8n>>The pale desert of this moon curves towards an empty horizon.  
  
She is to the [[north->mc\_travel\_2]].  
<</timed>>\

# mc\_travel\_2 [moon] {"position":"475,1050"}

Clouds of grey dust swirl in your wake.  
  
The wind is howling a language that you do not understand.  
  
She is to the [[north->mc\_travel\_3]].

# mc\_travel\_3 [moon] {"position":"600,1050"}

A building rises in the distance. This is the cathedral where she is waiting.  
  
You hear a rumble inside the cathedral.  
  
She is to the [[north->mc\_travel\_4]].

# mc\_travel\_4 [moon] {"position":"725,1050"}

The cathedral pierces the sky like a stalagmite.  
  
She is to the [[north->mc\_travel\_5]].

# mc\_travel\_5 [moon] {"position":"850,1050"}

The sculptures have weathered away.  
  
Their faces are blank, and the folds of their clothing are fading dunes of stone.  
  
She is to the [[north->mc\_travel\_6]].

# mc\_travel\_6 {"position":"975,1050"}

She is waiting in the north of the cathedral, in front of the altar.  
  
It is covered in red stains.  
  
The arches and walls are scarred with gashes. From the depth of the grooves, you know that they must be recent.  
  
You look to the north. She is a silhouette cloaked in [[moonlight->mc\_travel\_7]].

# mc\_travel\_7 {"position":"1100,1050"}

Moonlight is shining through the stained glass window, painting a rose of rainbows on the floor.  
  
She is still waiting.  
  
You take [[a better look at her->mc\_travel\_8]].

# mc\_travel\_8 {"position":"1225,900"}

Her <<linkappend "face" t8n>> is a palette of scars.<<set $face\_friend += 1>><<if $face\_friend is 3>><<timed 6s t8n>><<goto "mc\_travel\_9">><</timed>><</if>><</linkappend>>  
  
Her <<linkappend "eyes" t8n>> glow bright pink.<<set $face\_friend += 1>><<if $face\_friend is 3>><<timed 6s t8n>><<goto "mc\_travel\_9">><</timed>><</if>><</linkappend>>  
  
Her <<linkappend "hair" t8n>> barely conceals the nubs of her antlers, which look like buds emerging out of soil.<<set $face\_friend += 1>><<if $face\_friend is 3>><<timed 6s t8n>><<goto "mc\_travel\_9">><</timed>><</if>><</linkappend>>

# mc\_travel\_9 {"position":"1400,1025"}

This is worse than you feared.  
  
<<include "cycling\_mc\_travel\_7">>.  
<<timed 9s>><<goto "mc\_pre\_fight">><</timed>>\

# cycling\_mc\_travel\_7 {"position":"1100,1150"}

<<silently>>  
<<if not $choices\_mc\_travel\_7>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_mc\_travel\_7 to -1>>  
 <<set $choices\_mc\_travel\_7 to ["Shoot her", "Strike her"]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $choicesCount\_mc\_travel\_7 to $choicesCount\_mc\_travel\_7 + 1>>  
  
<<if $choicesCount\_mc\_travel\_7 >= $choices\_mc\_travel\_7.length>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_mc\_travel\_7 to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $cyclingResult\_mc\_travel\_7 to $choices\_mc\_travel\_7[$choicesCount\_mc\_travel\_7]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace $choices\_mc\_travel\_7[$choicesCount\_mc\_travel\_7] t8n>><<include "cycling\_mc\_travel\_7">><</linkreplace>>

# mc\_pre\_fight {"position":"275,1200"}

<<if $cyclingResult\_mc\_travel\_7 is "Shoot her">>\  
<<set $shot\_friend\_1 to true>>\  
You fumble with your blazegun for a moment, but you steady yourself, and you shoot in her direction.  
  
The bullets simply rain against the stone walls.  
<<else>>\  
You fumble with your $weapon for a moment, but you steady yourself.  
  
You rush forward to strike her, you only slice vacant air, and scatter a dance of dust motes.  
<</if>>\  
  
She has disappeared. You ready your <<if $cyclingResult\_mc\_travel\_7 is "Shoot her">>blazegun<<else>>$weapon<</if>>.  
  
She could be to the <<link "north" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "north">><</link>>, <<link "north by east" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "north by east">><</link>>, <<link "north-northeast" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "north-northeast">><</link>>, <<link "northeast by north" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "northeast by north">><</link>>, <<link "northeast" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "northeast">><</link>>, <<link "northeast by east" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "northeast by east">><</link>>, <<link "east-northeast" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "east-northeast">><</link>>, <<link "east by north" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "east by north">><</link>>, <<link "east" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "east">><</link>>, <<link "east by south" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "east by south">><</link>>, <<link "east-southeast" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "east-southeast">><</link>>, <<link "southeast by east" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "southeast by east">><</link>>, <<link "southeast" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "southeast">><</link>>, <<link "southeast by south" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "southeast by south">><</link>>, <<link "south-southeast" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "south-southeast">><</link>>, <<link "south by east" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "south by east">><</link>>, <<link "south" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "south">><</link>>, <<link "south by west" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "south by west">><</link>>, <<link "south-southwest" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "south-southwest">><</link>>, <<link "southwest by south" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "southwest by south">><</link>>, <<link "southwest" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "southwest">><</link>>, <<link "southwest by west" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "southwest by west">><</link>>, <<link "west-southwest" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "west-southwest">><</link>>, <<link "west by south" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "west by south">><</link>>, <<link "west" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "west">><</link>>, <<link "west by north" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "west by north">><</link>>, <<link "west-northwest" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "west-northwest">><</link>>, <<link "northwest by west" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "northwest by west">><</link>>, <<link "northwest" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "northwest">><</link>>, <<link "northwest by north" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "northwest by north">><</link>>, <<link "north-northwest" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "north-northwest">><</link>>, or <<link "north by west" "mc\_fight\_1">><<set $dir to "north by west">><</link>>.

# mc\_fight\_1 {"position":"400,1200"}

<<nobr>><<if $dir is "north-northwest" or $dir is "north" or $dir is "north-northeast">>  
 <<set $gen\_dir\_desc to "in front of her">>  
  
<<elseif $dir is "northeast by north" or $dir is "northeast" or $dir is "northeast by east" or $dir is "east-northeast" or $dir is "east by north" or $dir is "east" or $dir is "east by south" or $dir is "east-southeast" or $dir is "southeast by east" or $dir is "southeast" or $dir is "southeast by south" or $dir is "north by west" or $dir is "north by east">>  
 <<set $gen\_dir\_desc to "to her right">>  
  
<<elseif $dir is "south-southeast" or $dir is "south" or $dir is "south by west">>  
 <<set $gen\_dir\_desc to "behind her">>  
  
<<elseif $dir is "south by east" or $dir is "southwest by south" or $dir is "southwest" or $dir is "southwest by west" or $dir is "west-southwest" or $dir is "west by south" or $dir is "west" or $dir is "west by north" or $dir is "west-northwest" or $dir is "northwest by west" or $dir is "northwest" or $dir is "northwest by north" or $dir is "south-southwest">>  
 <<set $gen\_dir\_desc to "to her left">>  
  
<</if>><</nobr>>\  
[[One second->mc\_fight\_2]].

# mc\_fight\_2 {"position":"525,1200"}

<<if $dir is "north">>\  
Now, she isn't to the north. You miss again.  
  
You swerve around, and spot her behind you.  
<<elseif $dir is "south">>\  
She has reappeared to your south, but she still dodges your <<if $cyclingResult\_mc\_travel\_7 is "Shoot her">>shots<<else>>attacks<</if>>.  
<<else>>\  
She isn't to the $dir. You swerve around, and spot her behind you.  
<</if>>\  
  
<<if $cyclingResult\_mc\_travel\_7 is "Shoot her">><<include "cycling\_shoot\_again">>.<<else>><<include "cycling\_strike\_again">>.<</if>>  
  
[[Two seconds->mc\_fight\_3]].

# mc\_fight\_3 {"position":"650,1200"}

<<if $cyclingResult\_shoot\_again is "Strike her">><<set $shot\_friend\_2 to true>><</if>>\  
<<if $cyclingResult\_strike\_again is "Shoot her">><<set $shot\_friend\_2 to true>><</if>>\  
<<nobr>><<if $shot\_friend\_2 is true>>  
She casually sidesteps your shots  
<<else>>  
She casually sidesteps your $weapon  
<</if>>  
 and laughs, in the way she always did.<</nobr>>  
  
You stop to catch your breath. You consider your [[options->options\_comment]]:  
  
<<include "cycling\_mc\_fight\_3">>.  
  
[[Three seconds->mc\_fight\_4]].

# cycling\_mc\_fight\_3

<<silently>>  
<<if not $choices\_mc\_fight\_3>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_mc\_fight\_3 to -1>>  
 <<set $choices\_mc\_fight\_3 to ["Thrust your $weapon forward", "Steady your aim, charge the shot, and shoot"]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $choicesCount\_mc\_fight\_3 to $choicesCount\_mc\_fight\_3 + 1>>  
  
<<if $choicesCount\_mc\_fight\_3 >= $choices\_mc\_fight\_3.length>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_mc\_fight\_3 to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $cyclingResult\_mc\_fight\_3 to $choices\_mc\_fight\_3[$choicesCount\_mc\_fight\_3]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace $choices\_mc\_fight\_3[$choicesCount\_mc\_fight\_3] t8n>><<include "cycling\_mc\_fight\_3">><</linkreplace>>

# mc\_fight\_4 {"position":"775,1200"}

<<if $cyclingResult\_mc\_fight\_3 is "Steady your aim and shoot">>\  
<<set $shot\_friend\_3 to true>>\  
She smirks as she slices the bolt of fire midair with her $weapon.  
  
The other god's power.  
<<else>>\  
<<set $shot\_friend\_3 to false>>\  
She smirks as she parries your thrust with such strength, you let your $weapon go. It flies off to the other side of the room, and clatters on the floor, the sound echoing throughout this hollow space.  
<</if>>\  
  
She starts laughing harder, laughing in the way that one would laugh at the antics of [[a small child->flashback\_1]].

# cycling\_shoot\_again {"position":"575,325"}

<<silently>>  
<<if not $choices\_shoot\_again>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_shoot\_again to -1>>  
 <<set $choices\_shoot\_again to ["Shoot her again", "Strike her"]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $choicesCount\_shoot\_again to $choicesCount\_shoot\_again + 1>>  
  
<<if $choicesCount\_shoot\_again >= $choices\_shoot\_again.length>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_shoot\_again to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $cyclingResult\_shoot\_again to $choices\_shoot\_again[$choicesCount\_shoot\_again]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace $choices\_shoot\_again[$choicesCount\_shoot\_again] t8n>><<include "cycling\_shoot\_again">><</linkreplace>>

# cycling\_strike\_again {"position":"575,225"}

<<silently>>  
<<if not $choices\_strike\_again>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_strike\_again to -1>>  
 <<set $choices\_strike\_again to ["Strike her", "Shoot her"]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $choicesCount\_strike\_again to $choicesCount\_strike\_again + 1>>  
  
<<if $choicesCount\_strike\_again >= $choices\_strike\_again.length>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_strike\_again to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $cyclingResult\_strike\_again to $choices\_strike\_again[$choicesCount\_strike\_again]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace $choices\_strike\_again[$choicesCount\_strike\_again] t8n>><<include "cycling\_strike\_again">><</linkreplace>>

# flashback\_1 [flashback long-t8n] {"position":"650,1525"}

She smirks as she sidesteps your sword, again and again.  
  
You are children at the monastery, and you are training to fight. She was always better at anything physical—your form is far clumsier than hers.  
  
The sunlight is prickling your skin, and you are trying your best to ignore it. Frustration is burning in your chest.  
  
She is still laughing.  
  
<<include "cycling\_flashback\_1">>  
  
[[One second.->flashback\_2]]

# cycling\_flashback\_1 {"position":"650,1425"}

<<silently>>  
<<if not $choices\_flashback\_1>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_flashback\_1 to -1>>  
 <<set $choices\_flashback\_1 to ["Slash at her with all your strength.", "Hit her with the pommel of your sword."]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $choicesCount\_flashback\_1 to $choicesCount\_flashback\_1 + 1>>  
  
<<if $choicesCount\_flashback\_1 >= $choices\_flashback\_1.length>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_flashback\_1 to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $cyclingResult\_flashback\_1 to $choices\_flashback\_1[$choicesCount\_flashback\_1]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace $choices\_flashback\_1[$choicesCount\_flashback\_1] t8n>><<include "cycling\_flashback\_1">><</linkreplace>>

# flashback\_2 [flashback] {"position":"775,1525"}

You hit her, hard. Too hard. She grimaces as she falls, clutching her chest.  
  
[[Two seconds.->flashback\_2\_1]]

# flashback\_2\_1 [flashback] {"position":"775,1650"}

You watch her fall.  
  
[[Three seconds.->flashback\_2\_2]]

# flashback\_2\_2 [flashback] {"position":"900,1650"}

I'm sorry! You say, as you run over to pick her up. She groans, but she says it doesn't hurt.  
  
The nun jogs over to bring her to the infirmary, and you insist on [[following her->flashback\_3]].

# flashback\_3 [flashback] {"position":"900,1525"}

The nun tells you that you can return to class, but you continue to apologise, <<linkreplace "I'm sorry" t8n>>I'm sorry, <<linkreplace "I'm sorry" t8n>>I'm sorry, <<linkreplace "I'm sorry" t8n>>I'm sorry<</linkreplace>><</linkreplace>><</linkreplace>>.  
  
She tells you it's okay, [[you didn't mean it->flashback\_4]].

# flashback\_4 [flashback] {"position":"1025,1525"}

Still, after class, you continue to tell her how sorry you are, you just tell her <span id="apology"></span><span id="sorry-link"><<link "I'm sorry,">>  
 <<append "#apology" t8n>>I'm sorry, <</append>>  
 <<replace "#sorry-link">><<link "I'm sorry,">><<append "#apology" t8n>>I'm sorry, <</append>><</link>><</replace>>  
<</link>></span>  
<<timed 9s>><<goto "flashback\_5">><</timed>>\

# flashback\_5 [flashback] {"position":"1150,1525"}

You tell her, I'm sorry, once again, and you say that maybe you can give her something to make up for this—  
  
She tells you no, it's okay, and laughs, maybe we should practice later instead. You should work on your technique, you could hit even harder.  
  
[[Just meet me outside->chapter\_2]].

# chapter\_2 [center pink] {"position":"225,1050"}

<span class="number-heading">[[II->friend\_fight\_1]]</span>

# friend\_fight\_1 [pink] {"position":"250,1800"}

[[Your goddess has granted you a vision->friend\_fight\_2]].

# friend\_fight\_2 [pink] {"position":"375,1800"}

[[Your old friend will visit you, in the hope that you can be saved->friend\_fight\_3]].

# friend\_fight\_3 [pink] {"position":"500,1800"}

[[But she is wrong->friend\_fight\_4]].

# friend\_fight\_4 [pink] {"position":"625,1800"}

You know that she will bring $cyclingResult\_weapon\_1, and so you <<linkappend "pick the same weapon" t8n>>, prying it from the hands of one of the acolytes they sent [[to hunt you->etching\_friend]].<</linkappend>>

# etching\_friend [pink center] {"position":"750,1800"}

And you:  
<<include "cycling\_etching\_friend">>  
  
This is what you [[believe->friend\_fight\_5]] in.

# cycling\_etching\_friend [pink] {"position":"500,850"}

<<silently>>  
<<if not $choices\_etching\_friend>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_etching\_friend to -1>>  
 <<set $choices\_etching\_friend to ["imbue it with runes of faith", "infuse it with an aura of death", "empower it with dreams of martyrdom"]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $choicesCount\_etching\_friend to $choicesCount\_etching\_friend + 1>>  
  
<<if $choicesCount\_etching\_friend >= $choices\_etching\_friend.length>>  
 <<set $choicesCount\_etching\_friend to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set $cyclingResult\_etching\_friend to $choices\_etching\_friend[$choicesCount\_etching\_friend]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace $choices\_etching\_friend[$choicesCount\_etching\_friend] t8n>><<include "cycling\_etching\_friend">><</linkreplace>>

# friend\_fight\_5 [pink] {"position":"875,1800"}

[[You put yourself into your work->friend\_fight\_6]].

# friend\_fight\_6 [pink] {"position":"1000,1800"}

You put yourself into your work, [[in the way that faith demands sacrifice->friend\_fight\_7]].

# friend\_fight\_7 [pink] {"position":"1125,1800"}

And even without your goddess's vision, you know that she will also bring a blazegun.  
  
She was always a bit of a [[coward->friend\_fight\_8]].

# friend\_fight\_8 [pink]

<<timed 2s t8n>>You are in the cathedral, [[waiting->friend\_fight\_9]] for her.  
<</timed>>

# friend\_fight\_9 [pink]

You observe how the arches are carved in perfect curves, with mathematical precision.  
  
You are [[tired->friend\_fight\_10]] of this worship of symmetry.

# friend\_fight\_10 [pink]

<<link "There">><<replace "#1" t8n>> You leap up to leave your mark on this building, <<if $weapon is "rapier">>scraping<<else>>slashing<</if>> your $weapon against an arch.<</replace>><</link>>.<span id="1"></span>  
<<timed 10s>><<goto "friend\_fight\_11">><</timed>>\

# friend\_fight\_11 [pink]

The cathedral walls are now a patchwork of grooves.  
  
You put your $weapon down.  
  
You are [[tired of waiting->friend\_fight\_12]].

# friend\_fight\_12 [pink]

But you hear the rhythm of boots against sand, then marble.  
  
She is [[here->friend\_fight\_13]].

# friend\_fight\_13 [pink]

You are wearing the [[moonlight->friend\_fight\_14]] like a cloak.

# friend\_fight\_14 [pink]

Moonlight is shining through the stained glass window, painting a rose of rainbows on the floor.  
  
She is walking towards you.  
  
You take [[a better look at her->friend\_fight\_15]].

# friend\_fight\_15 [pink]

Her <<linkappend "face" t8n>> is as stony as ever.<<set $face\_mc += 1>><<if $face\_mc is 3>><<timed 6s t8n>><<goto "friend\_fight\_16">><</timed>><</if>><</linkappend>>  
  
Her <<linkappend "eyes" t8n>> burn with determination.<<set $face\_mc += 1>><<if $face\_mc is 3>><<timed 6s t8n>><<goto "friend\_fight\_16">><</timed>><</if>><</linkappend>>  
  
Her <<linkappend "hair" t8n>> is combed perfectly, like a statue of a hero.<<set $face\_mc += 1>><<if $face\_mc is 3>><<timed 6s t8n>><<goto "friend\_fight\_16">><</timed>><</if>><</linkappend>>

# friend\_fight\_16 [pink]

Exactly as you expected.  
  
And she is <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>raising her blazegun, her finger on the trigger<<else>>raising her $weapon, ready to strike<</if>>, you—  
  
<<timed 1s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Sidestep to the left." "friend\_fight\_17">><<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "sidestep to the left">><</link>><</timed>>  
<<timed 1.5s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Sidestep to the right." "friend\_fight\_17">><<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "sidestep to the right">><</link>><</timed>>  
<<timed 2s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Duck and roll forward." "friend\_fight\_17">><<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "Duck and roll forward">><</link>><</timed>>  
<<timed 2.5s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Duck and roll backward." "friend\_fight\_17">><<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "Duck and roll backward">><</link>><</timed>>  
<<timed 3s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Stay still." "friend\_fight\_17">><<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "stay still">><</link>><</timed>>  
  
<<timed 3.5s t8n>>Or step into a fold in space, and:<</timed>>  
  
<<timed 4s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Reappear to her left." "friend\_fight\_17">><<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "step into a fold in space and reappear to her left">><</link>><</timed>>  
<<timed 4.5s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Reappear to her right." "friend\_fight\_17">><<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "step into a fold in space and reappear to her right">><</link>><</timed>>  
<<timed 5s t8n>><span class='goddess-vision'><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Reappear behind her." "friend\_fight\_17">><<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "step into a fold in space and reappear behind her">><</link>></span><</timed>>  
<<timed 5.5s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Reappear in front of her." "friend\_fight\_17">><<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to "step into a fold in space and reappear in front of her">><</link>><</timed>>

# friend\_fight\_17 [pink]

<<set $friend\_dodge\_1 to $friend\_dodge\_1.toLowerCase()>>\  
<<if $friend\_dodge\_1 is "step into a fold in space and reappear behind her">>\  
 You step into the fold in space and reappear behind her, as you saw in the vision.  
 <<if $dir is "south">>\  
  
 She shoots in your direction, but you simply turn to the side, dodging her <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>shots<<else>>attacks<</if>>.  
  
 You can hear <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>the bullets patter against the wall<<else>>the $weapon slice through the air<</if>>, and you can hear her heartbeat race faster.  
 <<elseif $dir is "north">>\  
  
 She is still <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>shooting in front of her<<else>>slashing the air right in front of her<</if>>.  
  
 You can hear <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>the bullets patter against the wall<<else>>the $weapon slice through the air<</if>>, and you can hear her heartbeat race faster.  
 <<else>>\  
  
 She <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>shoots $gen\_dir\_desc<<else>>slashes $gen\_dir\_desc<</if>>, missing you completely.  
  
 You can hear <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>the bullets patter against the wall<<else>>the $weapon slice through the air<</if>>, and you can hear her heartbeat race faster.  
 <</if>>\  
<<else>>\  
 <<set $goddess\_freedom\_seen to true>>\  
 The goddess gave you the freedom to make your own mistakes. You defy her vision, just to prove to yourself that you do not need it.  
  
 <<if ($friend\_dodge\_1 is "sidestep to the left" and $dir is "north-northeast") or ($friend\_dodge\_1 is "sidestep to the right" and $dir is "north-northwest") or ($friend\_dodge\_1 is "step into a fold in space and reappear to her left" and $dir is "west") or ($friend\_dodge\_1 is "step into a fold in space and reappear to her right" and $dir is "east") or ($friend\_dodge\_1 is "step into a fold in space and reappear to her in front of her" and $dir is "north")>>\  
 <<if $friend\_dodge\_1 is "step into a fold in space and reappear in front of her">>You $friend\_dodge\_1, and yet, she still completely misses.<<else>>You $friend\_dodge\_1, and she completely misses.<</if>>  
  
 <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>One of her flame bullets grazes your shoulder, a brief sear of pain<<else>>Her blade scrapes your chest<</if>>, but you can already feel the wound healing, your flesh reweaving itself.  
 <<set $wound\_heal\_seen to true>>\  
  
 You hear her heartbeat race faster.  
 <<elseif $friend\_dodge\_1 is "stay still">>\  
 You stay still, and you feel <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>the bullets pierce your chest like hail<<else>>the $weapon tear through your chest<</if>>.  
  
 But you can already feel the wound healing, your flesh reweaving itself.  
 <<set $wound\_heal\_seen to true>>\  
 <<else>>\  
 <<if $friend\_dodge\_1 is "step into a fold in space and reappear in front of her">>You $friend\_dodge\_1, and yet, she still completely misses.<<else>>You $friend\_dodge\_1, and she completely misses.<</if>>  
  
 You can hear <<if $shot\_friend\_1 is true>>the bullets patter against the wall<<else>>the $weapon slice through the air<</if>>, and you can hear her heartbeat race faster.  
 <</if>>\  
<</if>>\  
  
You try not to laugh. What an idiot.  
  
<<timed 1s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Sidestep to the left." "friend\_fight\_18">><<set $friend\_dodge\_2 to "sidestep to the left">><</link>><</timed>>  
<<timed 1.5s t8n>><span class='goddess-vision'><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Sidestep to the right." "friend\_fight\_18">><<set $friend\_dodge\_2 to "sidestep to the right">><</link>></span><</timed>>  
<<timed 2s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Duck and roll forward." "friend\_fight\_18">><<set $friend\_dodge\_2 to "duck and roll forward">><</link>><</timed>>  
<<timed 2.5s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Duck and roll backward." "friend\_fight\_18">><<set $friend\_dodge\_2 to "duck and roll backward">><</link>><</timed>>  
<<timed 3s t8n>><<link "<span class='ina-bullet'>\*</span> Stay still." "friend\_fight\_18">><<set $friend\_dodge\_2 to "stay still">><</link>><</timed>>

# friend\_fight\_18 [pink]

<<if $friend\_dodge\_2 is "sidestep to the right">>\  
 Just like in the vision, you dodge her attack, watching the <<if $shot\_friend\_2 is true>>bullets fly by<<else>>blade whoosh by<</if>>.  
<<else>>\  
 <<if $goddess\_freedom\_seen is false>>\  
 The goddess gave you the freedom to make your own mistakes. You defy her vision, just to prove to yourself that you do not need it.  
  
 <</if>>\  
 <<if $shot\_friend\_2 is true>>The bullets pierce your chest, and you can feel the blood blooming across the fabric of your padded clothing.<<else>>The $weapon <<if $weapon is "rapier">>pierces through<<else>>rakes<</if>> your chest<</if>>.  
 <<if $wound\_heal\_seen is true>>\  
 <<if $shot\_friend\_2 is true>>\  
 You can feel the pleasant tickling sensation of your wounds healing, feeling how the bullets push out of your skin.  
 <<else>>\  
 You can feel the pleasant tickling sensation of your wounds healing, feeling how the gash in your skin is folding over itself.  
 <</if>>\  
 <<else>>\  
 <<if $shot\_friend\_2 is true>>\  
 You can already feel the wounds healing, your flesh reweaving itself.  
 <<else>>\  
 You can already feel the wound healing, your flesh reweaving itself.  
 <</if>>\  
 <</if>>\  
<</if>>\  
  
So, you can't hold in your laughter much longer. You let out a peal of laughter, and your old friend stops in her tracks.  
  
She draws deep, labored breaths, then she meets your gaze. Assessing her [[options->options\_comment\_2]].  
  
You know what to expect, and you [[wait->friend\_fight\_19]] for her next move.

# friend\_fight\_19 [pink]

Maybe this would finally scare her away.  
  
<<if $shot\_friend\_3 to true>>\  
It is as if time has slowed down to a quarter of a second. You slice the bolt of fire midair, and it tears into two.  
<<else>>\  
You tighten your grip on the $weapon, and parry her attack. To your surprise, she lets the weapon go. It flies off to the other side of the room, and clatters on the floor, so you hear a terrible, ghastly, echo.  
<</if>>\  
  
You compose yourself, then you laugh again. This is the first time you have seen your friend [[in years->tween\_flashback\_1]], and her first reaction is to try to kill you?

# tween\_flashback\_1 [flashback long-t8n pink]

Maybe she is still too scared.  
  
You are teenagers at the monastery, and you just heard that the nuns are <<linkreplace "burning books" t8n>>[[ritually destroying heretic texts->tween\_flashback\_2]]<</linkreplace>> today.

# tween\_flashback\_2 [flashback pink]

You are young, and <<include cycling\_tween\_flashback\_2>>. You want to steal one of these texts before they are destroyed.  
  
And your friend is refusing to help you. They are banned for a reason, she says.  
  
They're dangerous. It's best not to read them in the first place.  
  
But you tell her, don't you want to know what's out there? There must be worlds other than the one we know.  
  
She pauses. Okay, she says, but how?  
  
It's not that difficult, you answer. Just sneak into the library storage room [[during the assistant's break->tween\_flashback\_3]].

# tween\_flashback\_3 [flashback pink]

So you waited with her in the library, waiting for the assistant to leave.  
  
The assistant steps out, and the both of you [[sneak in->tween\_flashback\_4]].

# tween\_flashback\_4

Inside, you see piles of thick, yellowed books and loose paper. The books do not look very different from the books in the library. You feel a little disappointed.  
  
Your friend is telling you to leave. Let's go now, please.  
  
Just as you turn around, you notice that one of the books is [[glowing pink->tween\_flashback\_5]].

# tween\_flashback\_5

You don't remember picking it up, but you remember your friend telling you to put it down.  
  
She says, it must be cursed, please leave it here.  
  
That makes you want to [[read it more->tween\_flashback\_6]].

# tween\_flashback\_6

[[You are on your bed, reading the book->tween\_flashback\_7]].

# tween\_flashback\_7

[[You learn about the other god->tween\_flashback\_8]].

# tween\_flashback\_8

You spend your nights reading the book, and your time burns away.  
  
A few days later, you tell your friend, please read it, there is another way we can live. A way beyond these walls.  
  
Your friend says, I don't <<include "cycling\_tween\_flashback\_8">> to know. But you insist. You ask her, don't you trust me?  
  
She trusted you, because you were her [[friend->tween\_flashback\_9]].

# tween\_flashback\_9

She opens the book.  
  
Your friend seems transfixed, as she flips to the next page, then the next, ignoring you, and everything around her.  
  
Then, she stops, and [[throws the book down->tween\_flashback\_10]].

# tween\_flashback\_10

She tells you, you should be reported for keeping this. You ask her, are you really going to?  
  
She doesn't look at you.  
  
No, she answers. Of course she can't.  
  
She was always a [[coward->tween\_flashback\_11]].

# tween\_flashback\_11

After that, she doesn't strike as hard during training sessions, doesn't answer as many questions in class, and doesn't talk to you as often.  
  
She lives [[like a ghost->tween\_flashback\_12]].

# tween\_flashback\_12

You don't apologise to her, but you tell her that you won't force her to do anything again. You know that this sickness is your fault.  
  
Maybe she read something which was too dangerous for her. Maybe the very idea of other paths and choices was too dangerous for her.  
  
Ideas are the most dangerous things in the universe.  
  
You wonder if reading the book broke her, somehow. You wonder if you are the reason why she has lost her [[faith->chapter\_3]].

# cycling\_tween\_flashback\_8

<<silently>>  
<<if not choices\_tween\_flashback\_8>>  
 <<set choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_8 to -1>>  
 <<set choices\_tween\_flashback\_8 to ["need", "want"]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_8 to choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_8 + 1>>  
  
<<if choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_8 >= choices\_tween\_flashback\_8.length>>  
 <<set choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_8 to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set cyclingResult\_tween\_flashback\_8 to choices\_tween\_flashback\_8[choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_8]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace choices\_tween\_flashback\_8[choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_8] t8n>><<include "cycling\_tween\_flashback\_8">><</linkreplace>>

# cycling\_tween\_flashback\_2

<<silently>>  
<<if not choices\_tween\_flashback\_2>>  
 <<set choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_2 to -1>>  
 <<set choices\_tween\_flashback\_2 to ["foolish", "naive", "curious"]>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_2 to choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_2 + 1>>  
  
<<if choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_2 >= choices\_tween\_flashback\_2.length>>  
 <<set choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_2 to 0>>  
<</if>>  
  
<<set cyclingResult\_tween\_flashback\_2 to choices\_tween\_flashback\_2[choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_2]>>  
<</silently>>  
\<<linkreplace choices\_tween\_flashback\_2[choicesCount\_tween\_flashback\_2] t8n>><<include "cycling\_tween\_flashback\_2">><</linkreplace>>

# chapter\_3 [center purple] {"position":"225,1050"}

<span class="number-heading">[[III->choiceless\_fight\_1]]</span>

# choiceless\_fight\_1

[[The sacred algorithms have made their predictions->choiceless\_fight\_2]].

# choiceless\_fight\_2

They have predicted how <<linkappend "she will fight you">>you [[must->choiceless\_fight\_2\_1]] fight her<</linkappend>>.

# choiceless\_fight\_2\_1

[[You must simply follow their instructions->choiceless\_fight\_2\_2]].

# choiceless\_fight\_2\_2

[[She can't be saved->choiceless\_fight\_3]].

# choiceless\_fight\_3

You walk into the cathedral at a speed of 1.64 metres per second. 13.67 seconds later, she will disappear, and after 0.58 seconds, she will reappear 183.24 degrees clockwise from the north.  
  
Hence, you mustn't shoot yet.  
  
<<link "Stay still">><</link>>.  
  
[[One second->choiceless\_fight\_5]].

# choiceless\_fight\_5

She has reappeared 183.24 degrees clockwise from the north.  
  
<<link "Shoot three shots charged at 58.31% power, 197.53 degrees clockwise from the north">><</link>>.  
  
[[Two seconds->choiceless\_fight\_6]].

# choiceless\_fight\_6

She deflects the first shot, and dodges the second, but the third shot hits her squarely in the stomach. The fire eats away her armor, then her padded clothing, then—  
  
You look away. You don't need to see her to follow the algorithms' instructions.  
  
<<link "Shoot one shot charged at 99.98% power, 197.41 degrees clockwise from the north">><</link>>.  
  
<<linkreplace "Three seconds" t8n>><<linkreplace "Three seconds" t8n>><<linkreplace "Three seconds" t8n>>[[You want better choices->teen\_flashback\_1]]<</linkreplace>><</linkreplace>><</linkreplace>>.

# teen\_flashback\_1 [long-t8n flashback]

<<timed 2.5s t8n>>She deflects your question.<</timed>>

# chapter\_4 [center] {"position":"225,1050"}

<span class="number-heading">[[𓂘]]</span>

# options\_comment

<<if setup.enableUndo.get()>>\  
Even if you could undo your decisions, maybe you would have made the same <<return "mistakes">>.  
<<else>>\  
You can't undo your decisions. You can't undo your <<return "mistakes">>.  
<</if>>\

# options\_comment\_2

<<if setup.enableUndo.get()>>\  
She thinks that her only option is to fight. Even if you could undo her decisions, she would have made the same <<return "mistakes">>.  
<<else>>\  
She thinks that her only option is to fight, yet again.  
  
She can't undo what she did. She can't undo her <<return "mistakes">>.  
<</if>>\