

Outline:

Who is Lione?

The basic idea is that Lione is a character driven by guilt about her existence. She sees herself as an abomination which has come into the world through the (literal) sacrifice of others, and someone who has had an active negative role in the lives of anyone she's tried to care for. Of course, this is offset by a deep desire to help people that verges on a compulsion. This is mixed with her desire to undermine, however possible, the Collective.

- She's reluctant to show deep affection, though surface-level bubblyness is her M.O.
- She takes the loss of others extremely personally, and tries to protect herself by pretending not to care. She particularly hates causing harm to the people she loves.
- She wants nothing more than to take revenge on Phoebe, and to dismantle the collective. In general, she has a serious problem with authority.
- A lot of this is directed inwards to her "pet" stuffed lion, Nemius. She uses him as a safety blanket and never goes anywhere without him, despite him being from a person she now loathes.

The purpose of this minisode is to do three things.

- 1) Provide a field on which to acquaint ourselves with Lione's character and relationship to Talos.
- 2) a central tension of Kuklos, the one in which Lione is most involved: human ampules and collective blackights.
- 3) Give some insight into the *flavor* of Disruption as a setting: a place where things are never completely bleak, and where adventure and heroes do exist, but where bad things can happen to good people, and where control, manipulation, boundaries, and manufactured beliefs dominate most people's lives.

Vomit about purpose

- 1) Intro needs to show microcosm of who Lione is. Troubled. A short temper. Prone to duck responsibility and lash out at pretty much anyone or anything that tries to call her on bullshit or gives her any real inconvenience. Despite all that, she's cute, witty, and seems to genuinely care about helping people almost despite herself. To give context, Basically, she has regularly been going out trying to thwart various ne'er-do-wells and protect innocents, but refuses to interact with the people she helps beyond her initial involvement. She's scared of getting close to them and eventually failing. She's trying to live out pennance for failing her lost freinds without having to form relationships that could hurt her in the same way as her failures there did. The problem is, of course, that

she's setting herself up for a big failure eventually, and she DOES care--even if she tries to distance herself.

2)

Pass Two: Screenplay format.

Scene one purpose: Introduce Lione, her social barbs/charm with Talos, and establish goal (rescue)

**NO MORE REWRITES. JUST FINISH THE
DRAFT. FIX LATER.**

**This story archetype is either revenge or
call to adventure. Good reference may
be treasure island (planet), Gregor the
Overlander (esp. Tantalus arc) and
Railgun (sisters arc)**

Consider: Who is Lione (her flaw), what is her goal, what are the stakes for achieving it

Hit them where it hurts: Lione needs to refuse companionship and get comeuppance for it.

INTERCUT (temporal) :

Horrific images of experimentation on test subjects--separated cells, a desperate escape attempt. A group of children, eyes concealed, in a blindingly white room. One girl stands slightly apart. The others melt into her.

INT. TALOS ARMORY -- EARLY MORNING.

CLOSEUP: LIONE'S SLEEPING FACE

The cute face of a young girl is bathed in a halo of early morning light. From just on the other side of a lofted space. She clutches a ragged stuffed lion, muttering indistinctly, brows knit. Boxes of supplies can be seen around her, and a bundle of blankets covers everything but her head. Something flutters by and squeaks. The girl stirs, cracking one eye and looking around blearily.

MONTAGE :

The camera slowly pans across several small scenes: A banked forge, huge sets of old tools on it. A table displaying various unfinished weapons and pieces of armor. A "To do" board with large, blocky handwriting graffitied by a scrawling, spiky script, doodles and rude phrases covering several key invoices. A well-made cage with "Scrit" embossed on a burnished copper

name-plate in fine lettering sits ajar on a high perch in the last shot, its lock having been dismantled and an empty food trough hanging beneath it. The ~~montage~~ ends as The girl raises her head slightly, eyes focusing. After a beat, a small "hurngh" sounds as a furry form rockets from behind camera, knocking the girl back. She gives a cry of surprise.

CUT TO

MED. DOWNSHOT

The girl struggles for a moment, then pulls the animal off her face, holding it, squirming, above her head.

CUT TO:

MED. SHOT (FRAME BOTH)

The girl regains her composure and gives the small, winged creature an incredulous look.

LIONE

Again? Really? Talos must be letting those locks--

She is cut off by a long strand of drool falling from the creature's open mouth, it splashes across her face and the stuffed lion next to her. She drops the creature next to her as she sputters for a second before clearing her eyes, gagging slightly.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP OF STUFFED LION.

Lione sees the lion covered in spittle, and her face goes hard. She grabs the dog-creature and flings it in an arc off the edge of her little sleeping area.

LIONE

You mutt!

The dog-creature's parabola is interrupted by a boxy apparatus just above a circular door which marks the entrance to the shop. It connects with a solid THWAP and Lione visibly winces. It

begins peeling off the contraption slowly, blinking out of sequence in a lazy way. Lione appears— genuinely worried, making to stand in a hurried fashion, swinging a leg over the balcony and preparing to jump down. A large shadow passes one of the windows near the door. Lione does not notice.

LIONE

Ah-dammit! I didn't mean to--

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT

The door rolls open and golden morning sunlight halos a mountainous— bald man wearing worn homespun work clothes. He has a round, cheery face that offsets his enormous size. He steps partway into the room as Lione freezes, looking very much like a kitten playing somewhere it shouldn't.

A long, awkward beat.

Scrit, jostled by the working of the contraption as it powered the door open, flops at the man's feet, landing on its back like a balloon filled with pudding. The man looks down at it, and it stares up at him with a vapid expression.

SCRIT

Hurrrng!

The man's placidity turns dark as he glares up at Lione, before bending to pick up his pet.

TALOS

Ah, great. Just what I wanted first thing in the morning. You— decided to practice pitching with my little Scrit now, have you?

I swear, you've got to be the worst behaved stray i've ever seen, girl.

Lione gives a suddenly rebellious expression spoiled only slightly by her awkward pose and leaps nimbly to the floor. She advances, pointing

LIONE

He got out of his cage *again* Talos! Don't try to pin this on me.
He covered me and Nemius in spittle not two minutes ago while we
were sleeping!

Lione stops short as Talos takes his own massive stride forward,
holding Scrit lovingly. He leans forward slightly.

TALOS

And why's that? Far as I remember, someone's supposed to be up
before sunrise to start the forge and get things ready.

He glances over at the cage.

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP CAGE AND FOOD TROUGH

The trough is clearly empty.

CUT TO:

PROFILE MEDIUM SHOT.

Talos looks exasperated.

TALOS

And you're supposed to fill his food. No wonder he got out.
How'd you like it if I left you without supper for an evening?

Lione looks abashed glances away, clearly uncomfortable with
her failure.

LIONE

I didn't ask to take care of him...should get food on his own...

TALOS

So, each for themselves then? What a relief!! Maybe it's time we
do the same for you and your "pets" as well, eh?

Lione looks back up sharply, real fear on her face. She clenches her fists, going rigid. The threat is clearly a dire one to her, and she seems surprisingly sure Talos is serious.

LIONE

I--

Talos Softens visibly at the palpable fear.

TALOS

No, I wouldn't...but you shouldn't forget about Scrit, Little lion. I'll bet you were out all night again?

Talos moves over to the forge, depositing Scrit--who seems completely unharmed--on his perch as he passes. He fills the creature's food from a large bag of mooshy feed.

LIONE

There was another eviction, Talos. More people being snapped up,
I--

TALOS (CONT'D)

Wasted half a day chasing ghosts, then got back after the witching hour and crawled into bed without a care? You've got duties, little one. You can't get through life rolling past responsabilités.

Lione glares daggers and mutters something indistinct but clearly offensive.

TALOS

(Exasperated)

Don't sulk, dammit! I'm just tellin' you the way it is. Have you even been down to see those youngins you helped last week?

Lione moves over to a rack of tools and grabs a few items,. Absently, She gives Scrit an apologetic pat on the head when Talos isn't looking. Scrit blinks lazily, though Lione's eyes

are downcast in thought. She walks up beside Talos and begins to help him.

CUT TO:

Several smiling, laughing children, their eyes not visible. One looks like Lione

LIONE

No... They don't want to see me, Talos. I'd just make them uncomfortable.

Talos gently places a massive hand on Lione's tiny shoulder. She looks up at him and gives a hesitant, appreciative smile. Just then, Scrit starts honking noisily and both people look to the door, which rolls open. A spry woman in her mid twenties rushes in and shuts the door hurriedly behind her.

WOMAN

(Breathless, excited)

Lione, traced a new location!

Lione dashes over while Talos has slumped slightly, recognizing the moment is lost

TALOS

Hell... She's off again.

MONTAGE:

Discussing with the woman (marking "exclusion zone" on map), showing pictures of abductees, Underground market (Lione pointedly ignoring Talos standing with a group of kids in the underground). Entering a long, dark tunnel eagerly.

END ON:

INT. UNDERGROUND, EVENING.

Lione stands at the base of a deep shaft of rough stone, faint light glowing at the top. A pitch-black open passage yawns behind her. She holds a positioning device of some kind in one hand, ampule casting a dim, shifting light on the wall around her.

CLOSEUP, DOWNSHOT.

She appears unperturbed by the relative darkness, a strange third eye open and glowing faintly. She clicks off the device and looks up. A shaft of some sixty feet extends above her, a ladder broken off halfway up the shaft.

LIONE

Well, Nemius--this is the spot. Of course whatever idiots maintain this Bolt let an exit into an exclusion zone like this rot--I mean, how could you *not* want to go somewhere 'excluded'?

She considers quietly for a moment, then crouches slightly, rolling on the balls of her feet. Points on her forehead, palms and sacrum glow faintly. She readies her unusually long belt.

LIONE

It'll be even easier than tossing Scrit!

she leaps vertically almost seven feet, flinging her belt out, revealing a small grapnel.

The grapnel misses by a good five feet, and her eyes go wide with surprise. The fall is much less graceful than the jump. She lands in a heap and the hook bonks her painfully on her head. She writhes and curses, hamming it up for a moment. She stops suddenly. Her third eye tracks over to the passage behind her.

???

(muffled)

--definitely heard a voice.

Lione looks around in a panic, *and*, seeing a small alcove partly concealed from the main chamber ~~she quickly leaps~~ *leaps in* ~~quickly~~ into it, her map falling out of her pocket as she does. Her glow fades slightly, though her third eye remains a faint prick of light She crouches in a lithe, tense pose. She seems a bit unused to hiding.

One, two, three moments of quiet, then a pair of figures slink almost silently into the room. Both wear jet-black robes, indistinct. They slink forward with strange swords raised, and glance about. Lione's eyes go wide, knuckles white, as she sees the symbols emblazoned on their masks.

Both figures give a cursory glance over the room--but there is clearly little to see, the map is pushed behind a small rock, so they do not see it immediately.

Figure A

(soft, fluting voice)

We eliminated the last squatters here over three months ago, Lanius. I find it unlikely more vermin would have moved in yet.

Lione's third eye starts to glow faintly.

LANIUS

(similar, only slightly deeper voice)

Apologies for the insolence, Kestrel. I was certain I heard something...

KESTREL

Well, your curiosity ought to be ~~sated~~satiated. Enough skulking.

We must get to the gate before collections finish its pickups for today. There are some new adolescent specimens I've been ordered to set aside for a different interest, and I don't want those brutes wasting them in Pods.

Lione looks on in momentary shock. She same split-second flashback plays across her mind. Multiple children in a blank white room, her tension seems to fade for a moment.

Kestrel makes an elegant leap up the shaft floating on a cushion of water, cloak billowing out as she effortlessly grabs the ladder. Shrike goes to follow, but kicks the map. The figure

bends down, picking up the map. Lione snaps back a moment too late, Lanius has picked up the map and makes to shout immediately

LANIUS

Kestrel, there was--

They fight

They are cut off as Lione explodes from her hiding place in a streak, punching Lanius in the stomach. Lione's palm starts to glow, but before it can fire, Lanius slashes at her neck with a thick, curved dagger. Lione jerks back, taking a gash across the clavicle. She then fires a double-palmed blast directly into Lanius' face. One beam misses by an inch, vaporising a piece of the cloak. The other hits them full on, revealing a youthful, androgynous face in a rictus of shock and pain. The beam cauterizes a hole partway through their neck and jaw. Lione flashes ~~out~~ her own dagger and stabs Lanius in the chest for good measure. As she does, she looks up to see Ketrel framed by the faint glow of evening light from far above. Lione tries to fire a beam at the figure, but they duck away, disappearing up the shaft. Lione screams in anger and punches the lifeless figure in front of her hard, caving in the nose and bloodying her knuckles. Her eyes clear. She looks at the body with disgust. More flashes to the past. Lione jabs a hand forward and grabs Lanius by the forehead. There's a shock of blinding blue light and Lanius crumbles to dust. Lione wretches, but holds her gorge. She jumps and the same cushion of water appears beneath her. She uses her grapnel to aid her climbing and comes up into an ancient looking room. It's empty. Through an old wooden door, a figure can be seen with hand to ear. They glance back at Lione, then leap off the rise.

Lione breaks into a full sprint following the retreating figure.

WIDE SHOT: EXT. EXCLUSION ZONE -- EARLY EVENING

Lione runs for the cliff and looks down. She glances about for a second. A large wall surrounds a richly-vegetated, dilapidated

section of the city about a mile square. Lione stands on a stone outcropping in front of the ancient three-story tower she just exited. Kestrel's movement from building-to building, propelled by a jet of water, describes an arc on which Two points of interest sit: The gate to the exclusion zone no more than a few hundred feet away. A caravan makes their way in, buzzing with activity. Slightly further away, sitting imposingly in the center of the zone, is a large, castle-like stone butte covered in strange fruiting fungi. The caravan is heading that way.

It's a long drop, but as she sees the figure moving nimbly across the tops of buildings some distance away, she leaps, aiming for a slightly taller building with a large tree-like fungus extending from it. She jets forward using the water cushion, then again grapples and follows.

Lione manages to gain some ground, using a mixture of parkor, water-skill, and grapnel to get close. The ground both cover is impressive and puts them just a few blocks from the caravan, with the rock formation not much further. Just as she does, Kestrel chucks a water-propelled dagger at her, forcing Lione to dodge. She does, barely--but is then hit from the side by a massive blow from a hidden assailant: four men in sleek black armor surround her on the rooftop she falls to just above the street the caravan is progressing along. She barely dispatches them with a mixture of palm-blasts and dagger thrusts, but only after taking several more hits. Beat up and drained (ampules nearly out), She rushes forward again. The caravan has progressed enough that the lead carts are already entering the butte through a deep gash on the near side.

LIONE

No!

She puts on a burst of speed and catches up to the last vehicle in the caravan. She lunges out and catches on, throwing the terrified driver off. Guards are swarming out of the cave ahead--hulking armored figures, more black-robed individuals,

etc. Desperate, she claws open the door to find a group of terrified people inside. They look at her in stunned silence for a long beat. Lione looks nervous in front of them, almost abashed. She opens her mouth to speak after a brief beat. the vehicle explodes. Bodies fly and Lione is thrown hard against a wall. Nearly unconscious, she blearily sees the piled bodies of those she was about to rescue heaped about. A massive figure standing at least fifteen feet tall pounds down the alley towards her. Her blurry vision fuzzes and again overlaps the white room, now covered in scorch marks and bodies. A shadowed figure advances on her.

Terrified, Lione runs and runs. She stumbles and falls into an alley, sliding down into a partly collapsed basement. She fades into unconsciousness with the same dream from the morning playing over her.

Boots pound pass but miss her. Then, sometime in the deep night, a "huurk!" pierces the night. An ugly winged creature alights next to Lione's battered body. Her bloodshot eyes open blearily, and she closes them again as heavy boots resolve into the worried face of Talos. He picks her up gently.

TALOS

Oh, little lion...

FADE OUT

FADE IN

Lione is in a room in the Orphanage. She's awake and lucid, but clearly disturbed by recent events. Occasional worried faces peek in, but none of the children of the orphanage enter.

MONTAGE

Chase: Lione chases Kestrel, knowing that her cover is well-and-truly blown, and she has to stop Kestrel from raising an alarm. Unfortunately, Kestrel will make it to the caravan and alert the guards. Lione will be forced to flee against overwhelming odds without being able to save the people she wants to or otherwise disrupting the Collective's efforts. Could end with Sophia being put on her case.

Resolution: Lione limps back to Talos' shop/the underground, and is brought into the orphanage to be nursed back to health (excuse: can't show your face for a while). She's forced to confront the people she's worked to protect, and has subsequently ignored--she at once recognises failure in her current mission and ignoring responsibility while also receiving forgiveness from those she has ignored and neglected.

Maybe the captured individuals are people Lione has helped indirectly before? Doling out food or something similar? Helping to reinforce the lie she believes

Notes for next writing session:

- 1) Briefly montage convo and "Underground" access. Have Lione already out on the mission in next full scene. She's made it through a good chunk of the city and is going through the end of the bolt-holes, entering the observatory.
- 2) Don't forget to look at the ref material!

Tentative arc:

- 1) Lione likes to pretend she's reckless, carefree and irresponsible. She throws herself into pursuing the Collective and does everything she can to avoid having to face the people she's actually managed to help doing this and Talos--who has taken her in and given safe refuge to her wards.
- 2) The opening scene is a precursor of the structure for the rest of this story. Lione gets herself into some trouble, gets caught, hurts someone through her actions, and then refuses to "Own up." Writ large, her quick temper will get someone she's trying to rescue killed and let the bad guys get away. Rather than having an out, like she does with Talos because of an interruption, she has a much more severe personal failure she must own up to (this time because it's required to fight through the Collective agents)
- 3) Lione doing this forces her to own up and teaches her not to run away. She takes the first step toward becoming the proud, protective leader we see her inching her way towards in the game.

CUT BACK

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT, INT. TALOS ARMORY --EARLY MORNING.

The small creature clutches to a rafter in the ceiling, its stomach growls and it grumbles in a chittering voice.

Outline Pass One (high level)

- 1) Lione wakes up grumpy and worries about the kids from the night before. She interacts with Talos' pet varmint, a pygmy flying mouse (think sugar glider). She goes 'downstairs' to look for the kids.
 - a) She gets a reveal/feels good about what she and Talos are trying to build. We get to see her TENSION, a first introduction to her HOME/MOTIVATION, and her bombastic, silly way of interacting with people, including a friendly antagonism with Talos.
- 2) Lione learns from Talos that the parents may still be alive. They were spotted being taken into an abandoned part of town. (Talos heard from an underground connection). She sets off immediately, despite protest. Heads to a "quarantined" area of the city along the outer wall that has been sealed off and evacuated.
 - a) Introduce the purpose of Lione and Talos' operation. Show Lione's character and brashness.
- 3) Lione travels through the area, avoiding squatters, narrowly (and comically) avoiding a strange beast, following a strange patrol.

- a) Lione is sympathetic to the squatters, comic with the beast, and serious with the strange patrol.
- 4) Lione spots the woman *and her husband* being pursued by a Sicarius. She intervenes but is not strong enough. Woman sacrifices herself to give Lione a chance to escape with the man.
- 5) Lione reunites the children with their Father, but feels like a failure. Goes back to sleep along in her cot, with an extra voice in the void.

Worldbuilding Notes

1. The Smithy and “Downstairs”

- a. The Smithy is 1.5 stories and is located in an area close to the edge of the city. Pretty close to a slum. It’s a pre-disruption shell lovingly reworked into a “modern” smithy. Its notable features include a number of large chimneys, retractable walls that open the forge to the outside when in use, and with a small lofted area extra materials are stored in. This loft is where Lione usually sleeps. Talos’ shop is fairly well regarded and is outfitted for producing a lot of bladed weapons and some armor. He does deal in some other work. It does not deal in Devices.
 - i. Talos is a retired smuggler and thief with a long list of criminal connections. The shop was initially a front, though it is now his genuine profession and he spends most of his time there. Lione and he work to undermine and outwit their marks, and try to keep tabs on/help their community. A bit “Robin Hood” Lione is a good influence on Talos.
- b. “Downstairs” is access to the underground beneath Talos’ smithy, accessible by a secret passage. The underground serves as a hub for illicit activities in this section of the city, and gives Lione and other criminals quick and easy access through certain parts of the city using Kyanos-era underground networks that multiple eras have built over and forgotten.
 - i. Notable features include several old buildings that have been converted into storehouses, a variable number of stalls selling black-market goods, various raskals coming and going.
 - ii. Most important is a “orphanage” that Talos runs for various urchins anywhere from a few years old to their late teens. They’re unruly but mostly good. Talos and some of the elders ner-do-wells train those with aptitude as second-story workers. Sometimes they’re “adopted” out into thieving crews that need new blood.

2. Bolt-Holes

- a. These are warrens of natural cave networks, pre-disruption cellars/basements, purpose-built hide-holes, and so on. They are Expanded and connected by enterprising individuals over many, many years. They do not cover all of Kuklos, but they are prevalent in outer areas with less new infrastructure and lower government oversight.
- b.

3. Quarantine Zones

- a. These are areas that have been sealed off for “public safety” by fronts for the collective. Most of them are small zones near the outer walls where Exousia is supposedly leaking into the city. (or whatever explanation the masses would most likely believe). In actuality, they are the location of blacksights where the collective conducts research on the nature of Exousia and various applications therein. Security in these areas is not *overtly* tight--it’s enough for most people to know that strange things (like in the Forest) happens in these zones. That keeps all but the most desperate out. The fact that a large majority of those stupid enough to venture in don’t come back out isn’t questioned.
- b. The ecology of these zones *is* more like the forest, with various Disruption creatures sometimes even being present in these areas. They are full of an extreme amount of strange greenrery quickly overtaking buildings.

c. **The Observatory**

- i. This is a pre-disruption, *Pre-Kyanos* site inside the quarantine zone, which Lione uses for ingress. It is a three story wattle-and-daub style (stoneshaped) building connected to the bolt holes, and has seen many things come and go. It has an asterium on the top floor.

d. **The Shard**

- i. The shard is a butte that was the home to a temple venerating (??? which God) in Kyanos. It has been repurposed as a research center by the Collective due to the presence of several rare, undamaged devices.
- ii. **The World-Egg gate:** This is a door with Aligment tech powered by human Ampules. It serves both as a powerful security measure and a “Way” for researchign Exousia flow.