

Draft - 7/26/24 8:46:11 PM EDT

Don't read this whole book!

(Unless you want to!)

Although you're of course welcome to if you wish, you do NOT need to read this whole book. What a relief! It's long! Here's a quick look at what's in this handbook (and what's not):

Otherworld Staffing 101 – not in this book!

This is now an online reference. Visit the staff_center website and check it out. If you're a new staff person, please READ this.

the Staff Handbook

Character Overview

This section gives a brief look at the people who populate the village of World's Edge. This section talks about the person's history and lists 2-3 adjectives to sum up the person. And it tells who's playing who. Everyone should READ this. As you do, please be aware that some characters from the last event exist, but some are slightly different than before.

Plot Overview

This section briefly outlines the flow of the weekend. Of course, it only talks about the big events in which all participants take part. Everyone should READ this. The rest of the handbook will make a lot more sense if you do.

This section also includes a quick timeline of key events in the barony's history, which will hopefully be useful when it comes to figuring out which things happened when.

Set Guide

We have new set locations and we're making use of them in ways we never have before. Please SKIM this section and, if you're a person who's in a set location, READ that one. Note that some of you are servers, which means that you may well have two different set locations. Searching on your character name is the easiest way to find this out.

Charges

A large part of the weekend will revolve around the charges levied against various townspeople by the Prosecutor. This section outlines the charges and explains how the participants will learn more about each issue.

Common Knowledge

For each of the allegations made, there are a few paragraphs of common knowledge. This is the information that everybody in the village is privy to. In other words, everyone should READ this.

The Prosecutor's Indictment / Charge Assignment / The SECRET Truth / Clue-Type Info / Revelations / Pre-Trial Charge Check-in

There is a mention on each person's Staff Challenge and Encounters page of any charge-related information they need to give out. However, this info won't make sense in a vacuum. After you've read your page to learn which charge(s) you have information about, please also READ the full page of information about the relevant charge(s). This tells you what the real story is, what everybody else is saying and how your information fits into the big picture.

At the Trial

This section reviews the key points for each charge and gives a brief overview of the tone we hope each charge resolution will take at the trial. This is intended primarily for use at the Camp, to supplement/replace the chaotic 45 minutes when we try to brief 35 staff people at once. Still, it's worth it for everyone to SKIM through, and if you find your name mentioned there, please READ it.

in pursuit of Truth

Truth magic might be used on *anybody*. Please READ this page to make sure you know how to respond.

The Changed World

At 4pm, an act of random destruction occurs and the fallout of it wreaks havoc on the town. This section begins by detailing just exactly what it is that happens. Everyone should READ this.

2 - Introduction

Saturday Evening Activities

Each page explains a different one of the activities the participants will do to set things right. Everyone should please SKIM through the entire section so that we all have a vague idea what's going on in all the different components of the evening.

While skimming, watch for your name. When you find the Saturday evening activity that you'll be participating in, please READ that page closely.

Monsters

This section covers monsters and how to play them safely. Everyone please READ this section. If this is your first time volunteering for us, please read it twice.

Currency

A section full of info on what stuff costs. It's only necessary to very quickly SKIM this section to get a sense of how money works. Price lists will be posted in the merchants' shop, in the tavern, etc. so don't worry about memorizing or anything. (Not that you were planning on it...)

Lore

Traveler lore, as well as a notation about which traveler(s) receive the information, is consolidated here. If there is lore which concerns your character, a little note on your Staff Encounters & Challenges page tells you so. If that's the case, READ it.

Staff Challenges and Encounters

Please READ YOUR OWN PAGE(S) and think about the information on it. Make a note of anything you don't understand or have questions about. There will be time prior to the event to discuss the activities you'll be doing with the parties to make sure we're all clear on what's (theoretically) going to happen.

As part of our efforts to reduce the cost and waste of printing these books, challenges that are shared by multiple characters are now printed only once in this book, immediately after the final character in their section (e.g., after the last Valerius listed). Never fear, a note appears on everyone's page so finding the challenge shouldn't be a struggle. The trees you're saving will thank you.

Some characters know some secret information. This info is explained on that person's page and has a double-line box around it. If you'd like to read other people's pages - especially those people your character is related to or friendly with - please feel free. But be careful about the secrets; it would be a shame if someone forgot something was a secret and mentioned it in front of the participants before the time was right!

Information about charges is now noted on these pages; the full story is explained in the Charges section.

NOTE: This section is organized like the Character Overview, so all of the Valerius family pages are together, all the Roamers, etc. People who are usually at the Valerius house are grouped with the family, etc. Since these people often share challenges, this will hopefully make it quicker to turn to the relevant pages.

Administrative Jobs

As explained in the Plot Overview, we've created a few different jobs throughout the weekend to free up more of the EMs' time and reduce bottlenecks. If you're being asked to do any of these jobs, your (real) name will be listed in this section. If so, please READ that part.

Party Paths

A party path is the entire collection of planned encounters a given party has to complete their mission. It's set up to be linear at the beginning (when the party needs more guidance) and at the end (when we want to conclude with a big dramatic scene). The middle can happen in any order.

Your page in the Staff Challenges & Encounters section lists all the parties who are scheduled to come find you. You may want to SKIM the party paths for any party that you're scheduled to interact with. In this way you can get a sense of how your encounter fits into the larger whole of the party's experience.

If you are a Companion, the party path for your party is probably the most important section of this book. Please READ it over very carefully. Look through the Staff Challenges & Encounters section and find the explanations of the Challenges your party will be having. Make a note of anything you don't understand.

the Participants' Handbook

Prior to 2001, we mailed a Participants' Handbook out to all staff people every year. This costs a lot in printing and postage. Since this Handbook has changed relatively little, we no longer do this.

A downloadable .pdf of the Participants' Handbook is available on Otherworld's staff website.

The Participants' Handbook will probably require just a SKIM for most people. However, if you're a new staffer and/or you don't feel particularly knowledgeable about basic Otherworld rules (i.e. 'I don't know what the 6 jobs and their abilities are', 'I don't remember what a Free Hit is or how it works') then please READ this.

...and please remember:

Having the paper copy of the handbook is nice; you can highlight it, read it on the subway, etc.

But even if you adore the paper copy, don't forget that the online .pdf file of this document is incredibly useful because you can search through it electronically.

Search on your character's name

Once you know what your primary role is, search on that name. It's possible that some other character tells the party a story about you, and if so, it's nice if you've heard the story ahead of time!

Search on your real name

Many of you are scheduled to play more than one role during the weekend. Search on your name to find out if you're an Ander, part of a party-path ending, etc.

Character Overview

Pronunciation Guide

Dolorón -- DOUGH – la – rhone (last syllable rhymes with cone, not con)

P'loa -- puh – LOW – uh

Fortuna D'Oro -- for - CHEW - na DOR - oh (the magical pendant that allows the wearer to kill a Banshee)

Tiroth/Tirothi --TEAR - oth / tir - ROATH - ee (kingdom to the south / adjective describing someone from there)

Talian -- TAL (rhymes with Val or Hal) - ee - an (the great sea to the south, Tiroth is on the other side of it)

Makai -- muh - KY (the sect of people who live outside the bounds of traditional Lyrian society)

Mystal -- miss - TAHL (Moreth's largest city, also its capital)

Honoré -- ON - uh - RAY

Adina -- uh - DEE - nuh

Santiago -- SAN - tee - OGG - oh (just like the city in Chile)

Isaiah -- eye - ZAY - uh

Carmina -- car - MEEN - uh

Mila -- MEEL - uh

Aleeya -- uh - LEE - uh

Quinoa -- KEEN - wah (yep, just like the grain. That's the joke.)

Kazim -- kuh - ZEEM

Nemaia -- nuh - MY - uh

Dramina -- DROM - in - uh (almost like Andromeda without the first syllable)

Melados/Kulinos/Teknos/Koreos -- the last syllable of all the male muse names rhymes with 'dose', not with 'doze'

Cary -- just like Carrie, as in Grant or Elwes

Irena -- eye - REEN - uh

Elly -- the youngest biological Peacock brother, Elliott Peacock, is almost always called by his nickname, Elly. It rhymes with jelly; it's *not* the same as Eli. I know Eli is playing a different Peacock and that's confusing. When characters tell me their names, I listen.

Equi -- Equinoxious, first lady of the apocalypse, is often called by her nickname, Equi. It's EE - kwee.

Eugenie -- okay. This is a French name that the Brits co-opted, so it gets pronounced a hundred different ways. Here is World's Edge, we're pronouncing it you - JEAN - ee, dammit. Think of it like the Dave Korka Genie, with a 'you' before it. See, simple.

Melisande -- Morgoth's scary-ass partner in crime, whom only Arden (and Bracken) will get to see. It's mell - iss - OND.

Iolanthe -- EYE - oh - LAN - thee (Aleeya Witchborn's mother)

Mora -- MOR - uh (as in, the Crown of St. Mora, patron saint of the dying)

the Valerius Family, Staff, and Visitors

Baron Honoré Valerius -- Scott Moore

daunted, (figuratively) paralyzed

In a perfect world, every community has a leader like Honoré Valerius: wise, fair, and dedicated, with knowledge and experience on a wide breadth of topics and a commitment to doing whatever is needed to keep the region safe and flourishing. Not only was he well-respected - and, perhaps even more surprising, well-liked - but Honoré was a man comfortable with his power. As self-assured in a

sparring ring or financial session as he was running a village council, the Baron was a man to whom things came easy. His courteous manner appealed to those above him while his down-to-earth charisma drew simple folk to him.

Of course, this is not a perfect world. Most places can only dream of being governed by someone like this, but here, with Honoré at the helm, World's Edge is lucky.

Well. Was. World's Edge *was* lucky.

But half a year ago, everything changed. Winter was drawing to a close, but snow still blanketed the hills above the town. Plans were being made for the planting of early crops, and for increased defenses as commerce returned to its warm-weather levels. There were, as always, a multitude of tasks requiring the Baron's attention. Honoré dutifully prioritized his schedule and attended to the most pressing matters, temporarily setting aside matters of lesser import like routine paperwork and inspections.

On February 24th, World's Edge experienced brilliantly sunny skies and unseasonably warm temperatures. Townspeople who were weary of cold grey days were delighted to venture out. But in the hills, snow melted at a perilous rate, and that water raced toward lower ground, bringing rocks and logs and other detritus with it. The floodwaters slammed into the Silverspan Bridge, one of the structures Honoré was intending to inspect just as soon as he was able. The bridge's sturdy wooden supports weren't strong enough to withstand the water's sudden impact, and the mighty Silverspan was swept away.

Along with the three people who'd been crossing it.

Matty O'Dell and Terese O'Dell, a youngish couple of farmers from outside of town. And Elizabeth O'Dell, Matty's mother and a retired weaver. They'd ventured out to see friends after long months of winter isolation. They had crossed a bridge they trusted to be safe, because they trusted their Baron to tell them if it wasn't. And they had died as a result.

For the past seven months, Honoré has been a shadow of his former self. He is still wise and fair and dedicated, still intelligent and charismatic. But he is also nearly paralyzed by fear that he will make another wrong decision and it will cost additional lives. If he cannot be completely certain a plan is correct - and of course he cannot, because complete certainty is impossible - then he will not act at all.

The people of World's Edge pray that, in the future, their Baron once again become the leader they need. But for now, like Honoré himself, there is nothing more they can do.

Baroness Adina Rose Valerius -- Jen Platt

capable, compassionate

When the Silverspan was swept away and Baron Honoré's ability to lead was - at least temporarily - swept away with it, two very astonishing things happened. The first is that people stepped up to help. And the second is that Honoré let them.

Both of these things happened because of Baroness Adina Rose Valerius.

Honoré's wife hails originally from Arden, the daughter of Colonel Ibrahim Rose. She is calm in the face of danger and compassionate in times of adversity.

When she saw that her husband was unable to perform the many tasks required to keep the barony running, she acted with quiet authority. "For the time being, Sylvie will attend to charitable needs of the town. Managing the finances will fall to Pascal, and I will handle matters of defense." When Honoré expressed chagrin at what he saw as his own inadequacy, Adina silenced him with a graceful gesture. "Nonsense. You have carried too much weight for too long. Delegation of responsibilities is a healthy thing. When you are ready to resume some of these duties, they will be waiting for you."

And when it was realized that someone would have to arbitrate those petty disagreements that arise in a village, it was Adina who said, "Well, that's Nix's role, obviously." (Nix has taken to this job with gusto, and if most of her rulings on livestock ownership disputes or contested property borders start with "Listen, asshats", it's indeed cutting down on frivolous complaints.)

In short, Honoré is getting the space he needs to recover while the rest of the family handles all critical matters. If anyone in town takes issue about this system, one look at Baroness Adina has convinced them to keep those issues unsaid. Gracious and kind though she is, she has a will of iron, and she is not one to be crossed lightly.

Lady Sylvie Valerius -- Linda Bennet

gracious, graceful, grateful

She is a dancer, beautiful Sylvie Valerius, and even if you never see her dance - which is likely these days, busy as she is caring for the poor and cold and hungry of the barony - you will still see it in everything she does.

She moves through life as she does a dance floor, aware of herself, aware of her partner, aware of those around her.

She is uncommonly able to put herself in another's place. She may not agree with their choices, like their viewpoints. But she can see the thinking and feeling behind them, and hold a space for them even when they are so unlike her.

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Sylvie has always carried herself with the confidence of one who knows her own steps and knows, too, the abilities and limitations of those around her. She was like this as a little girl and is like this still, now that she is grown.

It begs the question: did dancing teach her this? Because certainly she began dancing only just after she learned to walk.

Or was she born thus, and she took to dancing because it was the closest way to approximate the grace that wells through her?

This is unanswerable and immaterial. This is just how she has always been. Especially now, when her brother struggles, the barony is lucky to have her.

Lord Pascal Valerius -- Matt Miles

hyperintelligent, philosophical

Addison's 4th Theorem says that we are all born into the right place at the right time. It's more complicated than that - Addison had ideas about free will that make his beliefs problematic for modern didactitions - but that's the very broad general idea.

If Pascal Valerius had been born into a wealthy but non-aristocratic family, he'd be an academic today. If he were a poor man's son, he'd be working with his hands, productive but unhappy. If his parents were middle class, he'd probably be keeping the books in their shop, recording expenses and profits in tidy columns while his mind drifted far above on bigger things. This, ironically, is the closest to where Pascal actually is today.

But if he were born with money but no title - or if his family were like a lot of other aristocrats, those who lend their names to a place but leave the tedious running of said place to hired officials - Pascal would now be sitting in some ivory tower surrounded by books and papers and colleagues with whom to endlessly ponder his beloved theorems and proofs. He would have everything he's ever wanted... except for Santiago. And thus, he would have nothing that actually mattered.

Instead, Pascal was born a Valerius, a family that believes in duty. That's why Pascal - a man so brilliant he sometimes struggles to talk to mere mortals about day-to-day concerns - found himself serving as an emissary at a social function in Vantage, Waylon. His brother Honoré or his sister Sylvie would both have been better choices, but they were needed elsewhere. And Pascal, genius though he might be, is very much a Valerius, and so he goes where he is needed. Even into - shudder - an important state dinner party.

No one there knew what to make of him. No one wanted to discuss Minever's Conjecture about the nature of matter or debate the VanArkin Proof. No one wanted much to do with him at all, no one except an elegant Waylonian nobleman named Santiago West.

At that endless dinner party, and in the three years since they married, Santiago found a way to bridge the gap between Pascal's intelligence and the vast perplexing peopleness of humanity. ("Santiago speaks Pascal!" says Nix, and she is not wrong.)

And when Honoré found himself suddenly unable to maintain the finances of the barony, Pascal stepped in to take over, even though this job is woefully underutilizing his prodigious mind. This is what needs doing, which what it means to be a Valerius. Pascal has been born in the right place at the right time, just as Addison theorized.

Lord Santiago West Valerius -- Neal Desai

cultured, grounded

Even a careless observer could probably understand what Pascal Valerius gets from his marriage. In Santiago West, Pascal found a liaison, a link between himself and the rest of the world. But what, that observer might wonder, is Santiago getting?

Santiago himself will be the first to answer that question. He will speak briefly but evocatively of his upbringing in Vantage, Waylon's city on the hill. He is too modest and gracious to belabor the point, but his poise and bearing tell the story anyway: Santiago grew up with far more money than anyone in World's Edge, and both his schooling and abilities mean he carries himself with an easy but polished refinement. He will talk about his ordination as a keeper of Summer. And only then will he start to address the heart of the matter:

"I became a keeper, as was fitting for someone in my position, but my Shield felt at that time like a mere decoration. I did everything expected of me, but never was I asked for my opinion or my help. I was admired and acclaimed and possibly even loved, but in truth, nothing I did there actually mattered. I was a decoration just like the Shield. But then, Pascal. Pascal actually cared what I thought. When he told me he had to return to World's Edge, he apologized. He said 'I'm sorry, but I am needed there.' And I thought 'I have never been needed anywhere.' What a remarkable thing, to be needed. With Pascal, I am needed."

In World's Edge, with Pascal and his family, I matter."

Lady Nicolette (Nix) Valerius -- Julie Leviter

badass, smart

The first story about Nix goes as follows: On the tragic day when outlaws attacked their family's home, Honoré had taken nineteen-year-old Sylvie and nine-year-old Pascal out to pick blueberries, but of course little Nicolette, only six months old, was left behind. She was with her parents in their room when sounds of violence were heard in the hallway. Fearing the worst, Baroness Cassandra placed her infant daughter under the bed to hide her, then turned to face the intruders. Baron William was a skilled swordsman and Cassandra wounded several men with her long dagger, but in the end, both she and her husband were murdered. One of the outlaws

heard movement beneath the bed and reached under to pull forth the baby. Nicolette had only one tooth, but it was a sharp one, and she bit the hand which tried to grab her. The man swore and pulled his hand away. Killing the Baron and Baroness was what they had come to do, he reasoned, and there was no sense going to pains to do any more. He and the other outlaws fled.

This story probably isn't even true. After all, who would have told it? Nix herself was fortunately much too young to remember that horrible day, and it isn't the sort of story an outlaw would boast of. And there was no one else present to tell it. Still, this story has been told for years, because (as someone inevitably says after the telling) it just *sounds like something Nix would do*. She might be the youngest, but make no mistake about it: Nix will go toe-to-toe in any fight, and more often than not, come out the winner. What she lacks in age (or anything else, for that matter), Nix makes up for in attitude.

She's not a bad person, but she can be abrasive. To be sure, she'll never be the polite young noblewoman her family might appreciate. She won't wear the dainty gowns her sister selects for her because "why *have* the tattoo if you're only going to cover it up?" (Patient Sylvie might sigh at this but is too sensible to give Nix the satisfaction of a bigger response.) Nix knows words that many sailors would blush to use. And of course, this doesn't even begin to address the subject of the nose- ring.

Yes, Nix can be a handful, especially for those who have to live with her. Most people in town don't envy Honoré for having had to raise her. Only the most perceptive realize that, for all the headaches she causes, Nix is quite possibly Honoré's favorite. There is great strength in Nix, and her iron will and intelligence are close matches for Honoré's own.

Isaiah Cooke -- Dave Korka

flowery, effuse, exasperated

May he be painfully, *exquisitely* clear? *Thank* you. He is a scribe. A secretary. A transcriptionist of minutes, an annotator of documents, yes, but he is also a *writer*. A man of letters.

He is, dare he say, a *poet*.

He is not, despite his name, *the cook*.

He is not a servant. He is not a mindless automaton. He is not someone who can be summoned to answer the door or clean mud off shoes or to *fetch things*. He is not to be whistled for. Nor *snapped*. *Never, ever snapped*.

Not that any of the Valerius family would disabuse him thus. They are a gracious lot, courteous and conscientious and *noble* in the truest sense of the word. It is, may he say, a privilege to clerk for them, even if *at times* their discussions - while he is endeavoring to write down *every* word said, mind you! - are voluble and loquacious and *immoderately* circumlocutorious!

But. Sometimes their guests are perhaps less mindful of his status. This is frustrating in the extreme. Offensive, even. Migraine-inducing.

Still, Isaiah will record minutes and take dictation and archive correspondence for the barony he loves and serves. On his own time, he will allow his own words - his rhymes and verses, his own beloved progeny! - to take flight.

Poppy Golden -- Laura Hiatt

bright, (a little) self-important

There've been Goldens in World's Edge for generations. They farm, mostly, although every once in a while, a Golden will find work as a carpenter or seamstress or blacksmith. They're very reliable, the Goldens.

And then came the day when seven-year-old Poppy Golden was playing in her family's kitchen. "Watch this!" she said, cupping her hands together. Nobody watched, because Goldens are busy. But not so busy that they didn't all turn around at the sound of water splashing to the floor. There was Poppy, her hands spilling over where there had been no water before.

That was the day that everything changed.

Well, not everything. The Goldens still lived in World's Edge, and most of them still farmed. But suddenly there was talk about Poppy's Future, when there had never been this sort of talk about a Golden before. Poppy was given special books to read, was tutored by other casters. When she turned 17, she was sent to the Crystal Spire.

After graduating, she began spending most of her time at the Valerius house, where her rituals were the only thing that kept closed the portal to the dark and dangerous Court of Mirrors. It's a great deal of responsibility, and maybe it's given Poppy just a small measure of contented pridefulness. Possibly there is just a little saucy swagger to her walk when she heads to the house each morning, and perhaps she preens just slightly when wearing a cast-off skirt from Lady Sylvie or a bracelet from Baroness Adina.

But really, who can blame her? She is doing a critical job, a job most people couldn't do, and she's doing it well. Reliably. She's not just any Golden, but still.

Lady Carmina Bordeaux -- Michelle Nathan

entitled, demanding, imperious

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When Isaiah Cooke is rendered quietly apoplectic because a guest is ordering him around? Lady Carmina Bordeaux is that guest. Always.

She arrived in World's Edge almost 4 months ago and announced that she would be staying with the Valerius family. No one remembered inviting her, which was no matter because Lady Bordeaux had not asked permission.

This, the family soon learned, was Lady Bordeaux's standard operating procedure.

No one in town is quite certain how it works, but work it certainly seems to. "I will be dining on shirred eggs this morning, Pascal. With hot tea and very dry toast," she will announce, and moments later Pascal - who, much like Isaiah is *also* not the cook - will find himself in the kitchen being tutored by Santiago as to how one might shir an egg.

It will not be done to Lady Carmina Bordeaux's standards. Despite Santiago being a very good cook indeed.

No one is sure how long Lady Bordeaux intends to stay on at the Valerius house. It cannot be much longer, right?

Even Nix does not dare ask.

Lenora Graves -- JenMeaux Morris

high-strung, arcane

Unlike Lady Carmina Bordeaux, Lenora Graves was actually invited to the Valerius house, by Sylvie, back in the spring. Lenora, a distant cousin of the Valerius family, is the sort of woman who'd be described as a spinster aunt even if she'd gotten married, which she did not. She had a beau once, you must understand. But he died. Tragically.

Maybe it was this that set the tone for Lenora's life, an existence not so much touched by the occult as it is caressed, embraced and *fondled* by the occult.

Not that she would describe it thusly. Gracious, no.

Lenora is a sensitive, anxious soul. A partial list of things in which Lenora believes includes - but is not limited to - astral projection, tarot, telekinesis, reincarnation, psychic phenomena, spirit mediums and mental telepathy.

Lenora sees omens where others just see three crows perched in an oak tree. She is deeply (some might say overly) attuned to the metaphysical world which overlays our own. She senses vibrations and sees auras.

Lenora is a world champion fainter.

If not everyone picks up on or believes in the supernatural phenomena that she sees everywhere, that just reinforces Lenora's commitment. She will dab her fevered brow with her lace handkerchief and soldier daintily on.

Danny Donovan -- Jeff Yaus

charismatic, easy-going, impetuous

If you grew up in World's Edge, you for sure know Danny Donovan. Hell, even if you didn't, you probably know him. Or maybe not him, but someone just like him. Everybody's got a Danny Donovan in their life.

Maybe he's your age, maybe he's a bit older. Probably went to school with your brother or something like that. Of course, when your brother got married and moved away, Danny stayed right here. Guys like Danny, they don't go far.

Chances are real good he was there when you tried your first warm sip of shitty beer, and there when you had too much. He stayed with you through that night, nodding sympathetically and patting your shoulder when you swore you'd never do it again. He's a good guy, Danny is.

You don't need to be told his specifics because they don't matter and 'cause you already know 'em anyway. What does it matter, the first of the deadend jobs, or the ones that came after? Who cares which he was at when he got hurt that time? What's it to you, the specifics of the injury? Maybe he busted up his shoulder or blew out his knee. Oh, or likely it was his back that got screwed up, carrying or tossing or lifting more than he should've. There was someone else there who couldn't pull the weight, but that was okay, on account of Danny being willing to handle the extra. Bit him in the ass though, didn't it?

When the injury didn't quite heal right, months and months in with that lingering pain, that's when Danny started using. White Noise, in this particular case. It's bad news, Noise is. You were sorry to hear about Danny using it. Sorry, but not surprised. Somewhere along the path of least resistance, that's where the Dannys of the world end up.

Word is, though, that Danny got clean back this past winter, and good for him. That's real good to hear. He got himself a job - or, rather, somebody pulled a few strings and got it for him - working as a handyman at the Morgan Theater. It sounded like it was going pretty good, which was nice to hear. A real decent guy, Danny Donovan, and it's nice to see him doing okay.

But then just this past Thursday morning, he'd been fired. You wanna say you were surprised. Gods only know what happened on Thursday night, that night nobody can remember, but when everybody woke up on Friday, the Morg was nothing but a smoldering ruin, and here's Danny all soot-covered and scratching his head.

He's a real good guy, Danny Donovan, but he's 50 now, for crying out loud. It's not cute anymore. He's gotta get his shit together. Nobody's holding their breath, though.

Frost -- Levin Scassellati

competent, deferential

In the middle of last winter, a boy knocked on the door of the baronial estate. His clothes marked him as the son of one of the families that farm on the outskirts of town. He was looking for work and inquired if the Baron knew of anyone who might be hiring.

"How old are you, son?" Honoré asked.

"Eighteen, my lord."

Honoré raised an eyebrow.

"Sixteen, sir?"

Honoré raised the eyebrow higher.

"Fourteen, my lord."

Honoré looked long and hard at the boy. "Probably close enough. Can you read, son, and write?"

"Yes, sir, although my Tirothi isn't as fluent as I'd like." After an investigation proved these surprising facts to be true, Honoré decided there was in fact a job opening very nearby, and so Frost became a servant in the Baron's household. He is strong and smart and skilled at any number of things and has quickly made himself indispensable.

Frost is always around the Valerius house, but this weekend, if you go looking for him any time except Sunday morning, it seems you've unfortunately just missed him.

the Roamers

Dimitri -- Cliff Young

roguish, charming

In a clan of witty, flamboyant, passionate Roamers, Dimitri just might stand out as the most charming of them all. The sort of man that women swoon over and other men envy and yet also honestly like, Dimitri has long been known in World's Edge as the Roamer Prince.

Dimitri has always been charismatic. He's always had a warm smile and rakish charm, which he's used to his advantage every time he's been caught in some minor transgression. Not that he's ever really been guilty of more misdeeds than any other spirited young man. Yes, he's been known to occasionally steal things, and yes, he can lie without ever batting an eye, and yes, he's been known now and then to con the honest and hardworking out of a royal or two. But really, is that such a problem?

And now Dimitri's grown up, even if he's still got his youthful sense of humor and boyish charm. He still manages to get himself into the occasional bit of trouble, but he's well-liked by most folks, and there are plenty single women in the village (and quite possibly several married ones as well) who would be more than willing to have their hearts stolen by the Prince of the Roamers.

Mila -- Christine Reeves

pragmatic, grounded

Mila, keeper of Autumn and Archon of Clan Wayfarer, could easily be a woman pulled in two directions.

Her vocation means that she is focussed on the divine; her elected position means she needs to pay attention to this world. As a Roamer, it is her way to be grounded in tradition and the past, but as a woman of the world, she knows the need to look to the future.

There is an earthy practicality to all Mila does. Yes, it is important to minister to the spiritual needs of humankind, but it is hard to reach people's souls if their bodies are unfed. Mila can speak to the transient nature of time, but she does it while stirring soup.

So too does she bring this pragmatism to her role as Archon. The rites and traditions of her people will survive for another generation because she is there to make sure the tents are mended and the firewood stacked.

Thankfully Mila stays balanced even while the tugs of responsibility and heritage pull her this way and that. It is in her nature to find the middle ground, to stay as rooted and flexible as the sugar maples that blush orange and scarlet in her chosen Season.

She bends always but she does not break.

Esmerelda -- Merri Rosen

observant, mysterious

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Esmerelda is the Roamer clan's obligatory fortune-teller, and she's very good at what she does. Maybe this is because she is truly gifted with The Sight (as the Roamers believe). Or maybe she uses her natural skills – remembering overheard gossip, being astute about human nature, and getting people to confide in her – to accurately tell fortunes. Maybe the truth is somewhere in the middle.

Perhaps because she's accustomed to Seeing things others can't, Esmerelda has a mystically cryptic quality about her. She speaks less than some of her more effervescent Roamer clanfolk, but her dark eyes are always watching, and the words she does speak have a riddling quality to them. She is greatly respected among the clan, and though she is young, her mysterious and solemn words are always heeded, and her opinions assigned much weight among the other Roamers.

Valentina -- Chelsea Hadlock

flirtatious, vocally undiscriminating

You know that little filter in your brain that screens your thoughts and edits out the things it's not really appropriate to say aloud?

Valentina doesn't have one of those.

Nope, if she thinks it, she says it. It's not like some people who've made a conscious decision to say what they think even if (or especially if) it offends people. Valentina can't help it; it's just how she is. Fortunately, she's a pretty nice person, so at least most of her thoughts are kind ones.

And friendly, too. *Really* friendly. The Roamers use this word without irony, and rightfully so, for Valentina is affable and open, hospitable and warm. Other people in town call Valentina "friendly", but some of them tighten their lips when they say it, and from these people it means "I am too polite to use words like loose and wanton, but, if the shoe fits..." Shameless, they mean. Immodest.

Probably it's not surprising that Valentina has had a long string of lovers. When a woman says "*Ooooh, you're nice...*" or "*Mmmm, look at those muscles...*" or whatnot to men she's just met, is it any wonder? And when those men awake the next morning to "Uhh, I had hoped you'd be gone by now...", it's probably also not surprising that none of them ever stays around too long.

Tinker Bill -- Dave Nadig

atypical

To a modern observer, Tinker Bill's mannerisms would probably be classified as mildly autistic. His stream-of-consciousness observations can be hard to follow, even for his fellow Roamers. His attention might remain focused on an interesting rock for an hour... or it might zoom from item to item randomly and instantaneously. He will speak so fast no one can make out his words and then later sit silently, pondering who knows what. No one knows why Bill is like this; he's just always been this way.

Tinker Bill is an absolute genius at fixing things... if he decides he wants to fix the item in question. He might instead take the thing apart to examine every tiny piece of it.

Odd though he is, Bill is also very friendly in his own peculiar way. He's always happy, and he seems to like everybody and everything (although, of course, it's sometimes a little hard to tell). He is a gentle soul, and other Roamers, even the youngest ones, are more than a little protective of him.

Aleeya Witchborn -- Deb Lack

bubbly, spooky

Aleeya Witchborn is a simmering cauldron of supernatural power. And seriously, you guys, what's more fun than that?

There have been Witchborn women among World's Edge population for generation upon generation: Circe Witchborn, who slept with snakes in her bed. Hecate Witchborn, who had a bulbous nose with not one but *two* warts at the end. Serilda Witchborn, who spoke in tongues. They were strange and frightening and sometimes smelled bad, but for years and years of village history, if someone needed a charm or a love potion, or was trying to have a baby, or was trying *not* to have a baby, it was a Witchborn she went to.

Then came Iolanthe Witchborn. She had greasy black hair that hung to her waist and was forever rubbing her hands together in a decidedly unsettling way. Everyone assumed that Iolanthe was like the Witchborn women before her: eerie and vaguely unpleasant, but useful. But then, Iolanthe and her coven cast some colossal spell that must've gone colossally wrong, because it produced a horde of Nightwalkers, ghastly snuffling abominations who wanted to wring the life out humans. All the members of the coven fled from World's Edge. Iolanthe did one thing before leaving: she placed a basket just inside the flap of the Eldest's tent.

The next morning, the Eldest found the basket. And in it, the baby girl, wrapped in a grimy black blanket, and pinned to the blanket inscribed with the words "Aleeya Witchborn."

And so Aleeya was raised, not in a little hut at the edge of the swamp, as was traditional for Witchborns, but among the other Roamer children. She laughed and played. Sometimes frogs and snakes whispered secrets in her ears, and occasionally she put the Evil Eye upon a playmate. But she was also given birthday parties and baths, and if Roamer adults learned about the Evil Eye thing, Aleeya was made to remove it *and* apologize.

People in town come to Aleeya, now, if they need the sort of help only a witch can provide, and Aleeya helps them. But the whole thing is oddly... pleasant. Aleeya is known to say things like “have a nice day!” after making someone a charm. It’s strange, but people in town are learning to put up with it.

Kazmira -- Ariel Jaffee

prone to exaggeration and/or fabrication

Kazmira has lived her whole life among the Roamers of clan Wayfarer. Let’s start there, since that’s the part that’s actually verifiably true.

Anything else that Kazmira tells you, you probably want to take with a grain of salt. Maybe more. Possibly a whole shaker-full.

Some clarifications, provided as examples, in no particular order: Kazmira cannot turn invisible at will. Kazmira was not raised by wolves. Kazmira is not secretly the lover of the Duke of Moreth. She does not have a birthmark on her shoulder which marks her as the chosen one. Her hair does not change color according to her mood. She cannot tie a cherry stem into a knot using her tongue.

She was never sold into slavery, nor escaped from slavers. She is not wanted for any crimes committed under another name, or for that matter, under her own name. She did indeed leave that mess in the tent.

No one knows where Kazmira’s compulsion to exaggerate, if not outright invent, comes from. There’s no trauma in her past that would have caused her mind to seek solace in an alternate reality. She was not, as an infant, set adrift in a basket made of rushes nor left on the doorstep of the Valerius house nor found in the woods by an old woman with only one eye.

Malachi -- Justin Hart

optimistic

Malachi believes the best about everyone and always knows every situation will turn out all right in the end. These are admirable traits in most anyone; they’d be perfect for a keeper or a teacher. But Malachi is a gambler, and these characteristics combine to ensure that he’s one of the least-effective ones World’s Edge has ever known. Despite years of crushing losses, Malachi’s hopes are renewed with every new game. *This time, Malachi knows, will be different. This is the time he’ll win big.* He can *feel* it.

Combined with his natural Roamer expansiveness, this optimism has made him a well-liked figure in town. That’s probably fortunate, since Malachi owes differing amounts of money to almost everyone. A cynical person might think that Malachi’s extravagant warmth – the compliments he’s always paying to everyone, the way he’ll cry with the sad and laugh with the happy, the generally chummy attitude he adopts with the low- and high-born alike – are just a ploy to avoid having to pay up. That person would be wrong, though. Malachi is as sincere as he is trusting.

Malachi isn’t stupid, and he’s aware that his past history hasn’t been a great advertisement for his chosen career. He’s just so buoyed up by hope that he can’t ever see that something is a long-shot until it’s too late. Malachi is a gracious loser, although this may be a result of constant practice as much as it is about his personality.

Natasha -- Katie Paugh

gloomy, brooding

It’s easy to identify the Roamers around town, because they wear red and orange and purple and gold and black. Natasha does, too... minus the red and orange and purple and gold.

Natasha has raised shadowy despondency to an art form. There is no weather so relentlessly sunny, no holiday so inexorably happy that Natasha cannot glower through it.

Do not take this to mean that Natasha is unhappy. Grim, yes. Mournful, certainly. Sunk so deep in a pit of melancholy that the light cannot reach her? Yes! And thank you for noticing!

Natasha has just as much passion as her fellow Roamers; she just channels it differently. Through a glass, darkly.

Huxley -- Edgar Fisher

edgy, culturally superior

World’s Edge has never seen anything like Huxley before. Which is why no one has used the word ‘hipster’ to describe Huxley or his Roamer girlfriend Quinoa, the pair who arrived in town just this (Friday) morning. This is fortunate, as Huxley eschews the term ‘hipster.’

Huxley uses words like ‘eschew.’ He also oils his beard. He wears suspenders to hold up his skinny jeans, and a bow tie, even though he doesn’t have to.

But no matter. Solomon had gotten word that some people were traveling to World’s Edge. A lot of people. Eleven parties of six, to be exact, and they were all going to want food and drinks. So, when Huxley walked into the tavern, Solomon said “Please tell me you’re a bartender?” To which Huxley answered “In point of fact, good sir, I am a mixologist.” And Solomon decided that that would just have to be close enough.

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Now Huxley is established behind the bar, although he has still failed to find Solomon's hidden stash of either artisanal bourbon or arm-garters. Huxley is muddling (get it?) through as best he can. The people of World's Edge are cautiously optimistic. It turns out, surprisingly, that avocado is indeed very good on toast. Although they will be godsdamned if they'll pay 18 royals for it.

Quinoa -- Janet Potter

indie, trending

Technically, Quinoa is a vegan. She does sometimes eat meat, but she does it *ironically*.

A Roamer from Elsewhich's Stonefall clan, Quinoa has just started working in the tavern as a server (she finds the term 'waitress' problematic for both its gendered construct and classist undertone) but she is mostly interested in the *concept* of serving, in the *implications* of consumers and consumerism. This raises fascinating questions about the nature of consumption itself, although some of the finer points of these distinctions are lost on those tavern customers who would just like their food, please.

Quinoa is, of course, not defined by her vocation. She spends significant time on her outfit, sporting clothing she insists on calling "vintage" although it appears extremely modern to the people of World's Edge. She is avidly concerned with awarding (and deducting) some sort of invisible (possibly magical?) stars from all the businesses in town. ("Smirch & Smirch: Location charmingly off beaten path but forced to take off two stars b/c no fair-trade potions") Also, she spends a lot of time "journaling", which appears to be much like writing, but in a much more expensive notebook.

Despite some unanswered questions (why, exactly, does the pair have so many different words for "coffee"?) the people of World's Edge like Quinoa. They don't understand her, but they like her.

the Makai Sect

The Makai are a small, peaceful sect who moved away from mainstream Lyrian society three centuries ago, seeking to live lives of devoted spirituality and worship their keepers of AllSeasons.

There are about 500 total Makai; their homeground lies a significant distance from World's Edge. Recently, a small number of them have ventured quite close to the village, as part of an important coming-of-age ritual referred to as Walking the Path of Epiphany. This is a Makai rite of passage observed twice during each person's life, first when she becomes an adult and again when she becomes an elder. It is customary for two people at different junctures of life to Walk together.

During this time, the two people leave the homeground and set out on a journey. For the younger person, this is often the first time in his life that he has seen or spoken to Lyrians. It is important that each young Makai have a chance to see what (a small corner of) the Lyrian world is like. Then, if he so chooses, he will return to the Makai homeground and "take the ink", receiving a facial tattoo as a sign of his commitment to the community. It is also at this time that he chooses the role he will play in the sect, earning the surname he will have for the rest of his life.

For the older person, it is an opportunity to reflect on how that role has shaped her existence, to consider what further gifts Nature intends to bestow upon her, and what new ways she may grow and change to further serve the sect.

The Makai are a practical people and the Path of Epiphany isn't intended to be an endurance test or dangerous mission. For this reason, the Walkers are accompanied by several other members of the sect who help ensure that they are kept safe, fed and content during their journey.

Kemma Runereader -- Eileen Christiansen

cryptic, spiritual

The Makai are a religious sect, but most of them aren't keepers. They are a community like any other; they need people who can bake bread and build houses and weave cloth. And, of course, they also need keepers, a particularly respected job among these spiritual people.

As among the "Lyrians" (as the Makai refer to everyone not of their sect), Makai keepers use their prayers to bring about divine healing. In general, however, ministering to the needs of the sick and wounded is left primarily to the sect's Woundtenders. A Makai keeper's more important role is performing divination rites and providing spiritual guidance. Where Lyrian keepers accomplish this latter feat primarily through dreams and visions, the Makai do so via their casting of powerful and mysterious runes.

Kemma Runereader is a gifted healer, skilled at diagnosis and devout in her prayers to AllSeasons. But it is as a Runereader that she truly excels. Years of looking into the secrets of the runes has made her a cryptic soul, sometimes prone to ambiguous mutterings. But often, as time goes by, the people of the Makai sect realize that the events which are coming to pass are those which Runereader spoke of several seasons before.

Of course, few people expect the runes to provide clear and definite answers. A rune of an owl might signify that wisdom is needed. Or it might indicate that something will be happening during the night hours. Perhaps it speaks of motion and flight. Or maybe it just means an owl. After years spent with the runes – 'speaking with them', as it is often referred to – Runereader has herself become more

and more equivocal. All interpretations of the runes are right, she says, and none of them. What does that mean? people wonder. No one wants to ask, though.

She is a much-respected figure among the Makai, and her spiritual devotion is unsurpassed. She is able to slip into a trance-state at will, and clearly great wisdom flows through her. If the other members of her sect can't always follow her thought processes, that only signifies that her spirit soars high above them.

Kira -- Kelsey Schultz

confident, certain

Kira is twenty-one years old and, along with her grandmother, Kovi Woundtender, is currently embarking on the Path of Epiphany. Once this Walk is complete, Kira will be given her second name, which will describe the role she'll play in the sect, and will take the ink that will mark her as an adult. Going on this Walk with the other Makai is a great adventure for Kira, but the ritual part of it isn't really necessary, because she already knows her calling.

Much of the rocky land the Makai inhabit is ill-suited to agriculture, so the community relies on hunting and on foraging to support the crops they're able to grow. Living as they do in the mountains, there are various food sources – berries especially, and several prized healing herbs – which are difficult to reach because they require an almost-vertical climb to higher ground. Hard as they are to reach, the community needs them.

Ever since Kira was a young girl, she has been confused by the fear that such climbs inspire in most of the sect. Heights don't bother her in the slightest, so she has always known that, when her time came, she would become a Cliffscaler. In this role, she will assist the other Cliffscalers in obtaining food that grows only on the highest precipices. As far as Kira is concerned, Walking the Path of Epiphany is an excellent experience for those unlucky souls who don't already know their destiny, but for her, it is basically a technicality. She knows where her future lies.

Of course, that doesn't mean she didn't want to go. It's been wonderful to spend this time with her grandmother and the others. She has traveled farther away from home than ever before, and she has seen and talked to her first Lyrians, which is extremely exciting, even if it's also a bit unsettling.

Kira is aware that some of the more traditional members of her sect, Runereader and Wayseeker especially, would prefer she pretend she didn't already know what her destiny was, so that everyone could have the fun of announcing it when they returned to the Makai homeground. They keep making little speeches about how the Path has unexpected turns and that sort of thing, but Kira counts herself as one of the lucky ones who has a clear destiny mapped out before her.

Kovi Woundtender -- Jodi Riley

contented, kind

A small, enclosed society that has long eschewed warfare, the healing needs among the Makai are somewhat different than those of the Lyrian kingdom. Although violent attacks are not unheard of, they are rare. Most healing is not dramatic and flashy, but rather is the patient ongoing sort of care that shepherds an individual from infancy through to old age. This healing is the province of the Woundtenders.

A respected member of her community, Kovi Woundtender has always been eminently well-suited to her job. With those who require healing, she is gentle and patient, her keen senses adept at ferreting out the source of a problem. In her dealings with others, such as the families of those who need healing, she is forthright, occasionally to the point of insult. More than once, she has had to speak plainly, relaying information that a family would rather not hear, but she never shrinks from this unpleasant side of her job. She has never been arrogant but has always exuded a confident surety that comes from knowing her work very, very well. At times she might disagree with a patient, family member or even another Woundtender about the correct course of action to take, but she is tenacious about following the route she knows to be right, and her decisions are almost always later proven to be correct.

In accordance with the rites of the Path of Epiphany, Kovi spent much of the early portion of the week in prayer. The answers she received were in accordance with her own beliefs: although many older members of the sect who Walk the Path discover a new role to play in Makai society, Kovi's skills as a Woundtender are still increasing, and it is in this capacity that she should continue to serve the sect. Perhaps just as important, the job still brings her great fulfillment, and great joy.

Kyson Wayseeker -- Rich Longmore

self-sufficient, stoic

When it is time for members of the Makai sect to Walk the Path of Epiphany, community elders carefully select a few other people who will accompany them on this important mission. There is always a keeper along to help interpret dreams and signs which the Walking pair might experience, and there is always at least one warrior included for protection. In addition, a Wayseeker usually makes the trip as well, for though the Walk is a spiritual journey, it is also a physical one, and it is the Wayseeker's role to ensure that the group finds its way safely back to the homeground.

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Kyson Wayseeker is highly respected among the Makai for his abilities. He can chart a path through woods that appear featureless to others and can always seem to find fish and game, even in the middle of the hardest winter. If you need a fire kindled in the middle of rainstorm or an obscure healing herb located in a rocky wasteland, Wayseeker is the man for the job.

He doesn't speak terribly much, because doing so would waste words and Wayseeker wastes nothing. In fact, he is renowned even among the conservation-minded Makai for his ability to "use every part of the Worlog." His reverence for nature is very great, as is his respect for Makai tradition.

Kerrick Dealbinder -- Greg Rothauser

jovial, smooth

Just as many people in World's Edge have never spoken to or even seen any of the Makai, so too are there Makai who go their entire lives meeting almost no Lyrians. As a Dealbinder, though, Kerrick is responsible for trading with the people of Moreth, to get some of the items which the Makai cannot produce themselves. Because of this, there is a worldliness about him... at least compared with the others of his sect.

The journey the group makes to Walk the Path of Epiphany is a deeply spiritual one – for Dealbinder as well as the others – but it also serves a practical purpose. There are supplies which the Makai cannot make or find themselves for which they must trade with the Lyrians, so Dealbinder is an obvious choice to send on the mission.

When they are back on the Makai homeground, there are some in the sect who are a touch apprehensive about the way Dealbinder might use an unusual phrase or wear an odd, foreign-looking garment. But here, so close to Lyrian society, Dealbinder has styled himself as a sort of ambassador and is eager to show both the other Makai and the World's Edge villagers how easily he moves between the two worlds.

As such, he's decided to act as a sort of cultural narrator for the rest of the Makai. ("The Lyrians are having a drink of water. Lyrians often enjoy a refreshing drink of water when they are thirsty.") And he is going out of his way to employ Lyrian customs (like an exaggerated handshake) and Lyrian slang (even if he doesn't always have the expression exactly correct.)

Still, it's hard not to like Dealbinder. He is very much a people-person... he is, after all, a salesman. He is a happy man, and that happiness tends to rub off on the people – Makai and Lyrian – around him.

Kora Peacekeeper -- Lynn Chiavacci

imposing, needy

The Makai withdrew into the mountains centuries ago in part because they wished to avoid senseless strife. This doesn't mean, however, that they don't recognize the occasional need for physical violence. Wild boar, bears, and Worlogs sometimes attack, and there must be people trained in combat who can protect the community from these threats. Members of the sect might be accosted by outlaws. This happens very infrequently, as the Makai have little that most Lyrians would consider worth stealing. Still, it happens occasionally. And within the community itself, there are the very rare instances when one member of the sect seeks to harm others. In all these instances, someone must be ready to eradicate the threat.

For those situations, there are Peacekeepers.

Kora Peacekeeper is very, very good at her job. She might not be terribly bright, but she's immensely strong and good at following orders. And the name Peacekeeper is more than a euphemism with her: not only do her formidable skills ensure that fights are quickly ended in her favor, but her evident strength and imposing visage convince many would-be opponents that they'd rather not start an argument in the first place.

There's only one down-side to this, and that's that Kora Peacekeeper is lonely. Sure, some people want to hang out and hear tales of gory fights, but she tends not to like those people very much. There are so many nice people out there, and for reasons Peacekeeper can't quite work out, they just never seem drawn to her. She's not certain why, because she keeps her giant spear clean and polished and tries to look her best, especially her prized necklace of Worlog tusks. She could crush an average person's head with her bare hands, but really, she just wants people to like her. Is that so much to ask?

Kullis Toolforger -- Erhard Konerding

resourceful, inventive

When most Lyrians think of makers, they think of technology, and of magic, and most especially of the intersection between the two. Unsurprisingly, most Lyrians would then assume (if it occurred to them to wonder at all) that the Makai have no makers, eschewing as the sect does both technology and magic. But this is patently untrue.

Of course, Makai makers are different from their Lyrian cohorts. Kullis Toolforger, maker extraordinaire (although he would certainly never describe himself thusly) would explain the distinction this way: "I have seen the wands that Lyrian makers construct, and they are impressive indeed. But the Lyrians begin by acquiring precious metals and rare jewels and arcane components with which to construct those wands. That is not the Makai way. It is the role of a Toolforger to make something out of almost nothing. If you have a few felled saplings, a quantity of deer sinew and a pile of downed leaves, you can form a shelter that will keep out the wind and rain.

Add in a few chips of stone and you can construct a bow and arrows that will take down a rabbit, plus a knife, fire-starter and grate so you can skin and cook him."

Even among other tribal makers, the ingenious Kullis has distinguished himself for his ability to start with only a handful of cast-off scraps and fashion of them whatever is needed. You would be forgiven if you wanted to make a Makai-ver joke right about now.

And you would not be wrong.

Kyli Talespinner -- Marsha Gershon

wise, mirthful

Many of the Makai are learned folk, and although Lyrian books are among the items the community is most eager to trade for, the sects' ability to print their own books is understandably quite limited. As such, it is critical that they as a community have people whose job it is to remember and tell their important stories. These are the Talespellers.

Lyrian culture has storytellers, of course, but there are those who consider these individuals as pleasant but extraneous threads in the fabric of the community. They don't fill an obvious need, like soldiers or farmers or weavers. The Makai, however, know the Talespellers to be essential. If a people forget who they are, they are nothing, as surely as if they had been conquered or had starved or frozen to death.

In light of this, it can be a weighty responsibility to be a Talespeller, but Kyli for one refuses to see her job this way. To her, it is a delight. For all the stories she knows – the myths of origin, the instructional fables, the recitations of who-was-born-to- who that serve as official records – Kyli is always ready to hear a new one. She is a gifted raconteur, but she is a skillful audience member, too, and others become better speakers when she is the one listening.

Kazim Firestarter -- John Nann

worried, eager-to-please

One of the first jobs the Makai created, when they left Lyria to live secluded in the mountains to the far west, was that of the Firestarters. There were two large and equally important parts to the job: making and tending the all-critical fires, and also using those fires to prepare food for the community.

Nowadays, of course, the sect is well-established at the homeground where they have lived for centuries. They are no longer one meal away from destruction. And yet among the Makai as among all civilizations, much depends on dinner.

And that's a lot of pressure on the person who's tasked with making it.

Kazim Firestarter is really good at his job, but there's a nervous energy to him as he goes about it. Is it salted enough for people's tastes? Too salty? Were the corner pieces burned just a little? Is it too hot, or not hot enough? It's overcooked, isn't it? It is, he knew it. And in the name of the AllSeasons, is everybody getting enough to eat?

He can't help it. He worries. Even though he's really good at his job. He just wants to be sure everybody's happy. Maybe that's why he's really good at his job.

Kiko Truthspeaker -- Gretchen Albright

sincere, (somewhat) stilted

In a small society – and surely the Makai sect qualifies as such – there are certain necessities that extend beyond the basics. Obviously, food and shelter and security are all needed, but in addition, one need is that problems be addressed quickly and cleanly. For this, there are Truthspeakers.

It is the role of these Truthspeakers to speak the uncomfortable truth, and to do so in a manner that the listeners can both hear and accept. Kiko is well-suited to this delicate job. She is discerning, thinking before she speaks and weighing opposing viewpoints before giving her own. She is also straightforward, a critical quality in a Truthspeaker, lest insightful words be so cloaked in kindness that their meaning becomes obscured or twisted.

Perhaps her only flaw, then, is that years of faithfully performing her job have left Kiko Truthspeaker with an occasional tendency to express the obvious. "It is raining," she will say. "It has been raining for four hours and appears likely to rain another two. I am sitting in a puddle three inches deep and I am not pleased about it." These statements tend to include a formidable amount of detail, but they are, in keeping with her role and natural talents, stated both concisely and without malice.

Kable Worldwatcher -- Matthew Scott

alert, empathetic

For the first generations of Makai sect-members to leave Lyria and start anew beyond the kingdom's borders, life was a perilous thing. Beasts in that unsettled territory were quick to seize a lamb that escaped its pen or a child that wandered afield. More treacherous, there were predators of a human nature who sought to steal provisions the settlers desperately needed. There were the Peacekeepers, of course, but they could not protect from threats that went unnoticed, and thus were the Worldwatchers born. The idea was simple: yes,

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of course every Makai watched out for their own livestock, their own children, their own property. But the Worldwatchers looked after everything, to be the eyes and ears of the community as a whole. To watch, to notice, so that appropriate action might be taken.

Eventually, the Makai homeground became a more settled place. The threat of predation was lower and within the realm of the Peacekeepers to handle. At that time, the sect did something that was, well, extremely *Makai* of them: they retained the Worldwatchers as a job but changed its scope: to be alert, not for external threat, but for turbulence within. And to watch not just for danger but also for opportunity.

There aren't terribly many Worldwatchers, but Kable is one of the best. His bright eyes follow others, both friends he's known forever and people he's just met, and he sees things in them often before even they do. If someone is moving slightly tentatively because a muscle pains them, if someone is swallowing down resentment, or if someone is quietly anxious, he will see it. Often, he says nothing about the things he observes. Many times, he will merely meet the eyes of the person who is pained or resentful or anxious.

Sometimes, Worldwatcher's acknowledgement is all the impetus someone else needs to seek help. Other times, there is no real help that can be given, but it is enough for the afflicted person to know that they have been seen.

Even when the things Worldwatcher sees are good ones - possibility for growth, potential for joy - noting them is not without a cost. He doesn't just see that someone is hurting or someone else is hopeful, he *feels* those sensations along with the one he's watching. That's an emotional burden to bear, even when the outcome is likely to be good. Still, it is a burden he carries willingly. Kable Worldwatcher looks deliberately into others' souls and then helps to carry the weights he sees there. It is, for him, a sacred calling.

the Smirches

Phineas Smirch -- Bob Coury

obsequious, smarmy

Phineas and Ursula Smirch and their children moved to World's Edge about five years ago. Until that time, the residents of the barony had relied on caravaneers and other traveling merchants for the things they couldn't produce themselves. The family established a shop on the edge of the village and has been there ever since, selling a wide variety of goods for more than they're really worth.

When his wife isn't around, Phineas likes to play the part of the wheeler-dealer, the man who knows everything and everybody and who can get anything - for a price. He is fond of phrases like "Normally it would be twice that much, but for you..." If there were used cars in World's Edge, Phineas would be selling them.

When Ursula is around, things are different. Phineas' normal unctuous flattery ("...for a man of your stature, only the finest cloak will do, am I right?") is replaced by "Yes, dear", "No, dear", "Sorry, dear", and "oh dear." Ursula calls the shots in their business, and Phineas knows it.

Ursula Smirch -- Ana Quintana

conniving, power-hungry

Most people in World's Edge don't like Ursula Smirch much. Ursula is well aware of this, but if she cares about it, it is only to feel a certain degree of pride in it. She seeks power over people, not friendship. She values money because it is a source of power. And not just vague power, like the Valerius family has. Ursula likes specific, razor-sharp, targeted power. It pleases her that, if some local peasant fails to make the mortgage payments on his small house, she has the power to take it away from him. Like a snake watching a mouse before it strikes, Ursula enjoys watching other people's fear. And she enjoys the fact that, should some area farmer experience a few difficult seasons, the farm will become hers. She doesn't want a farm, she just likes knowing that someone could lose everything to her.

Ursula will be far more pleasant to the participants than she usually is to the other villagers, especially early in the weekend. She has even gone so far as to procure new outfits for everyone in her family in an effort to impress the visitors. When it is clear that she can't immediately have power over someone, Ursula will either ignore them (as she does with the Valerius family) or seek to ally herself with them (as she does with the participants.) Of course, any such informal alliance will last only as long as it benefits Ursula.

Karmin Smirch -- Dave Kamin

cunning, supercilious

There will come a day in the not-too-distant future when Karmin's adored mother Ursula wishes to retire. If you imagine that day, probably you - with your feeble grasp of strategic thinking - picture Karmin formulating a clever business stratagem. Fool! Karmin has had a fiendishly complex master plan in mind for years now!

In a room full of checkerboards, Karmin is playing chess. While toddlers gnaw on the checkers. And wet themselves. *That* is how superior Karmin's intellect is! Bwa ha ha!

To say that the myriad Smirch financial dealings will burgeon in Karmin's ultra-competent hands is an understatement of laughable proportions. Obviously, Karmin will follow the law in its entirety, just as his mother always has. Regardless of this paltry limitation, he will develop and enhance her financial empire. Karmin would explain the fiscal blueprints he has devised but he scarcely expects a

mind such as yours to follow along. This is to be expected. A genius of Karmin's caliber comes along so infrequently that when one does, it is hard for mundane thinkers to grasp the extent of his brilliance.

No matter. Go about your simplistic little lives. Meanwhile, Karmin will be comfortably ensconced in some corner, steeping his fingers and smiling his knowing smirk.

Bwa ha ha!

Karla Smirch -- Kayla Schlenz

vapid, indulged

Although no one suggests it to Ursula, there are people in town who believe Karmin Smirch isn't *quite* as smart as he thinks he is.

Those same people also believe his younger sister isn't as smart as *she* thinks she is. Granted, Karla makes no claim to intelligence. At all. But still, she's less smart than that.

With her wide eyes and perpetually-surprised mouth, Phineas and Ursula's younger child bears at least a passing resemblance to a goldfish: shimmering and content and ooh! A rock!

If townsfolk fail to tell Ursula what they think of Karmin, they *definitely* don't mention anything negative about Karla. Despite her stunning lack of brainpower, Karla is Ursula's clear favorite, her coddled and spoiled little pet. Certainly Karla knows how *that* system works, knows that stamping her expensive boot and crying "Mother!" will call Ursula's wrath down on whichever unlucky person has failed to give Karla exactly what she wants.

Ooh! Another rock!

Oh, wait. That's the same rock. Never mind.

Inspirations Unlimited

There is a temptation, with the muses, to think of them as the consummate practitioners of their arts. That's not what they are.

To be clear, yes, they are all both gifted and practiced at their crafts. But that's not what actually matters here. They are each, in their own unique and beautiful ways, the living embodiment of what their artists need. *That* is what makes them so very good at what they do. That is what makes people travel from all over Lyria to work with them.

That is what makes them muses.

Koreos, muse of dance -- Greg Reid

enamored, protective

Hey. How you doin'?

"What do dancers need? Oh, my sweet, beautiful dancers. More than any of the other arts, a dancer *is* their art. Their body and their spirit, that's it. It's all they get. That means they need their bodies and their spirits cared for. Shored up. Beloved. They need warm compresses brought for their hamstrings and epsom salts for their weary feet. They need to be told they are beautiful. They need to be *shown* they are beautiful, and made to believe it, over and over again. They need to be reminded of their bodies' capacity to receive pleasure as well as to give it." - Koreos

A cynical observer might say Koreos seems a little in love with everyone he meets. No, the other muses would correct that person. Not *seems*. *Is*. Whoever you are, Koreos delights in you and desires you. He is consummately respectful of the boundaries of others. He reads the subtext in bodies, noting who wishes a look, a touch, a caress and who does not.

He sees, too, where people carry hurts, in both their bodies and their spirits, often even before they do. He heals the aches he can and empathizes with those he cannot.

Koreos sees just exactly who you are. And he. Is. Into. It.

Dramina, muse of theater -- Bri Taborn

soothing, expansive

Okay. Deep breaths. No, really. Inhale. Slooooowly. That's right. Now exhale. See? Better, right?

"What do theater people need? Are we talking actors here? Or directors? Costumers, props people, running crew? Y'know what, it doesn't matter. Same answer: they need to calm down. We. *We* need to calm down, every last one of us. Calm the everloving fuck down and so help me gods, do *not* touch that! That is *important* and people *keep* moving it *without asking* and I seriously *cannot...* Sorry. Where was I? Oh, right. Calming down. Theater is a heightened view of the world: it lets us look through a window to a place realer than reality. And that understandably calls to people who like intensity. I'm sorry, but you can't ask people to be dramatic and

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than fault them for bringing the drama, you know what I'm saying? But they all - we all - are a lot happier and are more productive after remembering to breathe just a little." - Dramina

Dramina is an effusive presence, spreading her arms to fill a space with sunshine. She is consummately able to read the energy in a room and then modulates her own personality to raise or lower that energy as needed. She is the rare person who can appear fully engaged and fully relaxed at the same time. Even when she is possibly not.

She is, after all, the muse of theater. Sometimes, when someone is as genuine as Dramina is, they can use appearance to shape reality itself.

Melados, muse of music -- Dorian Hart

astute, sensitive

So. Tell me about your childhood...

"This will sound flippant, but musicians need to be listened to. *Really* listened to, I mean. Stark raving mad, every last one of us. I mean, of course, so is everyone. But musicians, ah yes. Above and beyond. There's good reason for that, of course. With most of the arts, when you engage with them, consume them, you are paying attention. You are *choosing* to attend a play, to watch a dance. Music isn't afforded that luxury. Music is everywhere, it surrounds us and fills in our background and so we take it for granted. That's what has driven all of us musicians to madness, you know, even though we haven't realized it. That's why every musician needs to be listened to, actively and consciously. We may resist being drawn out, but we need it all the more for that." - Melados

There is something almost hypnotic about his mellifluous voice and thoughtful gaze, this soft-spoken man of music, that does indeed draw out even those who had no intention of sharing themselves. It is perhaps simplistic to say that Melados weaves harmony around himself.

Even if it is true.

Lexia, muse of writing -- Margot Holmes

hardassed, fun-loving

For gods' sake, stop fucking around and write. Just do it. I'm taking you somewhere fun later.

"Writers need to write. It's not that complicated. It doesn't need to be good. It probably won't be. That's fine. Just write something. They can fix it later. But they need to write. No, now. This is not that complicated. Of course, that's not all they need. No one expects a chef to cook without ingredients, and writers are no different except that their ingredients are ephemeral. They need adventures and experiences. They need to be carried forth into the beautiful wide world so they can see it swirl and spin and sparkle around them. They need to be lifted onto mountaintops and bathed in starshine. But also? They need to sit their damn asses down and write." - Lexia

Lexia has two settings and they are both essential. She is no-nonsense. She has a plan for her writers and it is that they write. Whether they want to or not. It doesn't matter if it's not good. Most of it won't be. That's part of the process. She will hear no discussion on this matter.

And. She is nothing-but-nonsense. That is, she understands that writers need to be pulled out into the world in ways that are unexpected and madcap and delightful. And she can deliver that because she is all of those things.

Floria, muse of gardening -- Mara Feingold-Link

gentle, innocent

Take your time, friends. Take all the time you need...

"Probably gardeners need the same things gardens do. I suppose we all do. The warmth of the sun, of course, and also cool rain. Light, but shade as well. The quiet fallow time of winter. To be able to dig down deep into the earth for sustenance, and birds and bees and gentle breezes to carry us out into the greater world." - Floria

Sweet, gentle Floria is the youngest and most trusting of the muses. There is a place in the world for disturbing artwork and revolutionary poetry. Music can ring out strident and turbulent and even food can be punishingly spiced.

But there is no such thing as an angry garden.

She is a nurturer, patient and giving. She will never be the loudest or most flamboyant of the muses, but she tends to all of them in her own quiet and loving way. If the rest of the world is less likely to take notice of her, that is assuredly the world's loss rather than her own.

Teknos, muse of mechanical innovation -- Brace Peters

curious, gleeful

Oh, nifty! What does *this* knob do?

"Inventors and innovators don't need much. Often, a lack is what pulls us. Don't have a way to cross a span? Build one! Don't have the part you need? Figure out what you could use instead! Don't have a teacher? Terrific! Play around! Make your own rules! Try it and see! So, yeah. A lack is really just an opportunity. But there's a thing we do need, and that's someone to look upon our works and say 'Holy cow! Cool!' It's funny. People think an audience is important for actors and dancers and singers, but I've seen those guys get their grooves on just fine on their own. But man, you build a thing, and you want somebody to show it off to. To ask the questions. What's this doohickey for? Why's this part like this? Does this piece spin, and if not, *could it?* That's when it's real. By gods, that's when we really know we've made a thing!" - Teknos

Teknos brings a childlike sense of wonder to everything he does. He is just so gosh-darned excited to see the all neato stuff in the world and being around him makes it hard not to get pulled along into that marvel and delight. Wide-eyed and youthful though that glee may be, he pairs it with a solid and gentle maturity.

Perhaps there is no better summary and endorsement than this: when the other muses have a project of their own they're proud of, it is Teknos they share it with first.

Kulinos, muse of cooking -- Cris Shuldiner

direct, brisk, (slightly) germaphobic

Don't be shy! Wash up! Dig in! Enjoy!

"A great cook needs an orderly mind. An adventuresome palate. A fierce appetite. And clean hands!" - Kulinos

Kulinos is a disciplined and decisive man, able to remain focused in the midst of chaos. He knows what he likes and he isn't afraid to tell others what that is. But he also understands when it's time to speak and when to keep silent.

Cooking's the art we most take for granted. Plenty of people go their whole lives without picking up a chisel or a flute or a trowel, but almost everyone will fry an egg at some point. All art sustains us, but none other as immediately as food does. Maybe that's why Kulinos is not a man to waste time on trifles.

Except for the custard kind.

Ha! See what he did there? He's efficient but fun!

Your water's boiling.

Hey! Wash your hands!

Aesthetika, muse of the visual arts -- Tasi O'Malley

collaborative, inclusive

Let's first go around the circle and introduce ourselves!

"It doesn't really matter the medium, a visual artist needs community, needs to see and know the other artists who've come before them and who will come after. Oh, we'll bristle at that, I promise you. With most of the other arts, creators are forced to work together. Even if it's a one-man show, someone needs to turn on the spotlight. Using a music metaphor, people say *working in concert* to mean creating together. But we painters and sculptors and ceramicists, we think we're different. It is so hard to remember that even when we say *I am doing something wholly new* - and we do, every single one of us has said that - we are defining ourselves in relation to other artists. We can be singular and still see and acknowledge our place in the whole, and once we get that, everything else gets easier. That's why we call it *perspective*." - Aesthetika

Lovely Aesthetika builds community around her so naturally that people sometimes miss her doing it. They notice that they have new friends, that they have learned skills from each other, that they are referencing some other artist's work often without seeing that it is her own artistry that has placed the framework in place.

How ironic, that Aesthetika's greatest art is invisible even when she herself is color and light and movement. The astute notice, though, and her fellow muses pull close around her.

Miscellania, muse of everything else -- Betsy Rosenblatt

flexible, well-rounded

Oh, wow. This is *so* great. Just... *wow*.

"Anyone who creates anything needs respect. It should be so simple, but we hand out respect like it's gold bars or internal organs, as though it costs us dearly. It doesn't. To be clear, there's respect to be had for *certain* things, especially certain *creative* things. If you paint a portrait that looks like someone? Respect. You wrote a symphony? They might not want to listen, but they'll respect you. But what about other sorts of creations? If you organize a search party or a dinner party? Thanks, they'll say, but that's not actually *creating*. You made some clothing / a game / a formula / some furniture / a procedure? Not actually *creating*. *No* actual respect. Gods forbid you make a *child*. Oof. *Negative* amounts of respect! Well, to hell with that. To. Hell. With. That. I see you. I *respect* you. Look at you, at this amazing thing you created, through your talent and dedication and effort! I see you, and I'm here for you." - Miscellania

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Miscellania knows at least a little about nearly everything. She's done a little origami. Some taxidermy here and there. Kickboxing and beatboxing. Blacksmithing? Of course.

She'd dabbled with winemaking. She's done a little debating and a smidge of both lip-reading and palm-reading. Interior design? Yes, and archery. Oh, and masonry. There's more, but you get the idea.

Did we mention stenography? Cartography? Yeah, those too.

Nemaia -- Kristi Hayes

wry, discerning

Inspirations-Unlimited-your-creativity-is-very-important-to-us-can-you-hold-please?

There's only one person at Inspirations Unlimited who's not a muse, and that's Nemaia.

Nemaia, who refers to all the muses as "my kids", is officially the establishment's Bookkeeper... in the most literal sense of the word. She has an imposing book with shimmering gold pages on which she records important elements of the stories each client shares as part of this application interview. After this process, if the applicant is deemed to be a good match who can benefit from a muse's services, this person is accepted as a client. The muses joke that although Nemaia takes notes in her golden book, that this is merely a formality because Nemaia's memory is unsurpassed.

Of course, there are people who think of her as "just the secretary."

It's not going to end well for those people.

the Peacock Family Singers (and One Talent Scout)

Milton Peacock -- Jeff Foley

splashy, antsy

Milton Peacock is not a man who sits still.

He's larger than life, with his wide tie and loud voice and big gestures. He's full of nervous energy and excitement, and he makes things happen. Milton's word for this is PIZAZZ! and if you don't know it's capitalized, you haven't met Milton.

He's the manager of the Peacock Family Singers, and if you're hearing of the Peacock Family Singers for the very first time, friend, today is your lucky day!

The Peacock Family Singers are numerous - 10 people! - for a singing group and they mostly play small venues where they sometimes outnumber the audience. Milton is constantly reworking their set list and refining their lyrics and reminding them to up the PIZAZZ!

Nobody hustles harder than Milton Peacock. And now there's a talent scout interested in them!

The Peacock Family Singers' big break is just around the corner, you can be sure of it!

PIZZAZZ!

Charlie Peacock -- Chris Reichert

complimentary (freely expressing praise of others), complementary (serving to complete or fill mutual needs)

Before there was the Peacock Family Singers, there were just three brothers who loved to sing. This is not a story with PIZAZZ, and thus not a story you'll hear from Milton Peacock. But it's true, and worth listening to.

Back then, there was Milton Swallow, Charlie Swallow and Elliott Swallow, the baby of the family, whom everyone calls Elly. Milton was the one who wrote their songs and arranged everything from their harmonies to their lodgings. Elly was - and still is - the one with the strongest voice and the widest range. Plus he's just got this glow about him. Everybody loves Elly from the moment they meet him. Charlie was content to be in the middle, providing whatever else was needed. And telling the stories.

It was Charlie who told his older brother: "You gotta stop calling us the Swallow Brothers. We're getting booked for the wrong gigs."

But it was Milton who came up with the peacock idea: another bird, memorable and flashy. Milton was focused on selling them, on PIZAZZ, even then.

In many ways, the smart move would've been for Elly to go off as a solo artist. There's a market for solo artists, and with his voice and charisma, he could be big. But Milton resisted this. "The family stays together," he always says. And Elly was happy to stay.

Charlie can tell you about everyone in the band: the ones connected by blood, like his brilliant daughter Joni, or by marriage, like Elly's talented wife Tanya. And he can tell you about all the rest, whom Milton insists on renaming Peacocks despite the fact that they're not truly related. And while he's doing so, he'll make sure you have what you need, whether that's food or a chair or company.

Very little of this description is actually about Charlie Peacock, huh? And yet you've learned a lot about everyone else by reading it. Perhaps that tells everything you need to know about the man himself.

Elliot (Elly) Peacock -- Mike Robb

appealing, boyish

When a great many gifts are given to a person, one of two things happens: too often, that person becomes treacherous, like a marsh that gets so much water poured into it that it becomes bloated and swollen and foul. Leaves blanket the surface like solid ground, but it's a lie, and creatures who step there are sucked down. So much is given, but it is never enough. Occasionally, though, there is a second case, and the person so greatly gifted lets joy run through them and out again into the world, clean-flowing like a river.

Elly Peacock is that second sort of person, running through life like a river with sun glimmering down on it. It's an oddly wholesome metaphor, but it fits the boy Elly was and the man he has become.

This is not to say that everything has been easy for him; it has not. Their father died shortly before he was born, and their mother followed when Elly was only five. Sixteen-year-old Milton and thirteen-year-old Charlie raised him, and although they were assisted by the ladies of their poor neighborhood in eastern Arden - all of whom doted on this winsome little boy - Elly's was still a childhood that knew hunger and want.

Perhaps that helps explain now, though, why Elly Peacock hasn't struck out on his own. He could, certainly. But what would that mean? To be rich and successful and alone? His whole life, even when he had nothing, he had his brothers. He knows his place in the universe when he is with them.

Good things will continue to find him here. They always do.

Tanya Peacock -- Dana Sullivan

excitable, gushing

Tanya Peacock is SO EXCITED to meet you.

It doesn't matter who you are, because Tanya has only one setting and that setting is SO EXCITED.

Tanya's been married to Elly Peacock for eleven years now (can you even BELIEVE how time FLIES?!?) and yet it still feels like YESTERDAY that they tied the knot. Everything about the day was PERFECTION. It was rainy but not hard rain and just warm enough but also not at all hot which was perfect. Plus Elly was VERY handsome in his suit and they sang their vows to each other which is obviously SUPER ROMANTIC.

And now the Peacock Family Singers are in World's Edge which is ADORABLE and also her darling new friend Belle is getting married THIS VERY WEEKEND and when Belle asked her to be a bridesmaid she SCREAMED.

Joni Peacock -- Emily Bernier

astute, awkward

There's a certain personality that gravitates to life as a traveling musician. Comfortable with change. Easygoing. Extroverted. If you decide to join a band that's constantly on the road, those traits make it easier.

If you're born into the life, you don't necessarily get to choose.

Joni's mom sang with the band for two years before deciding she wanted no part of touring or motherhood or Charlie, not necessarily in that order. She took off early enough that Joni has no memory of her. It's always been just Joni and Charlie... and, of course, her uncles Milton and Elly, and her auntie Tanya, and all her surrogate Peacock cousins.

From the time she was small, it was clear Joni wasn't temperamentally suited to this life, or at least not as suited as many others. She wanted stability and quiet, neither of which were easy to come by on the road. She noticed a lot but found it hard to meet new people, in a life that was constantly throwing new people at her. At times she despaired of ever, ever fitting in.

But she was also devoted to her father and to her sprawling family, both the biological and situational members. The little girl with big watchful eyes grew into a beautiful young woman with a voice people clamored to hear, and she is an esteemed part of the band.

The life continues to be challenging, but while Joni Peacock may not always face a challenge head-on, neither does she run from one. She will wait and she will watch, and when the dust settles and the chaos subsides and the reverb dies away, she will still be there. After all, she was born to be a Peacock.

Shaun Peacock -- Eli Hunt

insecure, gentle

If this is a bad time, Shaun can come back later. Tomorrow, maybe? Or next week. Whatever's good for you. Actually, it wasn't even important. He's sorry to have bothered you!

If you're not careful, you might start believing the picture Shaun Peacock paints of himself.

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To be sure, Shaun believes it. He's the weakest member of the group. The others carry him, musically. And socially. He's lucky to have them.

Except no. If Shaun could only see himself through the eyes he turns on everyone else, here is what he'd see: he has an innate and beautiful ability to harmonize with anyone and everyone. Everyone sounds better when they sing with Shaun. He is intuitive and compassionate, and if he got out of his own way mentally, he could be a front man.

Also he's hot, but he doesn't know it. And who doesn't want that?

Here's the part Shaun should really see: He was the first person to join the band from totally outside of the biological family. There was Tanya, of course, who became a Peacock (that is, by joining the band) before she became a Peacock (that is, by marrying Elly), but that line is blurred. But Shaun? Shaun was *chosen*.

He thinks it's because Milton felt sorry for him. Oh, Shaun. If only you could see the real you.

Donna Peacock -- Lindsay Daviau

demanding, glamorous

Sorry, but Donna isn't signing autographs today.

If you are - weirdly - not here in search of Donna's autograph, don't worry. She won't be offended, not because she's not easily offended, but because the idea that you - whoever you are - are not her biggest fan will never occur to her.

Oh! Maybe you're here with her latte! Not to be a bitch, but it is about frickin' time. It had better be made with soy milk, and only half-caff. Seriously, if she had known it was going to take this long, she would've just made it herself.

Just kidding, obviously. She's not going to make it herself.

Donna knows what she wants (everything) and when she wants it (now) and you're soon going to know it, too, because Donna is *not* shy about making her demands known.

"Contrary to popular opinion, it's not actually *Donna and the Peacocks*", says Mick. But he says it quietly. Which is just as well.

Oh, are you still here? Not to be a bitch, but the foam on this latte is garbage.

Mick Peacock -- Mike Hsieh

streetwise, flippant, relaxed

If you'd told him ten years ago that he'd be singing with a... bubblegum folk-pop group? Or whatever the Peacock Family Singers are? He'd have punched you in the gut.

Of course, there was a real chance he'd have done that anyway. He was *so angry* back then.

Who was he angry at? There were the obvious answers in no real order: his father, his bandmates, his exes, his cheapskate landlord, his godsdamned manager. There was the deeper answer: himself. And there was the real answer: no one/everyone/he just was.

Mick can't say what actually changed, when he joined the Peacock family ("Distant cousin," he tells interviewers, deadpan. "Real distant.") that drained a bunch of the anger away. He doesn't really try, Mick not being given to introspection. But he knows he's not that always-angry guy he was before, and if you catch him in a rare moment of seriousness, he'll tell you that this way is better.

Every once in a while, he'll meet up with someone he knew from before, and the conversation is often about how... isn't Mick pissed he's not headlining the band? He vaguely remembers that yeah, OG Mick woulda been seriously butthurt about that. Except that... why? The Peacocks don't have just one lead singer, and even if they did, who needs that pressure and hassle?

It's all good, now. Nobody's more surprised than Mick.

Dusty Peacock -- Anna Kelly

trusting, ditzy

Oh my gosh, she would lose her head if it weren't attached!

Dusty moves through the world like a small child or a large dog does, loving freely and without discrimination and expecting to be loved in return. To be clear, she's almost always correct in this expectation. And in those rare instances when someone doesn't automatically love her back, it's not clear she notices.

Dusty is, to be fair, very easy to love. She has a sunny smile and a sunnier disposition. She's tremendously musically gifted and yet utterly without arrogance. She thinks you're great. She really, really does.

Dusty can also be kind of a pain in the ass. She loses things constantly. She sometimes needs to have things explained multiple times. And not, like, complicated things. Kinda simple things. Her inability to see the downside of literally anything makes her less than great at making difficult choices.

And yet it feels mean-spirited to say - or honestly even to think - these things. You can't be annoyed at Dusty. I mean, unless you're Donna. Donna is often annoyed at Dusty. Thankfully, Dusty has no idea.

Dusty is on an exuberant technicolor joyride across the universe, and if you're not careful, she'll take you along with her. Yep, even you, Donna.

Stevie Peacock -- Kris Size

wary, provocative

If Dusty trusts everyone, Stevie Peacock trusts no one.

There are bad things in the world, dark things with jagged rusty edges that will cut the unwary, slicing into their fragile spots and leaving toxins in the wound to fester. Stevie Peacock knows that all too well, and she will not be made vulnerable again.

Stevie doesn't talk much about her past and even Dusty knows not to ask. She is the most recent one to join the group - she cannot bring herself to say "join the family" - and so all the other Peacocks know what she was like when they first met her: stunningly talented. Edgy and fascinating. Also often blind drunk. And/or spoiling for a fight.

Stevie's demons are still with her and probably always will be, but after two years with the Peacocks, they are quieter now. She picks fights less often, although certainly not never. She drinks less, and with less of a sense of needing to drown some part of her past. She is still edgy and watchful.

She cares about her bandmates - maybe, maybe she occasionally slips up, just in her own head, and calls them *family* - although she shows it only in her guarded Stevie way. She doesn't *think* she actually hooked up with Mick and/or Donna on her last bender, although she wouldn't swear to that. She's trying to get along with her fellow Peacocks. She is as close to them as she'll allow herself to get.

Because Stevie trusts no one. Not even herself. *Especially* not herself.

Jack Johnson -- Paul San Clemente

false, and yet somehow oddly sincere?

Jack Johnson seems like a good guy - a nice guy, yes, and an honest guy - which is weird because there is for sure something off about him.

It's not just that John Jackson is nervous about nearly everything, on edge and panicky, although he 100% is. It's not solely that he's preoccupied, occasionally staring off into space or trailing off mid-sentence. It's not even his unnerving tendency to go suddenly wide-eyed and laugh in a way that's as unconvincing as it is unwarranted.

Okay, maybe it is those things. Or, rather, a combination of those things and the fact that he's also so darn earnest.

Maybe that's not fair to criticize. After all, Will Carlson only arrived in World's Edge on Tuesday. Most people in town don't know much about the fast-paced world of popular music, but obviously he totally does, what with being a talent scout and all. And he's excited about the Peacock Family Singers, and just seems to keep getting more impressed by them.

It's only everything else about him that's odd. There is definitely something hinky about this guy.

And what was his name again? Ben Thomson, wasn't it, maybe? Oh, or Sam Dixon, or maybe Cole Larson? Certainly something like that.

the Post-Apocalyptic War Band

Diesel -- Lance Nathan

imposing, adamant

In the final days of the old world, the rivers will run red with blood and ash will fall from the skies, and when the Great Tumult is over, a handful of desperate survivors will set out to build a new home in this harsh place. In that desolate and forsaken land, one man will arise to lead his people through the dystopian hellscape.

Diesel doesn't like to call himself a warlord. But if the gasmask and motorcycle jacket fit...

Of course, the old world hasn't *technically* ended yet. All across the kingdom, people thought it would. Not everyone, of course, but some people. September 4th, they said. 9/4/994. A portentous date. The signs were there, for those who knew where to look. Some people panicked. Others prayed. But not Diesel. Diesel *prepared*.

Their ragtag band of survivors would be ready, he promised, when the endtimes came. They began living as though the apocalypse had already happened, hardening themselves to the privations that would soon follow.

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September 4th came and went. And... nothing. Diesel is undaunted. The end is nigh, he can feel it. He and his followers, camped in their compound in Greystone Clearing, they are ready. They have their stores of rations (although they often eat in the tavern, while it yet stands.) They have their distressed leather clothing (and one thing you can say about the endtimes: it's real, real sexy.)

All they need now is a name. Diesel, as always, has lots of ideas. He's still holding out hope for the Harbingers of Oblivion, although his old lady Equi claims it's too long. He also liked White Skull Clan, but there was dissension. ("All skulls are white, baby," said Equi.) Oh, or maybe the Ashenistas!

He's not gonna even bother telling Equi that one yet. Unlike most people, Diesel's got plenty of time.

Equinoxious -- Tenille Reichert

jaded, weary

If you live a traditional, sedate, middle-class life, you might be totally unaware there's another world out there. It is a land where the rules of an established society do not apply, a place on the fringe, and it is populated with revolutionaries and zealots, mavericks and crackpots, prophets and freaks. And in that land, Equi is a princess.

She's a second-generation deviant, Equi is. She was born in late September, when the bloodmoon rose and coyotes howled to welcome a night as long as the day. On that fateful eve, Brazyn smiled by the light of the trash fires, unlaced her leather vest to nurse her newborn daughter and said, "I'mma name her Equinoxious."

That's right: Brazyn - *the* Brazyn - was her mama. And then there's her pop, CrowBar. *Everybody* knew CrowBar, in the counterculture circles. If there was a rave or a protest, CrowBar was there. No gang of punks would share a bottle or plot an insurrection without him.

So yeah. Unlike everyone else in the clearing who came there to rebel, Equinoxious was born into this world, and unlike the rest of them, she uses her given name. Well, almost. It's a mouthful, certainly, so she mostly goes by Equi these days. Lotsa things are different, now.

Mostly it's... she doesn't like to say this to her old man Diesel, but... man, it's getting kinda old, this life. Like, sometimes Equi wonders what it'd be like to live in, y'know, a *house*. With a *floor* and shit. She knows it's all a load of bourgeois bullshit, that this kinda thinking is a tool of the Man, but it'd be real nice to not have everything be friggin' *damp* all the time, y'know?

Her an' Diesel are still real tight and she'll never give him up or nothin', but... did he just track mud into her nice clean clearing?

For fuck's sake. Equi is *so fucking sick of this shit*.

Dorito -- Erin Geno

cheesy, spicy (sorry)

Just because it's the apocalypse doesn't mean you can't have fun.

At least, that's how it is if you're Dorito. She's a rapid-fire collection of ideas ("What if from now on, singing was for regular talk and speaking was only for rhyming around the campfire?") and jokes ("I'm so hungry, I could eat these doomsday rations like there's no tomorrow!") and actions ("You guys, I'm hosting a No Pants Monday potluck!") If any of those ideas/jokes/actions don't land well, it's not a big deal, because in 5 minutes she'll have moved on to something else... and probably bigger and louder and zanier.

This unpredictability makes Dorito a lot of fun, but there's a dark element that runs through her madcap plans and goofy humor. She can get angry - at someone else or, more often, at herself - in a split second, and though these never last long, they're intense while they're happening. You're never entirely sure which Dorito you're going to get at any given moment, and that's an unsettling feeling.

And then... this past Monday, she suddenly... announced she'd killed a guy? A professor of some sort, someone most people in town had never even heard of. Everyone assumed she'd say it had all been a joke, albeit a not-very-funny one, but the minutes passed and it appeared Dorito was serious. She's always been volatile, but the idea that she would turn so intensely violent is bizarre and shocking. It can't be real, right? The same Dorito who just last week arrived at breakfast in her standard dusty black leather outfit and a pink feather boa? Dorito has never entirely made sense, but this confession is crazy and outlandish, even for her.

Bane -- Deo Gallotto

gruff, confrontational

In a world where there's little you can count on, it's reassuring to meet someone like Bane: the very picture of a doomsday cultist.

He's a fierce figure, with his piercing stare and aggressive posture. Even those who know him well, whom Bane counts as a friend - and he does have friends, even outside the war band, because he's a truly loyal person - are likely to be greeted with a harsh "who the hell are you?" when they approach the clearing. In Bane's world, you can't ever be too careful.

Still, in the four months the cultists have been camped in Greystone Clearing, even Bane seems to be letting his guard down just a little, won over, perhaps, by the kindness and acceptance of most people in town. You hear his laugh ring through the tavern, you catch a glimpse of his kindness in return.

Of course, he's still probably going to get all up in your face the next time you head toward Greystone. He's probably going to bellow at you as though none of the laughs you've shared matter. He's going to look just as dark and fierce and scary as ever.

In an uncertain world, it's comforting to have things you can count on.

JPeg -- Gareth Hinds

quirky, inventive

Never mind what his name used to be. You've heard it, at least the surname. It's the kind of name that's often got a III or a IV after it, or else it's engraved above a fancy stone doorway.

There are ways to make your father proud, when you've got a name like that, but being an artist isn't one of them. He can still feel it, that confident hand on his shoulder, and the deep voice above him: "Someday you'll thank me for this, Jay." And then the sound of his art - doodles, his father called them - being thrown away. Not just the pictures he'd completed, but the paper as well. They thought that if they took his paper, he wouldn't draw anymore.

Well, he'd shown them, hadn't he? He was an artist still, decorating the only canvas they couldn't take away: his own skin. And, as he grew more proficient, other people clamored for his art on their skin as well.

Lots of his fellow misfits love the act of rebelling, but that wasn't JPeg's way. Contrary to what you might think, his art - not the tattoos he was most known for in underground circles nor the drawings and paintings he created now that he could buy his own supplies - was never intended as a fuck-you to his father. It just is. He can no more stop creating than he can stop breathing.

Moxie -- Joyce Farnsworth

jittery, easily spooked

If you're going to rename yourself, you might as well go hardcore aspirational. Goodness knows that's what Moxie did. It's the only hardcore thing she's ever done.

Well, other than become a doomsday cultist, that is.

The doomsday part is totally on-brand. Even back when she was Monica Fleming, she was sure the world was about to end. It was just one of the many, many things she panicked about. Wildfires. Contained fires. Acid reflux. Social faux-pas. Armageddon. Honestly, it was kind of a relief when lots of other people started panicking as well. It made her feel calm. Almost.

But the surprising part was her taking action about it, other than the actions of trembling and yelping, which she does perpetually. She changed her name, got herself some leather clothing, and joined up with Diesel's ragtag little band.

Moxie is still prone to startling. Wide-eyed panic is still her default facial expression. It is a rare occurrence that doesn't provoke at least a gasp or small scream. But somehow, among this hardened brigade of desperados who expect the worst, Moxie has found her place, and while she probably won't ever actually relax here, she nevertheless feels at home. There's a lot to be said for that.

the Prosecutorial Entourage

Justice Orion Wilde -- Tom Ricket

disillusioned, listless

If a rubber-stamp were a man, that man would be Justice Orion Wilde.

It wasn't always this way. One of Lyria's many itinerant justices who arrive in a town, investigate and prosecute any crimes that have occurred since the last visit, and then go on their way, Justice Wilde started his career as an idealist, a firebrand determined to bring justice to even the most remote of communities.

But that was a long time ago. Years of slogging through bureaucratic nonsense have worn him down. Where he used to think real change was possible, he now realizes this is a pipe dream. He has lost faith in the system, and in so doing has lost faith in himself as well.

This lack of passion has blanched the color and vigor from every part of his life. His motions and speech are slow, and sometimes his sentences trail off into nothingness, as though he lacks the energy needed to speak the remaining words.

Orion Wilde wants only to get done with this trial as quickly as humanly possible. He is focused on following the letter of the legal restrictions, lest any of his charges get flagged for insufficient compliance with regulations. Gods forbid he needs to come back to this sad little barony before at least a year has passed.

Celeste Wilde -- Esther Lee

vibrant, romantic

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Perhaps Celeste Sun was wearing rose-colored glasses when she first met and married Orion. After all, he was a star on the rise. He was handsome and ambitious. Perhaps she could be forgiven thinking that hers would be a life of elegance and respectability: state dinners and grand soirées. They would hobnob with the wealthy and powerful.

But then Orion began his crusade against some of Lyria's most calcified and corrupt institutions. The wealthy and powerful took notice of him, that was true, but they were not happy with what they saw. They could not stop him outright, but they could make his life very difficult. Pressure was applied in a thousand insidious ways: offices were reapportioned until Orion was working out of a former broom closet. His memos and requisitions went missing surprisingly frequently. And force was applied such that his staff felt compelled to resign.

It was a challenging time for the young prosecutor, but it was then that Celeste Wilde discovered what she was made of.

If others weren't willing to serve as Orion's clerk, then she herself would. Celeste took to singing - loudly - while she toiled away in the closet-sized office until others who worked on the floor decided their quarters should be relocated. Celeste was pretty and personable and friendly to everyone, but people soon learned that losing the paperwork that came from Orion's office was a very poor idea indeed.

And if Celeste had been enamored with the fictitious Orion who lived in her head, the rising star who got invited to fashionable parties, she fell more in love with the real man, who was willing to suffer indignities and setbacks to accomplish what needed doing.

Time has passed since those days in the broom closet, of course, but Celeste still sees the Orion of that time. Perhaps she is wearing the rose-colored glasses still.

Nina Bliss -- Peggy O'Connell

idealistic, energetic

Nina Bliss wasn't always the optimistic, positive person she is today. About as far from it as possible, actually.

She grew up in Uri-Kesh, not in a slum but in a quietly respectable poor neighborhood that was very aware of its slum-adjacent status. Her older sister Addi was the can-do one in the family. 19-year-old Addi had a plan: she'd hold down a job while her (surly, angry, ungrateful) younger sister finished her schooling. With Addi's wages, they could move away, make a better life somewhere else. The plan was going to work, Addi just knew it, no matter how much 17-year-old Nina rolled her eyes and made snide comments. And why shouldn't it be a success? They were both smart and healthy and hardworking, and the world was a beautiful adventure to be had! They'd be on their way soon; it was only going to take a couple more years of Addi earning her salary.

At the Delta Garment Factory.

If you know anything about Delta Garment, about the worst factory fire in Lyrian history, you know this story doesn't end well. When the smoke finally cleared, Addi Bliss was one of over 200 casualties of the fire, most of them poor women and girls who'd been unable to escape through doors and windows that were not supposed to be locked shut. "Missing and presumed dead", as the report said. That was an impersonal way of saying there was nothing left of Addi Bliss to find.

Nina Bliss fell into a very, very dark place, and she might well have stayed there forever. Except that in the grieving streets of Lower Delta, word because to circulate of a young prosecutor who claimed he was going to bring the Delta Garment managers to justice. Most people in Lower Delta ignored these rumors, because promises from men in suits were cheap things, but as the months wore on, it turned out this young man intended not to just prosecute the Delta managers but the owners and directors as well. All around Lyria, other owners of other factories took notice. Astonishingly, actual change happened.

Possibly just as astonishing, in Lower Delta, bitter bereft Nina Bliss changed as well, such that she came to believe the actions of good people could actually matter. That optimism was both warranted and necessary. Almost as though all the positive plucky idealism that Addi Bliss had inside her was released into the ether and then came to rest in her younger sister.

That was many years ago. For almost two decades now, Nina Bliss has served as a packmaster/provisioner/general administrative superhero for none other than Justice Orion Wilde himself. Maybe he is sometimes weary these days. Nina Bliss will not hear anything said against him. She believes in him completely. And her belief, forged in fire as it was, is a powerful thing indeed.

Fenwick Michaels -- Kenneth Reeves

steady (or) high-strung

When the chips are down, Fenwick is the man you want in your corner.

Unlike many of those who serve as bailiffs in the Lyrian justice system, he had no formal swordsmanship training when he started working for Orion years ago, when the Viceroy verdict was issued back in '71. That was when Orion prosecuted William Viceroy, a notorious crime lord popular among the Mystal street gangs, who benefitted from the system of trickle-down graft and corruption. Viceroy also had friends in high places, one of whom arranged for security staff to be absent the day the verdict was announced... which was also when members of the High Street Boys broke into the courthouse looking for blood.

Things looked rather grim indeed for Justice Wilde and the other 4 staff in the courtroom, all of them unarmed against 8 High Street Boys with clubs, chains and broken bottles. That was when a man stepped out of the shadows and said "I can get you to safety." He was armed only with a quarterstaff, but he knew every passageway in the courthouse. When the courtroom crew reached safety, 3 of the High Streeters were down and bleeding, 2 were dead and the remainder had fled. Orion turned to the man, trying to figure out why his face was so familiar, and offered him a job as a bailiff.

"Does that mean I'll have to give up my custodian shifts?" the man asked. And then he fainted dead away.

Orion subsequently learned several things about Fenwick Michaels: he'd been a janitor in the courthouse for 9 years. He performed very, very well under pressure. When push came to shove, he could use a mop handle as a quarterstaff, and very effectively at that. When *not* under pressure, he had a marked tendency toward panic.

In the intervening years they've worked together, Fenwick's tendency to panic has diminished, although mundane situations still trigger his excitability. When actual danger threatens, however, he is as steady as they come. Since Justice Wilde's current role as an itinerant prosecutor is not without risk, Fenwick has copious occasions to display the reliability he is (mostly) known for.

(Some of) the Wedding Party

Belle Bishop -- Alison Morris

impulsive, open, whimsical

Being around inventor Belle Bishop is like drinking from a firehose, assuming you found a hydrant piping out caffeinated champagne.

She talks fast and laughs often and loves everyone. She is effusive and brilliant and overwhelming. Also: warmhearted. Hilarious. Maddening. She is the center of attention even when she is not The Bride, and this weekend she is indeed The Bride, marrying her beloved Cary Montalvo at long last. You should come to the wedding! Oh, say you will! Bring your family! It's going to be so much fun! Maybe they'll have fireworks! A rainbow of fireworks!

Also she invented a device that is on the verge of changing the world, and the fact that we're three paragraphs in before even mentioning that tells you quite a bit about Belle.

The invention in question is the Bellaphone and it allows vocal communication between two people who aren't in the same physical location. Exciting, right? Just think about what it will mean!

At this point in the introduction, you're either energized or you need to lie down. Maybe both.

Thankfully, Belle's hyper-exuberance is mitigated by the fact that she really does care deeply about those around her. Her affection is deep and genuine and lasting.

Once you're pulling into her orbit - and you will be. Everybody is, sooner or later - you won't ever be the same.

Captain Cary Montalvo -- Rob Daviau

vigilant, brilliant, resolute

Even after decades of peace, Lyria maintains a standing army. Separate from these rank-and-file soldiers, there is a much smaller, much more selective squadron that handles missions that are particularly dangerous, important or politically-charged. Officially, they are the King's Elite Special Forces, but almost no one - including the King himself - calls them this. Everyone refers to them as the Phantoms. If a diplomat disappears or terrorists threaten, it is the Phantoms who are sent in. And if the situation is very critical and the odds seem impossible, the man they call for is Captain Cary Montalvo.

Cary Montalvo is good with a bow or dagger, very good with a sword, and – although he's never once mentioned this to anyone in town – he could kill you with his bare hands without breaking a sweat. None of that is why, 28 years ago, he became the youngest person to attain the rank of captain in the Phantom Guard. Rather, it was his gift for strategy that earned him that honor... and it was his insistence on being present to execute those strategies – to risk his own life alongside his subordinates – that has kept him a captain instead of rising far higher.

Anyone who believes the adage that "no plan survives contact with the enemy" has never seen a plan of Cary Montalvo's devising. Very little escapes his notice, and when he constructs a plan – and even now that he is retired from the Guard, he always has a plan, because he is not a man who leaves anything to chance – it is robust and complex enough to account for every statistically-feasible possibility. If some view Cary as cautious or inflexible, that's of no concern to him. Crafting a well-thought-out plan and then sticking to that plan is what makes missions successful and gets good soldiers out alive.

And now he is back in World's Edge, after time spent in the palaces of Dolorón and the dungeons of Tiroth. He is back at last to wed the woman he has loved for so long, even though she is so very different from him. With his great strategic mind, he is the logical person to oversee the minutia of the upcoming wedding. Captain Cary Montalvo has rescued an heiress from kidnappers in the secret casinos of Uri-Kesh; he infiltrated the lair of a mad archvillain in Noctara. Surely he can devise a seating chart that doesn't offend the guests and coordinate the musicians who'll sing during the cake-cutting.

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How hard can it be?

Lieutenant Cameron (Light) Light-Astor -- Rich Pellosie

affable, flourishing, magnanimous

It would be easy to hate Cameron Light-Astor. In fact, many people do.

It could be his looks. Or his charm. Or his money. *So much money... or, rather, wealth.* Cameron's looks, charm and wealth were all immediately obvious when he first entered the rough barracks shared by the newest Phantom platoon. The other recruits took one look and turned away. Get a load of *this guy*. So easy to hate.

The Light-Astors are bankers in Dolorón. Or politicians, maybe. Something rich and powerful, that's for sure. None of the other recruits bothered to ask. They knew without being told that this guy'd grown up with the finest of tutors, the best of clothes, the fanciest of meals. He is polished and charming, and of course if he wants to woo someone, they are wooed. Of course. Everything comes easy to Cameron. Whatever. Fucking golden boy, that one. Why was he even here?

Only Captain Cary Montalvo looked at the platoon they'd assigned him and asked the question for real: Why *was* this man here?

Because clearly Cameron Light-Astor didn't need to subject himself to the rigors of Phantom training nor the indignities of military service. He didn't need to camp in the mud or dig latrines, didn't need to brush horses or carry a pack. And yet, here he was, doing those things, without fanfare or complaint. Cary watched how hard this young man worked and came to see that he did it because he wanted to. Because it was the right thing to do, and because he could help more with one patrol than with all the lavish parties he could host. His family didn't understand him, and for a time, his new platoon-mates didn't either.

Captain Montalvo watched this young man keep working and smiling, even in a platoon that hated him. This golden boy, undimmed in a dark place. "Light", Cary started calling him. Because of his name, obviously. But also not.

With Cary's respect and inclusion, the platoon took another look at Light. He was good at nearly everything but modest and happy to teach. Generous. Friendly. Even easier to like, it turned out, than he'd been to hate.

The barracks full of new recruits was years ago. Lieutenant Cameron Light-Astor could have risen high in the ranks based on nepotism or skill. His family can't understand it, but as long as Cary Montalvo was a Phantom, Light would serve under him.

Even the brightest of lights doesn't matter if no one sees it.

Lieutenant Umberto (Shadow) Dunn -- Ben Warren

pessimistic, grim, persevering

The nickname was inevitable, really. Light had been assigned a top bunk - because of course he had - and what else were they gonna call the guy glowering there in the bottom bed?

Shadow has never met a glass that isn't half empty. A glass that likely has a chip, and may well be poisoned. He's never seen a curtain that doesn't have a dagger behind it. He sees the worst of every situation. Ambushes. Double-crosses. Destruction. Death.

For many people, this is exhausting: a constant accounting of problems both real and imagined. But when you're moving mercenaries through a dangerous pass, when you're calculating supplies for a long march, when you're strategizing a raid on a bandit stronghold, you aren't looking for optimism. You're looking for the person who can see where things might go wrong and have a plan to make thing right again.

Because Shadow - Lieutenant Umberto Dunn, to give him his hard-earned title - may only be right 1% of the time. But that 1% has saved countless lives. He's not like this because he's cynical; he's like this because he feels that this is how he makes things better.

Well, and because he's cynical.

But if you look closely - like, Cary-Montalvo-closely, there's something else you'll notice about Shadow: he sees every possible grim outcome at the start of a mission. Every way they could fail. Every way he could die. And then he suits up and goes in anyway. There is a dark and determined courage to Shadow. He's not going away.

Just like the nickname: inevitable.

Al Bishop -- Jeff Anderson

earthy, hearty, confident

His better half Noreen - may she rest in peace - died young, so for a whole long time it was just him an' his little girl. Belly Bean, he calls her. Smart as a whip, that one, and that's the truth! Got it from her mom, of course. Big Al's just a plumber. That is, he *was* a plumber. He's retired now, so don't come crying to him if your crapper's backed up!

So, funny story: did he ever tell you how he's actually an ordained keeper? It was the damndest thing. Back when he was in the service - just a Private No Class, not like his hotshot future son-in-law - his file had been tossed on someone's desk. Prob'lly he was in trouble for something. Anyway, they'd needed a Padre to conduct a service and someone saw the name on his file. It was the Army, so

of course anything that could get effed-up would, right? There his name was on the file: BISHOP COMMA ALBERT. The mucky-muck in charge saw that and said "Oh, a Bishop! That'll do nicely!" And that's how Al found himself suited up holy and running the service! Afterwards, his C.O. was so embarrassed about the snafu that he'd gotten Al ordained all official-like. Standard Army protocol, right? Change reality rather than admit you screwed up. Typical!

Big Al Bishop is loud and crass and forgetful. He doesn't listen as hard as he should. He makes bad jokes and passes gas as though it's a competitive event. And.

He loves his daughter more than anything in the world.

Irena Montalvo -- Jo Agostinelli

serene, wavy

She was certain, back 55 years ago when she was pregnant and wandering dreamily through fields of wildflowers, that the universe would give her a little girl.

Irena was never married, a free spirit then and now. She glowed, dressing herself in the colors of the sunrise and weaving daisy chains to wear as crowns. She knew without a shadow of a doubt that she carried a daughter, someone with her fine bones and bright eyes, and that it would be just the two of them, kindred feminine spirits. And then, because the universe has a sense of humor, it handed her a baby boy, solemn and brilliant and fierce.

Not just a boy, but, ultimately, a soldier. A soldier! From her, she who breathes and embodies the deepest and most profound peace!

Once, late at night, when he was first on leave from the Phantoms, she gave voice to her confusion and fear and despair. "You kill people," she said. It was not a question.

Cary walked over to her, and took her hands in his own. "Mom," he said. "I save people."

From that point on, Irena despaired no further. She continues dressing as she always has, like the queen of a race of desert elves, in gauzy raiments that flutter when she walks. She not only uses words like "mindfulness" and "holistic" and "zen", but she understands them so well she teaches others. She is independent minded and ethereal and, yes, a bit otherworldly. And.

She loves her son more than anything in the world.

Phyllis Fieri -- Vanessa Robb

frizzled, overcommitted

If she can just get through this week, then everything's going to get a lot easier.

It sounded like such a great idea when Phyllis first heard about it: a magical service that lets you rent your unused property to visitors: FireWaterEarthAirBnB. Extra income for basically no effort! She and Steve have that vacant house in Rosedale, and with Emma starting up gymnastics they can for sure use the extra income, so this was a no brainer. Except that "basically no effort" has turned out to be "actually quite a lot of effort, and all on Phyllis' part."

Especially this week. Not only does she have a million other things to do, but somehow the FireWaterEarthAir people accidentally booked not one but *two* guests into the Rosedale house. That's right: a man named Al Bishop and a woman named Irena Something, both of them with totally valid contracts for the same space for the same time. There's nowhere else in town available right now, so Phyllis is trying to make this work for both of them.

And of course Tyler has strep throat and now Emma says her ear hurts. Dammit, she just remembered she was supposed to take Bear in for his shots! Shit, shit, *shit!*

Okay. Deep breaths. She can do this. She has run a strip of masking tape down the center of the Rosedale house and (hopefully politely?) informed both her renters that they'll just have to stay on their own sides. Except that this Irena woman is asking about hot-yoga classes in the area and for some reason Al Bishop wants to know if he can get "a whole lot more towels." Dear gods.

After this week it gets a *lot* easier.

Tavernkeepers & staff

Solomon Stillwater -- Nadav Barkae

stalwart, entertained

Before he became an innkeeper, Solomon Stillwater was a sailor, and long before working his way up through the ranks to serve as captain of the schooner *Grey Lady*, there was one moment, very early after he took to the sea, that neatly sums up who Solomon is:

He was probably about 14, and along with a motley crew of other young boys, he was being lectured by a wizened old sea captain about what mattered on the deck of a ship. "Strength doesn't matter so much", the man told them. "You'll all get strong in time, if you

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stick with it, but even the strongest man isn't near strong enough to raise a sail on his own. What *does* matter is you need to be smart, and you need to be spry..."

"Bad luck for you, Brick," one of the boys laughed at Solomon. That was their not-terribly-kind nickname for him, because while he was bright, he was not book-smart or smart-alecky like some of them, and while he tried his best, he would never be as dexterous or as fast as many of them.

Just then, a much-larger wave sloshed against the ship, and the deck tossed and bucked like a thing possessed. Boys stumbled and fell, many of them knocked almost overboard. And when the pitching had subsided a bit, only two were left standing: the old captain, and the boy they called Brick Stillwater.

"...but more than anything," the captain finished, "you need to just keep standing. Not much else matters if you can't do that." And here Brick smiled his wry smile, because this was what he *was* good at: no matter what life threw at him, no matter how rough the seas, he just kept standing. Stalwart and strong, a force to be counted on and, if need be, to be reckoned with.

This quiet inner strength and self-deprecating sense of humor serve Solomon well in his new life as innkeeper. The storms here are metaphorical ones, but they arise just the same in a village tavern staffed with more than its fair share of strong personalities. He never misses the sea. Why should he, with his lovely bride – who sometimes calls him Brick as a pet name – to ride beside him and weather the storms?

Bonnie Stillwater -- Julie Gruszynske

friendly, hospitable

Friendly Solomon Stillwater is popular in his adopted village of World's Edge, but it is Bonnie whom the villagers love the best. And why shouldn't they? She is a warm and welcoming presence in the tavern, comfortable with regulars and strangers alike. Besides the excellent food and ale served there, Bonnie's smile and easy manners draws customers to the Inn at World's Edge and many townsfolk now head to the tavern when they are hungry for companionship more than food.

The consummate hostess, Bonnie is concerned with every aspect of everyone's visit. Is the food too salty? Is the room too warm? Can she bring anyone another drink? Bonnie's concern for her customers extends to their own lives outside the tavern as well. If it's slightly chilly out, she hates to see anyone leave without a hat. If someone has mentioned difficulty with a spouse or concern over a late mortgage payment, Bonnie is certain to gently inquire when she sees the person next. Is everything all right? Is there anything she can do to help? For some innkeepers, doing this would be a matter of good business sense, but for Bonnie, it is just second nature.

So solicitous is Bonnie of her guests that most people hardly notice that, although she is always inquiring about them and their needs, she almost never speaks of herself. She has little to say of her past, and in truth, people know hardly anything about Bonnie's history, except that she grew up near the coast of Keer. Some townsfolk speculate that the village she was raised in must have been a cold and unfriendly one, for when the Stillwaters first arrived in World's Edge, Bonnie was often heard to exclaim in amazement over the kindness of the villagers.

How nice, then, that Bonnie has managed to find a place which suits her so well. Solomon is often seen in the bar gazing at his wife with wonder and pride. It's hard to remember that the Stillwaters have lived in World's Edge for only two years, so well have they adapted to life in their new home.

Pansy Golden -- Henny Admoni

tart, (a little) resentful

What is your earliest memory?

Perhaps it's a happy one. Your 4th birthday, perhaps. Or maybe it's less festive, like when you were 6 and broke your arm. Regardless of whether it's a pleasant recollection or not, one thing is likely: it's a memory of you. That's understandable, of course. We are each the most important person in our lives. Usually.

Pansy Golden's earliest memory is of standing in her mama's kitchen, watching as her sister Poppy manifested magic for the first time. On that day, a lot of things happened in rapid succession, and it was hectic enough that it wasn't until that night when 5-year-old Pansy asked, "When will I get magic?" Her mama was tired, and maybe that's why she didn't put much care into her answer: "Oh, you probably won't ever."

It wasn't a gently worded answer, but it wasn't wrong. Pansy is 29 now. And she hasn't ever gotten magic. Unlike her older sister, she's not magical or special.

Instead, Pansy works in the tavern and occasionally cleans houses to make extra money. None of the Valerius siblings have ever given her hand-me-downs. Evelyn has never come rushing in to ask her opinion on an important matter. No one thanks her for keeping the town safe because, of course, she cannot do magic or anything else of significance.

That doesn't mean Pansy doesn't matter, of course. People call out to her all the time. If they need more bread, maybe. Or something gets spilled.

Or if they need to know where Poppy is.

Sigh.

Ned Crochett -- David San Clemente

grumpy

Not long after the Stillwaters came to World's Edge, Solomon made a comment about Ned being a crankypants. Bonnie, having never heard this expression, took it literally, and because she is Bonnie, she made Ned a new pair of pants, thinking this would lift his spirits.

It did not.

Solomon explained to his bride - and to his hopefully-not-permanently-offended employee, that the comment had merely been a joke.

Here, in no real order, is a partial list of things that irritate, bother or vex Ned Crochett: Jokes. Being sung to. Being sung near. New things. Loud things. Rain. Pollen. Most customers. Pants. People who mumble. Food that's too hot. Food that's too cold. Months March through September. Anything sticky.

Despite this lengthy-and-yet-incomplete list, Ned Crochett means well. He is glad to have his job in the tavern, one he's had for years now, and it's important to him that customers be served promptly and correctly, even when the harsh realities of customer service are all too apparent.

He is a good friend to have, even if he's not a chipper one.

Scarlet Billows -- Gretchen Albright

volatile, belligerant

Back before the Stillwaters came to World's Edge, the tavern was owned by another Keer native, Scarlet Billows. Everyone in town agrees that Solomon and Bonnie are a tremendous improvement over the Inn's former owner.

Scarlet's bad points include (but are not limited to): she was mean-spirited and prone to outbursts of temper when sober, and became even more cruel and belligerent when drunk. She was lazy and uninterested in keeping the tavern even minimally clean. And she was too cheap to pay for adequate candles, replacement table linens and the like, adding to the general dark squalor of the space.

After 5 long years of running the bar, Scarlet decided she wanted to sell it. This was probably her only popular action in the entire time. Scarlet spread word back in Keer, which is how the Stillwaters heard about World's Edge in the first place.

Thankfully, that's the last anyone has seen of Scarlet. It's hard to imagine why she's even written up here at all...

Other Residents

Obsidian -- Brian Scassellati

crotchety, wise

When he was only in his thirties, Obsidian's wife and two young daughters were murdered by Wolven, that vicious band that inhabits the nearby Wild Lands. Now 80 and High Priest of World's Edge as well as a keeper of Winter, Obsidian has never lost his intense hatred of the outlaws and he is still a ferocious opponent with a sword.

Despite his great desire to rid the land once and for all of these criminals, Obsidian has not allowed his anger to turn him bitter or disillusioned. Although his curmudgeonly manners are finely honed, most everyone sees through this facade to the wise and honest man within. He is the confidante of countless people in the town, but their secrets are kept closely guarded, and he speaks only gentle words of advice to those troubled souls who seek his counsel. He embodies both sides of Winter: the clear and cutting ferocity of icy winds, and the forgiving peace of a soft snowfall. He is possibly the most respected and loved figure in the barony.

Electra -- Abigail Vargus

fierce

You've heard of social justice warriors? They pale before a social justice keeper.

Forget the image you have when you hear "keeper", of a serene cleric ensconced in a opulent sanctuary, meditating on the divine. Those people exist, of course, but they have little in common with Electra.

Electra serves the poor and the oppressed, the dispossessed and the downtrodden, and if she limited her actions to this alone, probably she would be called a saint. Instead, she's actively agitating, always asking uncomfortable questions: why are these people poor? When will their possessions be restored? Who is oppressing them? And what are we doing to fight back?

And she is practicing, always, what she preaches. When riots broke out in the slums of Lower Delta, Electra was there. And yes, she healed people who went back to throw an additional punch or bottle or brick. What of it? Autumn called her to minister to those in need, which in that sordid area of Uri-Kesh was assuredly not the wealthy landlords.

It's not impossible Electra has thrown a punch or two herself, especially if there was someone weaker who needed defending. Her faith and her practice burn fiery red like Autumn's flaming leaves, and if her words are sometimes sharp and her temper is occasionally quick, it is only because her heart burns warm as a November hearth, welcoming all - even and especially the needy stranger - to the feast.

Crabtree and Evelyn -- Melissa Crouch Chang and Kim Ricket

contentious, affectionate

Until a year ago, Evelyn was an avowed spinster who spent her evenings doing find-a-word puzzles and talking to her cats. Crabtree had always been a moody loner. But one night, on a whim, Crabtree placed an ad in the Western Moreth Weekly describing her love of sunsets and long walks on the beach. It expressed her desire to meet a compatible single for "friendship, romance, possibly more." Not knowing the ad had been placed by a woman from her very own village, Evelyn answered the ad, and the rest, as they say, is history.

To be clear: Crabtree despises walks on the beach. Fortunately, Evelyn does too, suffering as she does from a pronounced sand allergy. Since there are not actually any beaches in World's Edge, this hardly matters. After only a month of dating, Crabtree purchased a ring, an enamored Evelyn rushed into her arms, and the pair were married shortly thereafter.

Although their union has existed for only a short time, Crabtree and Evelyn have the appearance of a long-married couple... in the sense that they bicker nearly constantly. Evelyn disparages Crabtree's ability to select a matching outfit; Crabtree criticizes Evelyn's newest hairstyle. Crabtree calls Evelyn a loudmouth; Evelyn retorts that Crabtree is an imbecile. Most people in town understand, though, that the marriage is a strong one. Evelyn and Crabtree always make up quickly and affectionately, and even when they *are* squabbling, one gets the sense that they are both enjoying themselves immensely. In an odd way, they really do seem made for each other.

Together, the two have decided to fill an important void in World's Edge. They have set themselves up as a one-stop-shop for casters and keepers who need ritual components in order to renew their spells or prayers. It's true that raised voices are often heard emanating from their little store – Evelyn (an air caster) asserts that Crabtree's money-management abilities are almost non-existent ("From now on, I handle the money! Got it? And no more accepting chickens as payment!") while Crabtree (a keeper of Spring) complains that Evelyn's customer-service skills are sorely lacking ("I've seen Worlogs with better manners! Just let me do the talking, okay?") – but the couple is always seen happily cuddling together afterwards. And the shop is so conveniently located!

Buzzkill -- Alex Sheehan

deflated, (formerly) far out

It's a great name, right? He was super stoked, when he came up with it. Because it's got all the fun, y'know, of a BUZZ. And then all the toughness of the KILL part. BUZZKILL! Badass, but also like you want to party with him, right?

It turned out to be kinda spot-on, though. Bummer.

Because here's the thing: okay, obviously he didn't want the world to end. That would suck, right? Back when he first heard people talking about a coming apocalypse, obviously he was on Team No Thank You, okay? Duh. Obviously.

See, back then - when he was also working for Crabtree and Evelyn, both great ladies, of course, although maybe the job wasn't, like, the *most* exciting thing ever - he heard people saying that some seriously bad stuff was gonna go down. And like everyone, he thought, "Whoa. That's messed up."

But then he'd hooked up with those cultist-folks, and they were, like, a seriously great buncha dudes. Real positive, real good energy, and who doesn't want to wear black leather and all that? That's when he'd given his notice to good ol' C & E, got himself a gnarly new look and started calling himself Buzzkill. Yeah! Not gonna lie, it was all pretty great! No need to get up early or eat healthy or whatever because yo yo yo, it's the End! Of! Days!

Except it, y'know, wasn't.

The day all the bad stuff was supposed to go down was... just a day. And they all thought "Okay, cool. Musta got the date wrong. Tomorrow, for sure." But nothing happened. Not the next day or the day after that.

And although some of 'em are still hangin' on in Greystone Clearing, and props to those dudes, but... if the world's gonna not end, then some of us gotta, like, bring in a paycheck, y'know? Crabtree and Evelyn were real stand-up about it all, gave him his old job back and all. Let him wear the black leather he'd spent so much on, even started calling him by his super-cool new made-up name. Although not gonna lie, he's wondering if he maybe oughta just go back to being called Hank Stephenson.

Buzzkill.

Bailey -- Blake Geno

loving, curious

Who's a good boy? Bailey is! Oh yes he is! Oh yes he is!

There are plenty of people in World's Edge who seem different. Sometimes, this can be off-putting, even unpleasant. Bailey seems different from other people, but in the very best way possible.

That's because Bailey hasn't been human long. Up until five months ago, Bailey was a dog.

Most dogs love humans, and Bailey was no exception. He hung around the Roamer camp, belonging to no one but really to everyone, happily accepting the handouts that came his way. But the way he watched the humans in the camp... it was more than with a dog's open-hearted love, more than waiting for the next handout. There was a hunger in his eyes that was not for food. One day, Esmerelda squatted down beside his, staring, her dark eyes into the dog's own. She held motionless for a long time, staring, Seeing, and when at last she stood up, she said "That dog wants to be human."

Most of the Roamers scoffed at this, but Aleeya Witchborn rummaged through her bottles of tinctures and elixirs. Finding the thing she sought, she poured it into a bowl and placed it on the ground. "I don't know if I believe her, Dog. But if that's not what you want, this won't do anything to you. Probably." The dog lapped up the contents of the little bowl and then padded off into the woods.

When Bailey came back out of the woods, he moved gingerly. He was unaccustomed to carrying himself on only two legs, and his newly-soft feet and newly-bare skin were tender. Esmerelda looked at him. The big dark eyes were the same. "That dog's back," she said. "Somebody oughtta get him some clothes, though."

Now Bailey is part of the town, a real human member of it. He wears clothes and shoes and sometimes he remembers to use the forkstick instead of more efficiently lowering his mouth to the food. He is so so so happy to be a human. He is so so so grateful to Esmerelda and Aleeya.

In his heart – which is most of him – he is still a dog.

Brimstone -- Zak Terry

doting, mercurial

Brimstone is an imp, and this is his story: High in the hills above World's Edge sits a crumbling stone castle, the lair of a nefarious sorcerer named Maledicto. Maledicto summoned corrupt creatures from all varieties of evil dimensions and kept them in his castle as minions. Brimstone was just one of these nasty beasties, and he served his wicked master right up until this past spring, when Maledicto died. At that instant, the summoned creatures disappeared back to their own cursed dimensions... all except Brimstone.

Brimstone was left alone in the crumbling castle. It occurred to him that he now had no master. He himself could be the master, and could collect minions of his own! He came down out of the hills.

When he did, he chanced upon a woman. Brimstone would later learn that this type of woman was called a Bonnie, but he didn't know that yet. This woman, he thought, would be his very first minion! "You look hungry," the woman said. "Do you want half my sandwich?" No one had ever offered Brimstone a sandwich before, and he was so hungry. He walked alongside the woman. It was a very good sandwich.

Soon, they encountered a man. "This is Dimitri," the woman told him. And then turning to the man, she said, "This is my friend Brimstone."

Well! Brimstone had never had a friend before! A friend was almost as good as a sandwich, and longer lasting!

Brimstone made a decision right then. He didn't actually want minions. He wasn't certain what he would order them to do anyway; it sounded needlessly stressful. But friends! Friends would be very nice to have!

Brimstone would stay in the little village. He would serve the people of the village just as he had once served Maledicto, except that now he was serving out of love rather than fear.

Brimstone is only a small imp, but even a small imp commands incredible amounts of chaotic magic. Occasionally. A lot of the time, even a large imp can't do much of anything. But when the chaos magic fills him, Brimstone is very powerful indeed. He doesn't know when that will be, but it happens. Occasionally.

And when it does, he will use his awesome powers to serve his friends in the little village.

What could go wrong?

Eugenie Bright -- Charlotte Wilson

devoted, genuine

There are some people who, for good or ill, make a large and obvious mark on the world. You see them, and you see the effect they have. For lack of a better term, we could call these people protagonists.

And then there is another class of people who, if you were not watching closely, might appear not to be making a mark. They are, though. Just not as directly. These are the people who are having an impact, not so much directly on the world itself, but rather on other people. There's really no good word for these people. Perhaps we should call them our supporting characters.

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Precious few of those people support others as well as Eugenie Bright does.

When you get introduced to Eugenie, probably someone will say “She’s Theodora Bright Davies’ sister.” And now, because Dora died almost a year ago and a little reminder might be warranted, people will add “You remember: Diamond Dora Bright! The dancer! This is her sister.” And you surely do remember Diamond Dora, even if you never personally saw her perform. Probably you don’t know that it was Eugenie who sewed costumes for Dora, Eugenie who contacted theaters to set up shows, or Eugenie with her same-sized feet who wore her sister’s fancy dance shoes around the house to break them in. It was, though. If Dora were here, she’d tell you how nothing she ever accomplished would’ve been possible without her sister’s love and support and talent and work. Of course, that’s not possible now. Dora isn’t here.

Eugenie has been left behind, but she is still taking care of others. She dotes on her nephew Edwin, even if he is too busy to notice or thank her. She cares for everyone who enters her orbit, and in that way, she is making a mark on the world. Even when the world is too busy to notice or thank her.

Edwin Davies -- Nils Klinkenberg

sanctimonious, respectable

This has obviously been a sorrowful year for Edwin Davis, having lost his dear mother last fall. He himself is still wearing mourning black, as is only right. Although the Rites of Remembrance is clearly an important part of the liturgical calendar, Edwin will be glad when this painful reminder of his mother’s passing is behind him.

His mother, Mrs. Harold Davies - *née* Theodora Bright - was a lovely woman, even if she was occasionally prone to... well, *fanciful* decisions on certain matters. Edwin himself favors a more traditional lifestyle. It is our willingness to abide by polite society’s customs that sets us apart from the animals, is it not?

The list of topics which Edwin would prefer not to discuss includes but is not limited to: his mother’s career as a dancer before her marriage to his father, his mother’s return to dancing professionally after his father’s death despite her advanced age, his aunt’s insistence on holding a séance to contact his deceased mother, his aunt’s inadvertent summoning of a demon at said séance, any aspect of his mother or aunt’s eccentric behaviors or lifestyles, and/or his own rapid spending of his inheritance.

Thank you for respecting Edwin’s privacy at this difficult time.

Aria Morgan -- Diana Galanakis

intense, earnest

If you care anything at all about theater, you know the name Morgan.

Often called the first family of the Lyrian stage, the Morgans have been acting for more than a century. None of them were as well-known as the handsome and charismatic Montgomery Morgan, who - along with his wife and fellow actor Delia - built the Morgan Theater in World’s Edge back in 905, nearly ninety years ago.

At the time, the Morg - as it was inevitably called - was the height of glamour, but over time, everything fades. People claimed that Montgomery and Delia’s ghosts - and the spirits of other former performers - still made their presence felt in the old building, and the Morgan came to be known as “the hauntedest theater in Lyria.” Although it was a far cry from its start as a playground for the rich and beautiful, this notoriety helped keep the Morg afloat even as audience size was waning. Eventually, however, the small amount of ticket revenue wasn’t enough to sustain the tired old building, and the theater was abandoned.

For the past year, Aria Morgan, one of the few remaining members of the dynasty, has been hard at work refurbishing the old theater. Aria has thrown herself wholly and completely into this project. It is a labor of love for her, a fitting tribute to her family’s legacy... or, rather, it was, until the whole thing burned down just this Thursday night.

If Aria was a passionate advocate for and devotee of the Morg’s many charms, she is even more ardent now that it has been cruelly stolen away from her.

Other Visitors

Bartleby Sprink -- Kevin Kulp

ostentatious, showy

This will doubtless come as a surprise, but Bartleby Sprink wasn’t born to a life of effluence!

It’s true! He was a bricklayer, right up until he won the lottery! Bartleby and his wife Geneva had just learned they were expectorating a baby when it happened. 20 thousand royals anally for the rest of his life! Bartleby had wasted no stone unturned upgrading his and Geneva’s standardization of living: A new wardrobe of velvet and satan and silk! A mansion with not one but two moats! A gem-encrusted commode! This last one was 8,000 royals and so fancy it had to be fixed by a team of experts every time it broke down!

And of course, when their infinite daughter Angelica was born, Bartleby made sure that she was given the very best of everything: bejeweled rattles, ermine burp cloths, the whole kitchen kaboodle.

Now that she's almost all grown up, Bartleby's started to think about the grand wedding he'll throw for his little Angelica.

He'll do it up as only a Sprink can. A real extravagaranzo.

Geneva Sprink -- Jess Schoolman

opulent, privileged

The Sprinks are currently enjoying a kingdom-wide tour. It's been an opportunity to see the world and soak up the local culture, from luxury shopping and 4-star restaurants in Elsewhich to luxury shopping and 4-star restaurants in Dolorón!

La famille Sprink has been in World's Edge for two months now. Two months! Has it really already been so long? Yes, yes it has. Geneva herself feels they perhaps did not need *quite* this extended a visit in order to sample the culinary and cultural delights this region has to offer, but her darling Angelica has taken a liking to the quaintly picturesque World's Edge, and so for now, here they stay!

And what an adventure it has been! They have met so very many of the local population and learned more about the enchanting folk customs of the region! It almost makes one forget the lack of boutiques! Almost!

One hears about some lottery winners whose lives were upended by the sudden financial windfall, but rest assured that Geneva is *not* in this category. She took to her lavish new existence like a glossy pampered fish to rarified artisanal water. It is unclear Geneva even remembers she was not born to this life.

Geneva appreciates the finer things in life and, what's more, she expects them. *Now, please.*

Angelica Sprink -- Lane Daniels

coddled, oblivious, newly defiant

Angelica Sprink has recently learned a great many things.

Did you know that the food in the tavern - and possibly other places as well - grows in the ground or on bushes or inside animals? It's true! It's not even food at that time! You can't find an oatmeal tree or pluck a cheese sandwich from the ground, and nobody knows exactly how the plants and creatures turn into lunch and dinner.

Another new fact: many of the people Angelica sees everyday get paid to be there! This is not universally true; her mama and papa see her and do not receive any money for it. Samuelson, on the other hand, gets money every single day just because he has interacted with Angelica! This money comes from her papa, apparently. Solomon and Bonnie also get money, so theoretically Solomon pays Bonnie and Bonnie pays Solomon. This is called capitalism.

In addition to facts, Angelica is learning skills. She doesn't like to brag, but she can now lace her own boots despite being only sixteen. She has mastered hair brushing and teeth brushing, although she occasionally still chooses the wrong brush for these jobs. She can now cut her own meat but has been informed that cutting others' meat is generally frowned upon.

Perhaps even more surprising - and even less delightful - to her consternated parents, Angelica has suddenly discovered that she has *opinions* about things. She likes jelly but she does *not* like marmalade, as it is full of bits! Her favorite color is green! She is giving serious consideration to finding loud and/or high-pitched noises annoying!

And, now that she thinks about it, maybe she *does* like to brag! Yes! She thinks she does!

World's Edge is *such* an informative place!

Samuelson -- Mike Scandizzo

aristocratic, disapproving

If Samuelson may interject a personal factoid: his great-great-grandfather was butler to a Duke's daughter.

Samuelson himself grew up below-stairs in the Whittington mansion (the Rubyhill Whittings, it goes without saying.) Oh, what a merry childhood it was! Samuelson recalls with delighted pride the first time he was allowed to polish the Master's boots! He was four then, but Cook said he was polishing at a seven- or even eight-year-old level! His father was valet to the younger Theodore Whittington, and Samuelson had every reason to believe that someday he himself would serve Percy III.

But somehow, in the intervening years, so many of the mighty have fallen. Young Theodore had only daughters, embarrassingly enough. None of the families of the Whittington's circle had need of a servant of Samuelson's caliber. He was forced to go looking for employment. He was forced - this pains him to say - to the Sprinks.

To be very clear, Samuelson will only speak with this rude frankness when it has been a very, very long day. A day when the Master refers to a pair of liveried footmen as feetmen. A day when Madame Sprink requires him to carry about her small but ill-trained and

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odiferous dog. A day when Miss Angelica decides to wash her own clothing, which would be inappropriate enough were she not wearing said clothing at the time.

Such days are *painfully* common with the Sprinks.

The *Sprinks* are painfully common.

Not that Samuelson will say this aloud. But oh, he shall think it very, very loudly.

Bracken -- Rowan Scassellati

politely unyielding

The oldest residents of World's Edge remember a time when rogues and paladins roamed the land. Even those elders don't entirely know what to make of Bracken, this boy who seems half rogue and half paladin.

Some people are apt to give him a pass. After all, his grandfather Reynaldo, dead for more than a decade now, was a charismatic and respected resident for years. His own parents pre-deceasing his grandfather, Bracken was sent off to the Western Moreth Home for Children when Reynaldo died. So: an orphan, and one raised in the notoriously rough WMHC. That makes Bracken a target for either sympathy or suspicion, depending on who you are. His dirty face and much-patched clothes will only serve to intensify whichever of those reactions you have decided on.

No matter where you stand on his background and appearance, you rather can't help noticing that while Bracken isn't necessarily causing trouble, he's certainly... trouble-adjacent. If a Wolven raiding party is seen in town, chances are excellent that Bracken will be there as well. When Solomon locked his keys in the tavern, Bracken did... something... to the lock, and the door swung right open. And although most people aren't objecting nearly as loudly as her parents, everyone has noticed how much time he's been spending with the fabulously-wealthy Angelica Sprink.

And yet, despite the questionable optics of some of his actions, Bracken carries himself always as though he is beyond reproach. "I must insist you desist and vacate!" he'll announce to a group of Wolven... and when they don't, they meet the business end of his blade, which unlike his clothes is spotless. "With your permission, Mr. Stillwater?" he asked, before making short work of the padlock. And when Bartleby Sprink berates him and orders him away from Angelica, Bracken meets his angry gaze and says, calmly, "Respectfully, sir, I am unable to do that."

So. The hands of a rogue and the mouth of a paladin. How, exactly, is Bracken's heart?

Lincroft Spence -- Morgan Harris-Warrick

servid, desperate

In 991, Lincroft Spence published his first novel, entitled *Whatever*. To say that it became a sensation is an understatement.

Critics loved it. The general reading public loved it. People who don't read books bought it and read it and told their friends about it. Both "Ash" - the main character's name - and "Lincroft" experienced a surge in popularity as baby names. *Whatever* was made into a musical starring the acclaimed actor Derek Blade. It was translated into Tirothi, where the title was a word that roughly means "that which is nothing." Lincroft Spence made an amount of money that writers do not make, ever.

And then three years went by.

And all Lincroft Spence has to do is write another book.

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!

That is the sound in Lincroft Spence's head. All. The. Time.

Lincroft Spence has come to World's Edge, to Inspirations Unlimited. He sometimes picks up *Whatever* and reads a paragraph at random. It is so good. Where has he gone, the man who wrote these words? Lincroft Spence does not know. Maybe he will find that man, here in this little town at the edge of the world. Or maybe he will not. Maybe he will be a very rich man who wrote the greatest book of all time and then never wrote another.

Whatever.

Katherine Carmichael -- Marléna Soble

self-assured, daring

If you are - or were, in the last twentyish years - an adolescent girl, you know author Katherine Carmichael. Even if you aren't, there's a good chance you've heard of her slightly-fictionalized alter-ego Kit Carnage.

Not that you've actually read the books, of course. They're fine, probably, for children. For little girls. Probably some bored mommies here or there as well! You prefer real literature, of course, but the books are apparently popular.

Probably it's easy to see why. From what you've heard, this Carmichael woman hails from Sythwan, from one of those semi-lawless prairie towns. She's apparently a crack shot with a crossbow, orphaned at an early age, all of that, and the Kit Carnage books are a thinly veiled retelling of her own exploits.

The books sell well, apparently. Unclear who's buying them all; surely no one you know. People with daughters, no doubt. From the sound of it, the books are well-suited to impressionable little minds. Lots of action and adventure - fast horses, shoot-outs, etc. - but with a genteel cutaway when things get too gory. "And *that* was the last time he troubled the town!" sort of thing. Smart, really. No one wants little Susie or Jenny bawling all night because the bad book upset them!

Still, if this Katherine Carmichael knows which side her bread's buttered on, she'll start only sharing those exploits where the "villains" are true bad guys, not just someone who's offended her delicate sensibilities. There was a report about some father in... well, somewhere... calling for the books to be banned. He claimed Carmichael - and her Kit Carnage persona, of course - was a bad influence on his own little daughter. Said his Emmaline - probably 13 or so - had always been a model daughter, sweet and obedient, but that the books were making her mouthy and recalcitrant.

Maybe others are up in arms as well and that's why Carmichael's come to World's Edge for a little while? Carries herself like she's all that and a bag of chips, doesn't she? Still, it might be nice to tuck into some mindless fluff for a little while. Maybe you'll pick up one of her little stories.

Although if she's looking to build her fan base, would it kill her to smile once in a while?

Pearl Bryce -- Tricia Boynton

plucky, keen

Byline: World's Edge - The Wedding of Inventor Belle Bishop to Phantom Captain Cary Montalvo To Take Place Sunday!

And who's in town to be a bridesmaid in that very wedding (and also investigate all the goings-on in town as well?) None other than girl reporter Pearl Bryce!

Golly, Pearl's awful excited for this wedding! Belle's the best; she used to babysit Pearl back a million years ago! It's wonderful to see Belle again, and her dad Mr. Bishop, and check out her amazing invention the Bellaphone!

Not that Pearl herself has been sitting around much the past buncha years. She started out fetching coffee and sandwiches at the Lyrian Tribune, which was fine, except that she wanted to be a writer herself. It was pretty clear the guys at the Trib weren't gonna take her seriously unless she forced them to, so she did just that. She'd gotten herself committed to the Shannondale Asylum for the Disturbed, one of the most notoriously barbaric institutions of its kind, staying there 3 months before escaping. She'd emerged from the ordeal with a shaved head and a story good enough to make the Tribune sit up and take notice.

That was several years back, and now Pearl has her pick of plum assignments. Murder, corruption... you name it, Pearl's investigated it and lived to tell the tale! She's got a nose for news all right. Even right now, she came to see Belle tie the knot and found herself in World's Edge at the same time as her favorite author Katherine Carmichael! With *Resolve: The Kit Carnage Story* just about to celebrate its 25th anniversary, this is the perfect time for an in-depth article about Miss Carmichael!

Have no fear, intrepid girl reporter Pearl Bryce is on the case!

Vernon Gill -- Jim Vincent

petulant, difficult

You really need to feel bad for poor Vernon Gill.

No one in town's known Vernon for long, him only arriving on Wednesday, but even in that short time, most have heard his sad story: how Vernon was a career soldier, serving proudly up until ten years ago when - after an altercation outside a bar in Arden - Katherine Carmichael shot him twice, first in the forearm and then in the shoulder. Vernon survived the attack, but the crossbow shots - both to his dominant right arm - left him unable to continue his military career. People've heard, too, how after all this time, Vernon has finally succeeded in tracking his assailant down.

Katherine admits guilt in this case, saying she'll pay whatever the court mandates and serve the requisite prison sentence, so thankfully, Vernon will have both restitution and justice at last. Things are looking up for the former soldier at last.

Except that... goodness, he's still finding a lot of things to complain about.

The food in the tavern has been a constant disappointment to Vernon. His tea was much too hot and then much too cold. Also the climate in World's Edge... is it always this unpleasant? Is there not some sort of health code stipulating that a former *dog* ought not serve Vernon's lunch? And can someone *please* get those Anders to stop with that infernal playing?

It is, of course, very wrong to shoot someone with a crossbow. Twice. Even if you were probably provoked.

And you really need to feel bad for poor Vernon Gill.

And you're trying. Really. But... sigh.

Ember -- Mirin Scassellati

aloof, fickle

Ember is cooler than you'll ever be.

To be fair, that's not saying much. Look at you. Even if you were considerably cooler, you wouldn't be worth much of Ember's time. You don't know where she came from, when she arrived in town 6 weeks ago. Dolorón, did someone say? You asked Ember but she must not have heard you.

You're kidding yourself, obviously. She heard you.

What does it mean, that she's famous for being famous? How does that even work? Of course you don't understand, boring lame you. But that's what Ember is. An influencer. She'd been in town mere moments before everyone knew her name. She is effortlessly chic, and carries herself with a sophisticated careless grace. You don't know what that necessarily means, but for certain she does it.

Everyone watches her, admires her. And she doesn't care. Most of the time, Ember seems to wish everyone would simply leave her alone. They won't, though. How can they? She is beautiful and fascinating. Of course, when Ember *does* want attention, she wants it *then*. Which is fair. Small wonder she quickly grows disgusted with the fawning when it happens.

It's unlikely sleepy little World's Edge will satisfy Ember for much longer. Until she inevitably moves on, Ember's clothing and mannerisms will get copied by those who admire her. Will she notice this is happening? Maybe. Will she care? Almost certainly not.

Cal Coleman -- Ozzie Osborne

slick, pushy, amoral

Cal Coleman (of Coleman Associates) is an entrepreneur who's come to World's Edge to learn the secrets of Inspirations Unlimited, then streamline and reproduce this business model on a much larger scale. (*Nine* muses? Are you *kidding* him? Cal can replicate IU's success rate with three muses, *absolute* max.) Franchising, that's where the real money is.

Not that the IU crew are making it easy on Cal. Getting a straight answer from these people is like pulling teeth. Cal's got questions about overhead and profit margins and they're dicking him around with marketing BS about "nurturing the creative process" and whatever. Still, he's undaunted. He didn't get to be where he is today (top grossing enterpriser in the tri-duchy area for three years running!) without hustling, and now is no different. Once these amateurs got a load of Cal's custom-made suit and heard his can't-miss elevator pitch, they realized he meant business. They've been lining up to network with him, the muses and their clients as well.

Except... hotshot idea guy that he is, Cal hasn't yet managed to unlock the secret behind this whole inspiration gig. Obviously, there's some kind of stratagem in play here. The muses keep stringing him along with their doublespeak about "realizing and meeting the specific needs of each individual creator", like he's some yahoo who doesn't know a trick when he sees it.

But then he heard that secretary of theirs, Nemaia, saying something about a book. Cal asked about the book and Nemaia'd told him he couldn't look at it, so... bingo! Obviously that's the key to unlocking this whole scheme.

And as of yet Cal hasn't gotten Nemaia to show him the book and its corporate secrets. But don't worry, he will.

Cal Coleman is not a man who takes no for an answer.

the Companions

Clementine, Elvie & Urving -- Britt Rothauser, Christine Huebbe & Bill Sabram

Moreth is a strange place, but most of the rumors spread by people in other duchies are totally false. Two-headed tree sloths? Fictitious. Water running up hill? Fictitious. Treasure chests randomly appearing out of thin air? Well, that one actually does happen. Clementine, Elvie and Urving have proof.

Two years ago, cousins Clementine, Elvie and Urving were barely eking out a living on their tiny farm. The wind whistled through their ramshackle house and the cupboards were bare. Just when things were at their grimmest, the family discovered a treasure chest hiding on their turnip patch where yesterday there'd been nothing but wormy turnips.

Suddenly, everything changed. Forget the miserable little farm! Forget the turnips! The majority of the money was safely stashed away and the remainder was used to finance a kingdom tour for the delighted family.

Clementine, Elvie and Urving have only recently returned to World's Edge. They've seen the wonders the rest of the kingdom has to offer, splurging in most of the gift shops along the way. Now they're home again and realizing they've never really partaken of the cultural offerings of their own village. Why not use this opportunity to be tourists in their home town? What fun!

Nadia & Silla -- Sherry Rinell & Lori Nadig

Nadia is a Roamer from the World's Edge clan. "Not the sharpest quill on the porcupine," as Valentina once described the woman, Nadia is nevertheless friendly and well-liked. She adores stories of exotic, faraway places and the adventures that inevitably seem to arise in those locales. Despite the fact that she herself has spent more than two decades traveling from place to place, Nadia is still extremely gullible, and some practical jokers have been known to capitalize on this fact. There was the time Nadia tried to walk around on her hands to be "just like the Upside-Downer tribe of Uri-Kesh." And she still has nightmares about the dreadful mouselope, a man-eating rodent with antlers that roams the forests of Arden.

Silla is a woman with a dream. She is going to be a sailor, become captain of her own ship (and thus, metaphorically, of her own destiny as well.) She can envision herself, striding proudly across the deck, the sails catching the wind overhead. And Silla knows that if you believe firmly enough in your dreams, there's nothing that can stand in your way. Some people in town – and Silla loves World's Edge; she never plans to leave – even some normally kind, supportive people, have pointed out that it's hard to become a ship's captain in a landlocked duchy like Moreth. Silla is not dissuaded by these nay-sayers, nor by the people who suggest that her tendency towards motion sickness nor her hydrophobia might stand in the way of her fate. Silla believes in the power of her dreams!

Ari, Gloucester & Polo -- Susan Gerow, Steve Spodaryk & Amos Meeks

The Western Moreth Tribune, a bi-weekly mid-sized newspaper with a circulation of 25,000, features a host of different advice columns. There's "Ask Miss Amie", with advice for the lovelorn, and "Tips 'n' Tricks from Aunt Elly's Kitchen". There's "From the Stock Desk of Cash Worthington", "Clete's Straight-Talk Farm Answers" and "Bodecia's Boudoir Secrets", all of which are quite popular. But there isn't actually a Miss Amie, just like there's not an Aunt Elly or a Cash Worthington. What there is is Ari and Gloucester and Polo, three bosom pals and feature writers at the paper, who write answers to all the questions readers send in.

The problem, alas, is that the friends aren't actually experts on stock-trading or farming or... well, anything boudoir-related. About all they know is how to write for a bi-weekly mid-sized newspaper, and honestly they're really not even terribly great at *that*. But they're nice people, and their editor hated to fire them outright. Instead, he gave them each a month-long furlong with only one directive: go experience *something*. He's not sure what they'll do or what they'll learn from it, but anything would be more than they know right now, so he figures it's worth a shot.

Dodi, Keifer & Wade – Maisie Sturtevant, Bob Marriott & James Surano

Dude, you would not believe the colossally bone-headed move that brought Dodi, Keifer and Wade to World's Edge. For ages now, the terrific trio has been palling around on the beaches of P'loa. They had sweet boards and life was totally awesome.

One day, they'd overheard some dude talking about how bodacious the surfing was in Western Moreth. Say no more! They'd packed up their bags and headed off to World's Edge, which is as western as Moreth gets.

But – wait for it – it turns out the guy they heard was actually talking about serfing – like, being a serf? farming the land under a feudal system? – which is *totally* not their scene! D'oh!

Still, the trio are making the best of a bogus sitch. They're hanging in the tavern, seeing the sights, meeting the locals. Everything is copacetic here in the big W.E.

Plot Overview

The section covers both those elements of the plot that concern all participants and the time-specific structural/admin elements that keep the event moving forward.

Overarching Plot Elements

The participants will learn about these people and events through encounters described on various people's SE&C pages. Since you don't have that luxury, here they are:

The Rites of Remembrance

Every year, people all over Lyria take a week once the harvest is complete to pause and remember those they have lost, especially those who have died in the past year. This sacred time of looking back is called the Rites of Remembrance.

The rituals associated with this observance differ from region to region. In the western lands of Moreth, locals build way-shrines, tiny altars that are placed along thoroughfares. Each is dedicated to someone who has recently died, and within each one are candles and small remembrances of that individual: a scarf they always wore, a bottle of their favorite drink. Having these small but public reminders allows the grieving to share stories of their lost loved ones and hopefully serves to make those who died feel more present.

On Saturday, the final evening of the Rites, people in World's Edge will gather for Soul Speaking, since it important to share stories and accolades not just for the dead but for the living as well.

Note: while the Rites of Remembrance is a sensitive and loving tribute to those who have died, it may still be emotionally fraught for participants and staff who have lost someone. There is information on our website and registration form alerting participants of this subject matter so that they can make an informed choice if this storyline is one they wish to experience. Any staff who'd like some sort of accommodation with this plotline are encouraged to reach out to the Event Managers or Ombudspersons.

The Wedding of Belle Bishop and Captain Cary Montalvo

For the first time in Otherworld history, we're telling the participants right from the start: there'll be a wedding on Sunday!

Unsurprisingly, the small town of World's Edge is excitedly gearing up for the impending nuptials. The bride- and groom-to-be are both in their 50's; they have been together for a long time and everyone is eager for their wedding.

Both members of the couple are well-liked, both are brilliant and they are very much in love. Other than that, they could scarcely be more different.

Belle Bishop moved to town more than a decade before. A scientist and inventor, she is best known for her recent development of an instrument designed for the simultaneous transmission and reception of the human voice. This device allows users to conduct a conversation despite being in geographically separate areas. We are referring, of course, to the Bellaphone.

Although this technology has yet to become widespread, a few early adopters in town are proud owners of Bellaphones. Even without this feather in her cap, Belle is well known in town. She is an exuberant presence: impulsive, open, and whimsical.

Her groom is... not.

His name is Cary Montalvo, and he's just recently retired from the Phantoms. An elite corps of highly-trained soldiers, the Phantoms are called in when a diplomat is kidnapped or terrorists have taken hostages. Although Captain Montalvo's skill with a sword is noteworthy, it's as a strategist that he most excels. He is cautious, vigilant and dedicated, having spent his career orchestrating missions in which foolish choices mean lives lost.

A private and intense man, Cary lacks his fiancee's easygoing camaraderie, but even though he has only recently traded in his visitor status to become a resident, the people of World's Edge have a quiet but abiding affection for him. Part of this is surely due to Belle's evident adoration. But the townsfolk have also seen the scars that mark his face and arm, and they've heard the stories his lieutenants tell: in a dangerous situation, Captain Cary Montalvo is the last man out. He is circumspect with his own stories, but there is a deep sense of goodness about him.

Belle and Cary's lengthy courtship has not been without its bumps. (The fact that these bumps are all common knowledge is 100% due to Belle, who confides equally uninhibitedly in friends, acquaintances and strangers.) Two stories will prove relevant here:

The first concerns Cary's 50th birthday, an occasion he celebrated on a visit to World's Edge. Belle marked this milestone with a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday", not realizing that, for a special-forces soldier, becoming the sudden focus of attention is neither festive nor appreciated. At all. Belle promised never to publicly sing to Cary again, but knowing her tendency to get swept up in the moment, her friends remind her before each subsequent birthday.

The other noteworthy disagreement occurred on the evening of their engagement. What could be more romantic than matching tattoos? This was Belle's thinking, and she took every necessary step: choosing a design ("forever and ever"! Written over little matching hearts!), visiting local tattoo artist Jpeg, and getting her portion permanently inked. Every step, of course, except ascertaining that Cary was on board.

Cary was not on board.

Cary pointed out that tattoos are painful and that he has spent his entire career attempting to minimize pain. And so Belle sports a delicate tattoo on her wrist:

...and ever



while Cary's wrist remains notably uninked.

People in town have Opinions about this. But these can be left to the reader's imagination.

There are stories of other difficulties - of the time Cary waited in the rain for hours when Belle got so swept up in a project she forgot their date, of the time Belle was named Innovator of the Year, an honor Cary missed seeing because he was triple-checking the perimeter of the venue - but despite their hurdles and despite being such very different people, there is great love between the couple.

And on Sunday they will finally be married! The wedding will be quite a celebration. Although Belle is full of ideas, it is Cary who is planning the event. He has coordinated rescue missions and hostage negotiations. This is just one wedding. How hard could it be?

Inspirations Unlimited

There's an unusual business in town, and knowing about it is important to understanding this story. As of right now, it's not certain whether we'll have access to Lakeside Cabin. Even if we do, it may make sense for this establishment to be housed in Hillcrest in order to encourage foot-traffic through that area. Stay tuned for more information on this.

The business in question is called Inspirations Unlimited. It's essentially Rent-A-Muse. If you're a creative professional - or amateur, it really doesn't matter - and you find yourself unable to move forward on your next creation, Inspirations Unlimited can help.

There, you'll be matched with a muse who specializes in whatever arena you work. If you're a painter or sculptor, you can work with Aesthetika, muse of the visual arts. If your medium is dance, then Koreos is the muse for you. And if your specialty is something other than writing or cooking or gardening, music or theater or mechanical innovation, have no fear: there is still Miscellanea, the muse of Everything Else.

There is a financial charge for this service, but it's a nominal one. The additional requirement is that each client take part in an extensive interview conducted by the only denizen of Inspirations Unlimited who is not herself a muse: Nemaia.

Nemaia, who refers to all the muses as "my kids", is officially the establishment's Bookkeeper... in the most literal sense of the word. She has an imposing book with shimmering gold pages on which she records important elements of the stories each client shares with her as part of this application interview. After this process, if the applicant is deemed to be a good match who can benefit from a muse's services, this person is accepted as a client. The muses joke that although Nemaia takes notes in her golden book, that this is merely a formality because Nemaia's memory is unsurpassed.

As of right now, Inspirations Unlimited is the only business of its kind in all of Lyria, but that may be about to change. An entrepreneur named Cal Coleman has come to World's Edge to learn the secrets of the business and then streamline and reproduce the business model. Franchising, that's where the real money is, Cal insists. Cal hasn't noticed that no one at Inspirations Unlimited is concerned with turning a profit, nor would he understand this mindset if he did notice.

Justice Orion Wilde and the Upcoming Trial

In the large cities of Lyria, trials are held as needed in imposing courthouses and presided over by the judges assigned to that district. The small towns and villages of the land, however, aren't nearly large enough to warrant a permanent structure for trials or a dedicated judicial staff. For all of these provincial regions, there is a staff of itinerant justices who arrive in town, investigate and prosecute any crimes that have occurred since the last visit, and then go on their way. Orion Wilde is one such justice and he and his staff have arrived in World's Edge Friday morning to prepare for the trial which will be conducted on Sunday.

If a rubber-stamp were a man, that man would be Justice Orion Wilde.

It wasn't always this way. The prosecutor started his career as an idealist, a firebrand determined to bring justice to even the most remote of communities and to prosecute criminals even among Lyria's richest and most powerful citizens. But that was a long time ago. Years of slogging through bureaucratic nonsense have worn him down. Where he used to think real change was possible, he now

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realizes this is a pipe dream. Orion Wilde wants only to get done with this trial as quickly as humanly possible. He is focused on following the letter of the legal restrictions, lest any of his charges get flagged for insufficient compliance with regulations. Gods forbid he needs to come back to this sad little barony before at least a year has passed.

Justice Wilde's staff, including Celeste Wilde, his clerk and long-suffering wife, assure the parties that the prosecutor will of course still conduct a fair and proper trial. But they remember the time when he actually cared about seeing justice done, and they miss the man he used to be.

It is, of course, somewhat *unconventional* (and, some - ahem, Cary - would say, *inconvenient*) to hold a wedding and a trial in the same place on the same day. But Belle thought it would be exciting. Plus more people will be in town! The more the merrier!

About Last Night

When the parties arrive, they'll hear people talking about the Rites of Remembrance, the upcoming wedding and the trial. And yet all these topics of conversation are overshadowed by one pressing question: *why can't anyone remember the night before?*

The situation is this: No one in town, without exception, remembers what happened the night before. Thursday evening, from around 6pm till at least midnight, is a blank slate in the mind of every single person who was in World's Edge. And they don't know why.

Thursday night was our wedding couple's bachelor and bachelorette parties, so many people who awoke without memories understandably attributed this to alcohol consumption. But even people in town who drank nothing, as well as people who didn't even attend either party, have no recollection of Thursday night's events.

This odd happening appears to be limited exclusively to those who were in town. The Makai sect arrived in World's Edge on Friday morning, as did the prosecutorial staff, and all of them have clear memories of Thursday night. In addition, Lord Pascal West Valerius and his husband Santiago were away on official baronial business. They arrived home shortly after noon on Friday, and they, too, are able to remember the events of Thursday evening. But everyone who was in town, whether a resident or visitor, can remember nothing of that time.

Nothing like this has ever happened before. Some people are extremely concerned about this situation; others are less so. But even among the nonchalant, it's a big topic of conversation.

Friday evening

On this evening, eleven parties of adventurers arrive in World's Edge. They've each been sent on separate missions by people in their own duchies. As each party enters the adventure, they are escorted to the front door of the tavern. The Storyteller will read to them from his book and begin setting the mood. Then they step into the tavern...

As in the past, the parties enter one at a time. Each party has its own mission, each of which will require multiple steps and interactions with different villagers, and none of which will be complete-able until Sunday.

Contacts (starting 6 - 7pm)

Each party starts the weekend with a letter from an important person in their home duchy. This letter directs them to a certain person in World's Edge who can hopefully help them get started on their mission. This person is called their Contact. (The party *theoretically* knows to look for the Contact, but they often get excited and forget. The Contact doesn't have to pounce on the party immediately, but in the interest of keeping things moving on Friday, the Contact should call the party over if they've been in the tavern 15 minutes or so and haven't yet connected.)

When the party arrives, each Contact is sitting with their Companion, whom they've already met pre-adventure. We now serve a full dinner in the tavern. Each party will sit and eat with their Contact.

While the parties are eating, Phineas Smirch and Buzzkill both circulate through the room. Phineas has cards **PROP** that let people know the hours of the Smirch shop (9am – 7pm) whereas Buzzkill has cards **PROP** for Crabtree & Evelyn's (9am – 6pm.)

In addition, Kulinos is circulating with cards **PROP** for Inspirations Unlimited. These cards list the IU hours (9am – 4pm) and remind the parties that IU carries technomagical wand components. [Note: in some plots, staff from Lakeside set location gave out wand components in the tavern. Now that there's a wand piece in the Friday night Skeever loot-drop, this doesn't happen.]

In each case, the Contact makes conversation with the party and helps them start getting comfortable, but doesn't do an 'official' challenge. The Contacts also regretfully say that they can't actually help much with their mission. But they know someone who possibly can...

2nd Friday Encounters (starting 7:15 - 8:30)

Each Contact directs the party on to someone else, also in the tavern, who might be able to help. This is their 2nd Friday Encounter. When the party leaves their Contact, their Companion goes with them.

Like the Contact, the 2nd Friday makes conversation but doesn't do a challenge. And again, they can't do much to help with the mission. They do know someone who can... but that person isn't in the tavern right then.

3rd Friday Encounters / Friday Night Fight Coordinator – Peggy O'Connell / Combat (starting 8 – 9pm)

Each 2nd Friday Encounter is pretty certain they know someone who can help the party, but that person isn't in the tavern. In each case, the 2nd Friday finds someone who can be trusted to bring the party out to whatever place that helpful person is. The people who'll be escorting the parties out to these places are the 3rd Friday Encounters.

As of this writing, we *think* the Friday night combat locations are happening in slightly different spots than they normally do. Since everything with 4H construction is in flux, this will get decided later.

The parties don't know this, but they're each going to encounter a group of monsters as they walk to the set locations. To make sure each party gets a satisfying and challenging combat encounter (rather than all bunching up around the same three Skeevens) we have a Friday Night Fight Coordinator who'll coordinate releasing parties from the tavern. We're asking Peg to serve as the Friday Night Fight Coordinator for this plot. (Specifics of this job are on page 575.)

There are 3 monster groups out on Friday night, each of which is positioned to be encountered by 3 or 4 different parties. Before 3rd Fridays lead parties from the tavern, they need to check in with the F.N.F.C. This doesn't mean that two parties can't leave the tavern at the same time. But, for example, Elsewhich, Glendeep, Sythwan and Waylon are all encountering Skeever 1. It's fine if P'loa and Waylon leave the tavern at the same time, but not Elsewhich and Waylon.

As always, Companions (assisted by 3rd Fridays) should make sure that participants take all their stuff with them when they leave the tavern. Also, although we're not saying "You're going to be attacked!" participants should all head out with their items stowed (rather than in a big ball in their arms.) Lastly, because it bears saying, most of the set locations don't have bathrooms, so participants might want to use the tavern bathroom before leaving.

4th Friday Encounters (starting 8:15 – 9:45pm)

Each 3rd Friday brings that party to the assigned set location and then the 3rd Friday heads back to the tavern. In the set location, the party finds their 4th Friday Encounter. Friday night set locations are:

- Valerius house (2 parties)
- Roamer camp (2 parties)
- Gilded Way horse ring (in this plot, the camp of the Peacock Family Singers) (2 parties)
- Makai camp (2 parties)
- Crabtree & Evelyn's (in Hillcrest)
- Inspirations Unlimited (in Hillcrest)
- a Rosedale cabin (in this plot, an AirB'n'B currently housing members of the wedding party)

Unlike the other Friday encounters, the 4th Fridays actually do their challenges (although the party needs to succeed, so staff need to encourage/facilitate until this occurs.) Also, the 4th Fridays actually have useful mission-related information to give out! Each 4th Friday just happens to have a letter/page from a notebook/etc. sitting around listing the items that party will need. In addition, the 4th Fridays tell the party where they can get most of these (and insist the party write this info down!) It's *critical* that each party get both the letter and information on Friday night, so even if a party completely fails to mention their mission, the 4th Friday needs to draw the story from them and make this happen.

post-4th Friday (starting 9:30 – 10:30pm)

The Companion will give the party a heads-up that they've finished the scheduled part of the evening. Anyone who wants to is encouraged to head to the cabin. Participants who aren't ready to sleep – it needn't be the whole party – are welcome to come back to the tavern. If they wish, they can explore the camp, although there won't be any encounters for them. If any participants express interest in visiting other set locations, their Companion tells them they can't do this, because it's late and they're not invited (and in actuality because it will detract from another party's experience and/or keep staff out too late.) Although a party might encounter people on their party path in the tavern, none of these people will talk about those encounters until Saturday.

Now that scheduled portion of our evening ends so much earlier than it used to (yay!) we have more participants who'd like to do a bit more before heading to their cabins. Although participants are welcome to simply hang out and relax in the tavern, we now offer a few slightly more structured activities for those participants who'd like them. Parties don't need to stay together for this portion of the evening.

Sparring (Adina Valerius, Bane, Fenwick Michaels and Obsidian)

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Some parties often decide on their own to do some sparring, but we wanted to make sure that this opportunity was made available to any given participant, even if the rest of the party isn't interested in joining in. Obsidian and Adina can circulate through the tavern letting participants know that they'll be doing some sparring outside and that the participants are welcome to join in if desired. Other interested staff can join in, offering tips as warranted. Obviously, the focus here is on making participants feel comfortable about combat.

Singing (Charlie Peacock and another other Peacock Family Singers, plus additional staff as desired)

The staff can start a singalong on the porch of the tavern, after circulating and letting participants know they're welcome to take part. Although everyone loves the amazing vocal talent of the Otherworld staff, this isn't the time for virtuoso performances. We want to stick mostly to renditions of well-known songs and create an atmosphere where people don't have to be great singers to feel comfortable joining in.

Card Games (Solomon Stillwater, Malachi and Ned Crochett)

We can have several decks of cards and poker chips **PROP** available in the tavern, and if participants are interested, Solomon Stillwater, Malachi and Ned Crochett can get a game or two going. Staff shouldn't allow gambling for royals, since the last thing we want is a party being upset because one of their members has already lost the party's breakfast funds.

If all goes as hoped, the tavern will shut down at 11:00 or shortly thereafter. (!)

The Bellaphones

Although they aren't the focus of any big scenes, the Bellaphones **PROP** are a notable presence around town. There are Bellaphones in the Valerius House, Inspirations Unlimited, the Prosecutor's Pavilion and the tavern.

The Bellaphones are largely silent, although the one in the tavern rings very occasionally. When it does, it is always answered by Solomon Stillwater and is exclusively a never-identified young boy asking for patrons such as Hugh Jass, Seymour Buttz and Jacques Strap. The normally-jovial Solomon is less than amused.

Things to Talk About

On Friday evening, the first priority is making sure that parties find their Contact / 2nd Friday / get out to their set location to get the information they'll need to start their party path. Some of you have also been assigned specific information to mention on your SC&E page. So long as that's going smoothly, here are some other conversational tidbits you can pass along:

The Rites of Remembrance - The week-long Rites are celebrated all over Lyria as a time to honor and remember the dead, especially the recently deceased. Here in World's Edge, the way-shrines along Valinor's Path/Topsy Row serve as a reminder of those who've passed away in the last year. The Rites will conclude on Saturday night with Soul Speaking.

The Trial - On Sunday, itinerant Justice Orion Wilde and his staff will hold a trial to address any crimes that have been committed in the village in the past year. The justice is known to be fair but also to seek the most rapid conclusion to the proceedings as possible.

The Wedding - Once the trial is concluded, everyone in town will celebrate the marriage of inventor Belle Bishop and former special-forces Captain Cary Montalvo. Although the bride and groom are very different, they are very much in love and everyone is excited for their wedding.

The Unexplained Memory Loss - No one who was in town on Thursday evening can remember anything about that time, and no one knows why. Although people are of course speculating about what might have caused this bizarre situation, please don't speculate too hard in any one direction lest we introduce confusing red herrings. We'll talk more about how to do this during the Staff Briefing!

the shops – The Smirches' shop will be open tomorrow from 9am – 7pm, and Crabtree & Evelyn's will be open from 9 – 6pm.

the Wolven – Here in World's Edge, which borders the infamous Wild Lands, the Wolven are a constant threat. [NOTE: if possible, please DON'T mention specific Wolven Captains to the party, since this is likely to trigger the travelers' lore, which we're hoping to save for Saturday. If you forget, it's not the end of the world, but do try.]

Saturday 8:30 am

The Poster

Before the tavern opens, a poster **PROP** is hung up on a wall there, saying "I have received word of yet another attack by the Wolven, this time on a farmhouse to the south of town. Reports indicate that Morgoth himself may have been present at this attack, but this is unconfirmed (and would be unlike Morgoth.) Anyone with information about this matter is asked to speak to me. Thank you, Baroness Adina Valerius" (This will serve mostly to trigger the travelers' lore.)

1st Saturday Encounters

On each party path, someone who's on that path will approach the party at breakfast. These people are the 1st Saturday Encounters.

Each 1st Saturday will seek out their party before they leave the tavern. This can be phrased as “So, Person X (the party’s 4th Friday) mentioned that you need Item Y? They say they gave you a letter about it? I *do* have a Y! Once you’re done eating breakfast, why don’t you come back to my [set location] and I can get it for you?”

Our goals with the 1st Saturdays are to spread the parties out around the camp and to remind them about their mission and list of needed items. 1st Saturday set locations are:

- Valerius house
- Roamer camp
- Makai camp
- Smirches’ shop
- Crabtree & Evelyn’s
- Inspirations Unlimited (Hillcrest)
- Air B’n’B in Rosedale
- Peacock Family Singers camp (horse ring)
- post-apocalyptic compound (Greystone Clearing)
- Prosecutor’s pavilion (Overlook Hill)
- Inn at World’s Edge

Like all the Saturday encounters, the 1st Saturday does their challenge with the party. Unlike with the 4th Friday, the party doesn’t need to succeed at this encounter immediately.

At the end of the encounter, the 1st Saturday says “So, where are you headed next?” Up until this point, the party path has been largely staff-lead, and we want to signify that it’s now time for them to make their own choices.

Ongoing Encounters

There are a number of encounters that all/most participants will be having, beginning on Friday night, which are critical to moving this story forward. They are as follows:

The Makai and the Cup of Insight

Beginning with the parties who goes to the Makai camp for their 4th Friday and continuing all Saturday, the Makai will be doing their Cup of Insight ritual with all the parties. As is always the case, all the parties need to have done the ritual before 4pm. Wandering staff characters are welcome to visit the Makai but shouldn’t participate in the ritual.

The only exception to this rule is that our soon-to-be-wed bride and groom, Belle Bishop and Cary Montalvo, have participated in the Cup of Insight. This doesn’t happen “on-screen”, but the Makai might want to mention it to at least some of the parties. [This will only matter later, because aspects of the 8pm/10pm scenes are easiest if these two characters understand that the world has changed.]

Brimstone

Even in World’s Edge, home to more than its fair share of odd individuals, Brimstone stands out as unusual.

Brimstone is an imp, and until recently, he was just one of the many unholy minions of a foul sorcerer named Maledicto. Upon Maledicto’s death, Brimstone came down from the crumbling stone castle in search of minions of his own. Instead, he found kindness in the little village of World’s Edge, and he is now fiercely devoted to all his new friends.

Like all imps, Brimstone commands incredible amounts of chaos magic, albeit magic that is available to him only sporadically. Unlike every other imp, Brimstone now wants to use this magic to serve rather than torment humans.

The Wedding Party

It will probably come as no surprise that Belle Bishop has oodles of incredibly dear friends and that she has asked every single one of them to be a bridesmaid. They are a disparate and varied group - World’s Edge residents Crabtree, Mila and Esmerelda, plus recent visitors Lenora Graves, Ember and Tanya Peacock, as well as reporter Pearl Bryce, whom Belle babysat years before - but all of them are proudly sporting the “bridesmaid” sashes Belle has made for them.

Cary Montalvo has fewer close friends, although to be clear, anyone he does consider a friend is someone he loves and trusts completely. His two former lieutenants, Cameron Light-Astor (whom everyone calls Light) and Umberto Dunn (correspondingly called Shadow) have both traveled to World’s Edge for the wedding, and Cary is very, very close to selecting one of them to be his best man. He has made lists of pros and cons for selecting each. “OH MY GODS JUST PICK ONE OR ASK THEM BOTH!” says Belle. But Cary, who will make instantaneous choices in a tactical situation, needs time to deliberate every decision in his personal life, and this, too, should come as no surprise.

Two other important people have come to town for the wedding. There’s the mother of the groom, Irena Montalvo, a bohemian sort of woman who works as a mindfulness instructor. And the father of the bride, Big Al Bishop, a retired plumber and full-time beer

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drinker/bullshit artist. Due to a scheduling mishap, Irena and Al have accidentally been double-booked in the same small rental property. And with a sudden influx of adventuring groups in town, there is no vacant properties for either of them to move into.

Everyone is handling this situation with differing levels of grace. Irena is attempting to mediate her way to acceptance, although this is challenging. (Is Al... eating chili out of her Tibetan singing bowl??) Al is blissfully ignorant that there is any tension. Mostly, he is bursting with delight at seeing his daughter, whom he calls BellyBean, a nickname she loathes. He speaks eagerly and incorrectly about her inventions ("Daddy, I've told you, it's sound waves. There aren't any little invisible men...") and equally eagerly/incorrectly in rambling stories of her childhood.

The Peacock Family Singers

A month ago, a musical group arrived in town: the Peacock Family Singers. They've set up a camp of sorts in the old horse rings on the way to the Valerius house, and they show no signs of leaving.

For now, most of the group appears happy simply to be making music together. Their manager Milton Peacock continues his tireless quest to promote the band, and to coach them ("up the PIZAZZ!") in methods he believes will make them a smash hit.

Nemaia and the Book

During the day on Saturday, parties will learn more about exactly how it is that potential clients at Inspirations Unlimited are vetted and matched with a muse. During this process, Nemaia always begins with the same question: "Tell me about a difficult memory." And from this, inevitably, stories flow.

Nemaia listens for as long as the person speaks, recording notes in her large golden book. When the person eventually draws to a close, Nemaia turns to a fresh page. Nothing - no person, no place, no situation - is all bad, she says. There are always good stories and memories about any given thing, even a very difficult thing. The good may not balance out the bad, but it is still there. And we need to remember it and acknowledge it. "Tell me your good memories of this difficult thing," she says. And these she records, there on that fresh page.

At the end of this conversation, assuming the person has met whatever invisible criteria Nemaia has set, they are matched with a muse. But before they leave Inspirations Unlimited, Nemaia does one thing more: she tears a page from her golden book, the page spelling out the good memories. This she gives to the person. It is important, no matter how challenging a situation, to remember the good pieces, she says. The page with the bad memories remains in her book. "No one," says Nemaia, "needs help remembering the bad parts."

The parties will learn of some specific people in World's Edge who have visited Inspirations Unlimited and what is recorded from them in Nemaia's book. Two of them are explained here.

The Valerius Family

For many years, Baron Honoré Valerius has been an ideal leader: intelligent, fair, and committed. Six months ago, however, three people in town were killed because of a decision Honoré made, and since that time, he has been nearly paralyzed with fear of making another wrong move. His current inability to act would itself have spelled disaster for the town except that his wife and siblings have all stepped up to make the decisions that the Baron himself cannot.

This process of essentially governing by committee is not without its downsides, most noticeably that it is laborious and slow. This fact is not lost on Isaiah Cooke, the family's secretary. He has long dreamed of being a poet and recently visited Inspirations Unlimited to pursue this goal. There, he despairingly told Nemaia about the hours and hours of note-taking that were now required of him during the daily marathon discussions held by Baroness Adina and the younger Valerius siblings, Pascal, Sylvie and Nix. So long-winded! So much bickering!

Only after Nemaia had turned to the fresh page in the book did Isaiah recall how dedicated the entire family has been. It is invigorating to be around such devotion to both the barony and the Baron. Isaiah shows several parties the golden page from Nemaia's book, which he keeps folded in his pocket. He hopes to capture some of that ardor in his poetry.

The Bridesmaids

Belle Bishop has also availed herself of the services of Inspirations Unlimited, and she, too, carries around (and, conveniently, shows to some parties) a page from Nemaia's book.

Belle explains that at the time she sought inspiration, she was frustrated by the breakdown in communication amongst her many friends. When Nemaia'd asked her about a difficult thing, she'd spoken angrily about the rifts that had formed between the women who are now her beloved bridesmaids. Belle confesses that when she ranted to Nemaia, she'd gone so far as to call these women catty and petty, mean-spirited and toxic.

Nemaia had recorded all that vitriol and then started a new page, the page Belle carries still. On that, she'd recorded all the instances of these women taking care of and supporting Belle and each other. Seeing all these instances had reminded Belle how critical open

communication is, and yet how challenging it could be. This realization is what ultimately motivated her to develop the Bellaphone. And she owes this all to her work with Teknos, muse of mechanical innovation, and also to her darling bridesmaids.

And Many More

There are several other people in town who carry around a golden page from the book. Each will also be showing these pages to various parties, as well as explaining what's written on the page still in the book, the page listing exclusively bad memories. These encounters are all explained in the Changed World section.

It's important that people are talking about what's written on the pages that remain inside the golden book, because this is the only way to learn their contents. Nemaia is hugely protective of the book. These difficult memories are private, she says. All the muses know that neither they nor anyone else, anyone but Nemaia herself, is allowed to touch the book.

Saturday Lunchtime

Staff Check-In - As Needed Only

In the past, we have had assigned staff check in with every participant during lunchtime. Although every staffer involved has done a great job with this challenging task, it is taking a very long time and creating logistical challenges. In addition, it's creating certain problems, often more than it is actually solving.

For this reason, we are trying out a system where staffers are available to check in with participants on an as-needed basis only. We'll explain more about this to Companions and any staff who are tasked with this.

Posting of the Charges

At some point when all or most parties are present, prosecutorial bailiff Fenwick Michaels enters. He reads from his scroll

PROP "Hear ye, hear ye: Be it known that in accordance with the Lyrian Code of Law, a trial shall be held in this place, to be conducted one day hence, at noon on Sunday, the 6th of October in this, the year 994 of the common calendar. A list of all charged individuals shall be posted outside of this place in an area accessible to all. Any person accused who fails to present themselves at the trial shall be assumed guilty, and shall from that point be treated as a fugitive from justice. Per royal edict, the use of magic is inadmissible in a court of Lyrian law."

Brimstone's Confession

Immediately after this announcement - while everyone is still quiet! - Brimstone stands. He did a bad thing, he explains. He is so sorry! He wanted so much to take care of all of them, but he understands now that he didn't do nearly enough last time. No one needs to worry, though, he says. Next time he'll get it right!

Bonnie Stillwater comes from behind the bar. Gently she asks Brimstone what he's talking about. What has he done?

Brimstone explains that, for this whole past week, he's felt sorry for people in town. It's no good, this Rites holiday. It has made people sad. Some people's eye-holes are leaking, and that is a thing that happens when people are very sad! When Brimstone felt his magic accumulating, he was so glad, because he could take away people's sad!

And he did, he says... but not enough. He made people forget a piece of Thursday, which was a very good start if he does say so himself. But then on Friday, he saw people still walking by those terrible way-shrines and being sad all over again.

Brimstone explains that soon his magic will accumulate again, and when it does, he knows what to do: instead of making everyone forget a period of *time*, he will make them forget *people*. He will take away all their pesky memories of the people who died! Then no one will need to be sad!

Bonnie tells Brimstone that no, he mustn't do that. It's true that sometimes it's sad to remember the people who are gone. Yes, some people cry, remembering. But even with this sadness, people don't want to lose these memories. The memories are precious. Even when remembering is hard, it is still important. It still brings joy.

Brimstone: Huh. People are very complicated.

Bonnie: This is true.

Brimstone: I don't always want to remember. Maledicto died. I am looking forward to forgetting him!

Bonnie: Ah, yes. I can see that. But... do you want to act like Maledicto?

Brimstone: No! Maledicto was terrible!

Bonnie: Then maybe it's important to remember him for that reason. So that you're not ever like him.

Brimstone: Oh. I hadn't thought of that. And the people who weren't terrible, the people who were good? We want to remember them, even when it makes us sad?

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Bonnie: We do.

Brimstone: So... I should not take away any more memories?

Bonnie: That's right. Please don't. Are you able to restore the memories you took, of Thursday night?

Brimstone: I don't think so. Gone is gone. I am sorry. I did a bad thing that was not the bad thing I thought I did.

Bonnie: Sometimes that happens. Now you know better, so you can do better.

Brimstone: I will. I promise.

Bonnie: <Turns to the bailiff> This was a mistake, and it won't happen again. Is that...?

Fenwick: Uh, using chaos magic to remove memories? That's... not a crime?

Brimstone: Hooray!

Fenwick: Okay, but still. Don't be doing that. Per... royal edict, I guess? Don't take anyone's memories, even if they're sad? Anyway, the trial shall be held, one day hence, et cetera, noon on Sunday!

Fenwick exits, and once outside, posts the charges **PROP** on the board there.

Assigning the Charges

As in the last plot, a charge will be assigned to each party by a concerned person in town, rather than by an angelic vision or whatnot. There is more information about this in the Charges section and on relevant people's SC&E pages.

If you're scheduled to assign a charge, the easiest way to have this conversation – at the right time, and when participants can actually listen and focus – is to wait for the party to leave the tavern at the end of lunch and then follow them out. (If you try to talk to them in the tavern, it's usually too chaotic; if you don't do it right as soon as they leave, you can waste a lot of time tracking them down again.) Each person assigning a charge has a small slip of paper listing out the wording of the charge; this is given to the party.

PROP

People assigning charges are:

- Angelica Sprink (Arden)
- Honoré Valerius (Clairia)
- Pearl Bryce (Dolorón)
- Buzzkill (Elsewhich)
- Floria (Glendee)
- Diesel (Keer)
- Kullis Toolforger (Noctara)
- Joni Peacock (P'loa)
- Solomon Stillwater (Sythwan)
- Edwin Davies (Uri-Kesh)
- Jack Johnson (Waylon)

Saturday 3:50pm

Offscreen, Cal Coleman is done dicking around. This is ridiculous. He's come to World's Edge to find out the secrets of Inspirations Unlimited and he intends to do so. Right about this time, Cal pays a visit to the shop. He wants a look at that book of Nemaia's, the one he's sure contains all her proprietary business secrets.

When Cal arrives, Nemaia isn't there. In fact, only one of the muses is around. Her name is Floria, and she's the muse of gardening. She is the youngest of the muses, gentle and kind. Although the muses have all been told repeatedly never to give anyone access to the book, Cal talks so fast and so persuasively - pushy is really the word - that Floria decides to let him take just a quick look.

But there aren't any secrets in the book, at least ones that are actionable or profitable. It's just a lot of people's sad and angry memories! Cal is outraged at being mislead this way.

And he throws the book into the fire.

Saturday 4pm

At 4pm, the Companions tell their parties that the sky turns black and the earth shakes.

Not All That Glitters Is Gold

The parties don't know it yet, but at the moment the book goes into the fire, something very significant - and very bad - happens: the descriptions in the book become reality.

Remember, all the pages with good memories have been torn out. Only the pages of bad memories remain. Everyone mentioned in the book is now the worst version of themselves, the people they are on their very worst days.

It's possible to tell who these people are. Their clothing is mostly the same as it was before, but their skin is now shimmering gold, just like the pages of the book.

That is, it's possible for the participants to tell, because the Cup of Insight has granted them the ability to see what's happened in this magically-altered world. To the people of World's Edge, this is simply how things have always been.

But the participants will notice the sparkling gold faces of Baroness Adina, Pascal, Sylvie and Nix Valerius, all of whom are bickering incessantly, and thus doing nothing to serve or protect the Barony.

And they will certainly notice Belle's "catty, petty, mean-spirited and toxic" bridesmaids, all of whom have golden skin... and neon-green swords.

The specifics of this, as well as many other altered characters, are explained in the Changed World section, page 158.

Saturday Early Evening

Floria (5 - 7pm)

At 5pm, Floria regains consciousness. Nemaia's gold book is just smoldering embers, and there is no sign of Cal Coleman.

Floria is distraught. She stumbles out of Inspirations Unlimited, telling any parties she encounters that this is all her fault. She doesn't yet know about all the changes to the world, but she knows that something terrible has happened. She explains to any participants she meets that Cal has burned the book. She takes full responsibility for this.

Brimstone (5 - 7pm)

As a being essentially made of magic, Brimstone is also aware of this magically-changed world. He doesn't know what has caused it, but he's certain it wasn't his doing. He circulates during this time, sharing this fact with anyone he encounters.

The Makai (6 - 8pm)

At 6pm, Kora Peacekeeper, Kyli Talespinner and Kullis Toolforger begin circulating among the parties. It is clear, they say, that something strange has happened in town. They speculate that the Cup of Insight ritual which they and the participants performed earlier in the day has granted them all perception enough to stay outside of whatever has happened. They tell the parties that they will hold a council in the tavern at 8pm, in hopes that something may be done to put things back as they were before.

Saturday 8pm

Council with the Makai

This meeting is explained in more detail in the Changed World section, page 158. If you're part of this scene, please look there for info, but here are the salient pieces to understand the plot:

In addition to the Makai and Aleeya Witchborn (because she's got to go with the Nightwalker group) there are a few other townspeople present. Belle and Cary are there; they've done the Cup of Insight and are aware of the changes to the town. Floria is there as well, and is also aware (because she was there when the book was burned.)

The Makai believe they've found a ritual that will return World's Edge to its former state. Kemma Runereader lists the needed items, including an item consecrated to a saint. Lord Santiago West Valerius, a keeper of Summer, is there with a box containing the Crown of St. Mora, patron saint of the dying. (Although Santiago isn't cognizant that this is a magically-altered world, he, like Aleeya Witchborn, has been made aware that his help is needed in a critical matter.) St. Mora's crown is a profoundly sacred item, but putting it on comes with a high cost. Santiago doesn't know for certain what that cost will be, but his research indicates that the crown demands a sacrifice. Floria understands this and is more than willing to put the crown on to fix the problems her action has created.

After Runereader has listed out the items needed for the ritual but just before the participants divide up into groups, she announces that it's time for Floria to put on the Crown. She opens the box...and the crown isn't there. Everyone spends a minute looking around frantically and confusedly, and then:

Cary: Belle. What the hell is on your head?!

Belle: <As she comes from behind the bar, she reaches a hand up absent-mindedly to touch the thing on her head, which is, of course, the Crown of St. Mora> Oh, this? I found it in a box on the bar! I'm sorry, what were we talking about?

Cary: Take. It. Off.

Belle: <she tries> Um. It... won't come off.

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Floria: But I need to put it on. This is all my fault! I need to be the one who wears the Crown!

Santiago: I think there's a way to transfer it. But I'd need my books, and my Sacred Shield...

Cary: I can get them.

Santiago: They're up at the Makai camp. When Runereader talked to me before about all this, I left them there. But now, there are way too many Wolven raiding parties out there. There's no way to get to the Makai camp and back safely!

Cary: <he draws his sword> You'd be surprised...

The assembled staff assist the participants in dividing into groups, and then everyone sets off on their separate missions.

Saturday 10pm

The Ritual of Restoration

Until recently, it has been the Makai who cast the ritual components into the enchanted fire. Because we've had good luck with doing this a new way, we'll continue with our recent improvement of having this function performed by selected participants, in hopes that this will make them feel more involved in the scene.

Therefore, as different groups return to the tavern, the assembled Makai should choose someone from each group to cast that group's items into the fire. (That is, they need to choose someone who went to the Dance to cast in all the Tokens of Undying Affection, someone who went to the Banshee battle to cast the Soul Magnet, etc.) The Makai should ideally be choosing people who have not already been the focus of a given scene (e.g. not the person who wore the pendant of Fortuna d'Oro, not that inevitable loud guy who went to the Wolven battle, etc.) The Makai should also choose people without super full cloaks/skirts/sleeves, very long hair or anything that's going to be unsafe when standing next to the fire. One of the Makai should write down the names of these six participants and which component(s) they have.

The Makai are in the tavern, as is Cary, who's returned with the books and Sacred Shield, but there is no sign yet of Belle, Floria or Santiago. Deciding they can't wait any longer, Kemma Runereader leads them all to Windvale, where Kazim Firestarter has built a fire.

The Makai encourage participants to sit in the lower pews, keeping all the participants close to the stage area. The people chosen to cast components into the fire should be down front or right on the aisle. The Makai tell these people that they'll be called up when it is time to cast the components into the fire and that they should return to their seats after they do so.

Kullis Toolforger takes out a technomagical wand, blows a whistle and reads the wand effect: "This wand affects all people who are within the sound of my voice, causing them to be restored to life and to full health, leaving their free-hits unchanged."

Everything is ready to go... except for the Crown sacrifice.

Belle, Santiago and Floria come in, Belle still wearing the Crown. Floria is crying quietly. Cary reassures them that he's successfully retrieved Santiago's books and Shield. Santiago apologizes for sending Cary on a dangerous mission needlessly. He then explains that he did find a way to take the Crown off Belle, which is by deconsecrating it.

Cary: Excellent. We can do that now, then.

Santiago: Yes. We could. I could. I could do that and then reconsecrate it...

Cary: So... let's do that. Now, please.

Belle: It won't work, Cary. Santiago's been looking into it this whole time. It will take weeks to reconsecrate the Crown. It could be a couple months, even.

Cary: Okay...?

Belle: World's Edge can't wait that long. You saw it out there, Cary. Things are bad, and this is the only way to put them right. It needs to happen now. I need to do the ritual.

Cary: No. You can't do the ritual. You're getting married tomorrow.

Belle: I'm the only one who can do it, Cary.

Cary: The person who wears the crown is a sacrifice, Belle. You'll get sick, or weak, or... you could die, Belle. You can't do it.

Belle: What did you tell me, Cary? All those years, when I asked you to leave the Phantoms. When I begged you to let someone else risk their life, what did you say?

Cary: I said I had to do it.

Belle: And why was that?

Cary: Because I was the only one who could. Because people would die if I didn't.

Belle: Well then. How is this any different, now? How is this any different except that now you're the one who can only wait and hope?

Cary: Godsdammit, Belle. I might lose you! I can't stand losing you.

Belle: I know, love. What did you tell me, every time I said that?

Cary: That if I didn't do what needed doing, you'd have lost me anyway. *<He takes a shaky breath>* I hate this.

Belle: I know, love. I do, too. But I put this crown on, so for better or worse, I'm now the only one who can maybe save the town. Now it's my turn to be the hero. *<she embraces him hard and then pulls away. Then she says, to Runereader>* We need to do this now.

Cary: Just... I'm sorry, Belle.

Belle: For what?

Cary: I'm sorry that I didn't understand, before. I knew it was hard for you, to just... wait and hope. But I didn't know just how hard it was. You've always been the hero, Belle.

Belle: *<to Runereader>* Gods, just do this now.

Kemma Runereader: *<she looks at Cary and Floria, who stand on either side of Belle, and at Santiago. They all nod sadly.>* All right, then.

<Participant 1>, please place the Hand of Death pendants upon the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, these pendants are our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 2>, please place the Tokens of Undying Affection upon the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, these tokens are our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 3>, please place the Soul Magnet upon the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, this magnet is our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 4>, please place the Gloom Crystal upon the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, this crystal is our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 5>, please pass the Radiant Staff over the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, this energy is our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 6>, please place the Portal Stone upon the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, this stone is our offering, willingly given.

And Seasons, this... *<she takes a deep breath>* Seasons, in your infinite grace, this woman Belle Bishop stands before you, in the crown of St. Mora. Know that her sacrifice is willingly and so bravely given.

Kemma Runereader: Let this ritual be thus completed! Let all those whose goodness was cruelly burned away be made whole once again. In the name of the Four, this I pray.

<Cary moves to catch Belle, but she doesn't fall or even falter. When he sees this, he embraces her hard, lifting her off her feet.>

Cary: *<joyfully>* Belle! You're all right!

Belle: *<After he eventually sets her down, she looks at him and giggles>* I am! *<she runs her hand over his arm flirtatiously>* Now I'm very, very good! *<she looks into his face, still coquettish>* And you are...?

Cary: I'm.... what? Are you all right, Belle?

Belle: I am, but you have the advantage of me. I'm Belle Bishop. And what's your name, handsome?

<Everyone looks at her, confused.>

Santiago: Belle. You... know who you are, right?

Belle: Of course! I'm Belle Bishop. I live in World's Edge, a small village at the western end of Moreth.

Santiago: And you know who I am, right?

Belle: I'm afraid I don't. *<she looks around. She is curious but not frightened or upset.>* My goodness, what a crowd! *<she turns to Floria>* I love your laurel wreath! I don't think I could pull off that look! I... *<she reaches up absently and touches the crown, which she then takes off and looks at>* Oh, well that's a questionable fashion choice! *<turns back to Floria>* I'm Belle Bishop. *<she holds out a hand to shake>* It's a pleasure to meet you, ...?

Cary: What the hell is going on? She's all right, isn't she? The ritual didn't hurt her!

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Santiago: <slowly> It didn't affect her physically, I don't think. The Crown is consecrated to Saint Mora, so we thought it would take her life force, either some of it or... or all of it. St. Mora's feast day is all about the line between life and death. But... today isn't that feast day. It's the Rite of Remembrance.

Cary: So she shouldn't have been hurt, then!

Belle: I'm afraid you've all lost me. Who are we talking about?

Santiago: She *wasn't* hurt, not physically. The Crown demands a sacrifice. It didn't take her life force. It's the Rite of Remembrance. I think it took her memory.

Cary: No! She knows who she is!

Belle: I'm sorry, are you talking about me? Of course I know who I am! I'm Belle Bishop! You might have heard of me, actually: I'm the inventor of the Bellaphone? A device that allows vocal communication across long distances? If you'd like to learn more, you can reach me at 203-555-6041.

Santiago: She knows who she is. But she doesn't know who we are. Those memories... that's what the Crown took.

Cary: <desperately> When are they coming back?

Santiago: It... it was a sacrifice, Cary. I don't think they're coming back.

Belle: People seem very worked up, but really, there's no problem here. <*to Cary, flirtatiously*> But I asked you who you are. Tell me a little about yourself.

Cary: I... I'm someone who's real proud of you, Belle. <*He's holding it together, but barely*> But I think I need to be somewhere else for a while. <*He leaves*>

Belle: <*she watches him go. Then...*> Huh. He's cute. But... a little strange, right? <*she turns to Santiago; she is still quite upbeat*> I'm afraid I didn't catch your name. But maybe you could show me around a little bit? This place is so interesting!

Santiago looks semi-bewilderedly at Kemma Runereader, who shrugs back. Santiago offers Belle his arm and escorts her away from Windvale.

Just then, Baroness Adina Valerius arrives. Her face is no longer gold, and she seems her normal pre-4pm self.

Adina Valerius: My goodness, what a crowd! I'm not sure why you're all gathered here, but Solomon has made apple crisp to mark the end of the Rites...

Kemma Runereader: Baroness! Everything... is well with you?

Adina: Of course! Please do join us in the tavern when you conclude... whatever this is! <*She leaves*>

Kemma Runereader: It's likely the people of this town won't remember what happened here tonight, which is probably a blessing. But you have all risked much to save a place that is not your home. You have made these people whole again. Those of us who know... we will not forget your courage and your sacrifices. From the bottom of my heart: thank you.

The assembled staff lead the participants back to the tavern.

Saturday 10:30pm

The Rites of Remembrance Draw to a Close

Weather permitting, we will have a bonfire **PROP** on Saturday evening for any participants and staff who'd like to sit at it.

Soul Speaking / Soul Speaking Coordinator – Henny Admoni (10:30pm - completion)

Before each party heads to bed, they will be doing Soul Speaking in either the Bower of Dreams, Fern Grotto or Spring Glen. Obsidian will have talked to all parties earlier in the weekend to let them know that this will be happening. Soul Speaking will be lead by three Officiants (Obsidian, Electra and Al Bishop) and there will be other staff helpers (Santiago Valerius, Mila, Crabtree, Evelyn, Bonnie Stillwater, Dramina and additional staff as needed) "shuttling" the parties back and forth to the Bower, Grotto and Glen.) During the evening, each person must be Spoken for, with the speaker extolling their virtues and deeds. The Seasons reward those who are deserving of Their grace, so this recital of worth helps to show that those who are Spoken for are good-hearted people. The only rule is that no one may Speak for themselves; someone else must do this. Far from being thought of as a chore, Speaking for someone is a great honor and privilege. We suspect that most participants will be Spoken for by someone else in their party, although some staff characters may ask a participant to Speak for them as well.

In an attempt to get all the parties through Soul Speaking in a timely fashion, we now have Soul Speaking Coordinator to handle this. We're asking Henny to hold this job in this plot. See page 577 for a description of this.

Sunday Morning

Sunday Breakfast

Belle isn't out at breakfast, but people are talking about how she doesn't remember them. People in town don't know about the strange 4pm change, but they shouldn't get bogged down trying to make sense of this. The salient point is that Belle doesn't remember anyone, including Cary. The wedding is off and people are disappointed and saddened by this.

Cary also isn't around. His lieutenants Light and Shadow circulate among some of the parties, expressing their concerns about him. Cary is crushed that Belle doesn't remember him, they say. In their opinion, he needs to drink as much as he can as quickly as he can. Then Cary can forget Belle just as she's forgotten him.

Path Ending Coordinators – Betsy Rosenblatt and Kayla Schlenz (8:30 – 11am) / Penultimate Steps

Between 9:30 and 10:30am, parties complete the missions that brought them to World's Edge in the first place.

All of the parties' missions end with a scene that will hopefully be compelling and rewarding. In order to make these scenes work, various staffpeople need to be in place. It's very anticlimactic to summon the Knights of the Golden Circle when said Knights are still getting their makeup on in the Basement.

To make sure this doesn't happen, each party needs one item that they can't get until a fixed time on Sunday morning. These are called Penultimate Steps. Each of these people (hopefully!) met their party on Saturday and did their challenge, but then said "I have the item you need, but I can't give it to you right now. I'll meet you in [certain location] at [certain time] and give it to you then." (We realize it seems unlike more heroic quests to have someone say "I'll meet you at 10:15 in the tavern", but it's the only way to make the timing work.)

Making certain that all the party path ending characters and all the Penultimate Steps are in synch, timing-wise, has always taken a lot of EM energy on Sunday morning, so we now have a Party Path Ending Coordinator to handle this. We're asking Betsy and Kayla to hold this job in this plot. See page 578 for a description of this.

Even with people coordinating all the timing, we will sometimes run behind on Sunday morning. SO... if you are a penultimate step – there'll be information on your SC&E page if you are – please make sure you check with the Party Path Ending Coordinator before you give the party the item they're waiting on. And if you are a Party Path Ending, please check in with the Coordinator and do whatever you can to be where you need to be when you're needed.

NOTE: in an effort to make take-down easier, we are attempting to be more timing-conscious of everything that happens on Sunday, from Cocoa Anders onward. As part of this rescheduling, we've moved several penultimate steps and party path endings earlier than they've been before. If you find contradictory timing instructions, e.g. your staff page says the encounter happens at 10am but the party path section says that same encounter happens at 9:30am, please bring it to an EMs attention so we can figure out which is correct. We tried hard to update every necessary timing reference; apologies if we missed one! It's very worthwhile to know about small timing discrepancies so we can fix them all now!

Charge Revelations

Many parties will also probably be finished investigating their assigned allegation for the upcoming trial. (Some parties will no doubt be thinking about their assigned charge for the very first time, but so it goes.) Some parties are receiving a revelatory vision on Sunday morning; others will have information revealed to them when they complete their party path.

Some of the people who have charges listed against them will be available during this time and can talk to parties who have figured out the truth about their assigned allegations, although the participants will of course still need to present their findings during the trial itself. Information about all of this is listed in the Charges section.

Trial Coordinators – Mirin Scassellati, Mike Robb and Zak Terry (8am-12noon)

We now have multiple Trial Coordinators; we are asking Mirin, Mike and Zak to do this job in this plot. None of them will be doing this job the entire time listed, and it's our hope that having multiple coordinators will let someone brief staff in the Basement while someone else readies the tavern for the trial. A description of this job is on page 579.

Sunday late morning

Weapon Collection

Designated staff - Fenwick Michaels, Nina Bliss, Ned Crochett and Pansy Golden - will be stationed at the door to the tavern beginning at 11:20am to collect weapons, shields and spellbooks when the participants enter. They explain that magic is inadmissible in a Lyrian court of law, as, of course, is physical violence, so the parties won't need any of these things. (Collecting items now is also useful to expedite clean-up, but staff don't need to mention that.)

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Note: if a path ending or revelation encounter runs late, it's possible not all these staff will be available at 11:20am. Those staff who are should begin this process anyway so we stay on time.

Dinner...

If at all possible, we'd like the trial to start at noon.

The lunch buffet will open to participants at 11:30am. Not all the parties will be ready for it, but ones who are should be encouraged to move through the buffet line at that time.

Staff who aren't needed elsewhere can go through the buffet beginning at 11:15 so they don't create traffic later.

...and a Show

In the past, a few designated staffers circulated among all the parties, encouraging them to be ready to present at the trial. Some parties got the message. Some... did not.

We're trying a new system, where each party now has a specifically-assigned staffer (the Pre-Trial Charge Check-In) who will seek that party out starting at 11am, encouraging them to present a dry-run of the charge at that time. Let's hope this gets us trial presentations that are clear, concise and compelling!

Sunday noon

The trial is happening soon after parties complete their original mission; hopefully this will give the participants a feeling of urgency as they complete their party paths and rush to figure out the truth about the charges.

Has Anyone Seen Cary Montalvo?

As noted, Belle has a firm grasp of who she is, but no recollection of anyone else, nor does she realize she's forgotten anything. This poses no problem for her; she has always loved novelty and there are so many delightful people around to meet!

Cary is still nowhere to be found in the hours before the trial. Shortly before the trial is to begin, Nemaia circulates among the assembled participants, asking if anyone has seen him. No one has.

Over the weekend, participants will have learned a little about the friendship between Nemaia and Cary. Although their backgrounds are very different, they share a dry sense of humor and the ability to observe more than they reveal. In Nemaia, Cary has found someone who will listen to even his darkest stories, and after three decades as a soldier, he has experienced horrors most people can't tolerate hearing about. What's more, the Bookkeeper remembers every story he tells, every name of someone he couldn't save. For Cary, Nemaia has been a safe place to lay down burdens he has long borne alone.

But now Cary has lost his beloved Belle. And no one knows where he's gone.

JPeg and the Ink

Just as the trial is about to start - Fenwick Michaels has already called out "Hear ye, hear ye! This Court of Lyrian Law, with..." - Nemaia locates JPeg, World's Edge's resident tattoo artist. "I need you to find Cary Montalvo and give him this note," she says. "Oh, and you'll need this..." She gives him her gold inkwell and the note; he takes both and leaves.

The Trial

Poor Fenwick tries again. "Hear ye, hear ye! This Court of Lyrian Law, with the Honorable Justice Orion Wilde presiding, is now in session! All in attendance shall come to order. The defendants shall now enter this Court." He reads the list, in order, of all those accused. Fenwick reminds those assembled that extraneous testimony, irrelevant details and long-winded postulating will not be allowed. This trial is to proceed as quickly as possible!

At the start of the trial, Orion Wilde is as bored and listless as he has been all weekend. He checks his watch **PROP** often and doesn't hesitate to remind anyone who's taking too long to present information that they will be cut off shortly.

As the trial progresses, however, he begins to change. He is vaguely surprised to hear people speaking up in defense of others. Occasionally he asks, in the tone of a routine question, how long a participant has known the defendant they are speaking for, and he is noticeably surprised when he learns that this person has only briefly known the accused. With each subsequent charge, Orion's posture and tone changes a little more. He is leaning forward now, eyes wide open and hands fidgety with excitement as he hears testimony given.

Over the course of the trial, Justice Wilde is slowly but surely re-energized by the parties' commitment to justice and truth. He still enforces most of the regulations - we do still want the last few parties to testify to do so briskly! - but he will do so excitedly and supportively. The system *can* work, and as the trial progresses, Orion Wilde learns that once again.

All the specifics of the trial are noted in the Charges section, especially the At the Trial pages, 152. But it is worth mentioning that resolving one of those charges involves a party encountering Cal Coleman out in the woods, and then bringing him to justice for the additional crime he has committed, over and above his burning of the book.

Take that, asshole.

Here Comes the Groom

Immediately after the trial ends, Cary comes in. He has grown more disheveled as the weekend has progressed; by now he's carrying rather than wearing his military jacket and is dressed just in t-shirt and jeans. His expression is that of a man who really, really doesn't want to be there.

Belle: <she sees Cary> Oh, hi! I remember you!

Cary: <immediately hopeful> Wait, you do??!

Belle: Of course! From yesterday!

Cary: <and just as quickly crushed> Oh. Right. From yesterday.

Belle still has no idea who he is, but she finds him really attractive.

And she decides to convey that through song:

Call Me Maybe (Carly Rae Jepson)

*Hey, you're that guy from before
Wanted to see you some more
And then you walked through the door
And now you're in my way
It's like I wished on a star
And now you're here in this bar
Don't even know who you are
But you are in my way*

*Your stare was holdin'
Ripped jeans, skin was showin'
Hot night, wind was blowin'
Where you think you're going, baby?*

*Hey, I just met you, and this is crazy
But here's my number, so call me, maybe
It's hard to look right at you, baby
But here's my number, so call me, maybe
Hey, I just met you, and this is crazy
But here's my number, so call me, maybe
And all the other boys try to chase me
But here's my number, so call me, maybe*

*You took your time with the call
I took no time with the fall
You gave me nothing at all
But still, you're in my way
I beg and borrow and steal
At first sight, and it's real
I didn't know I would feel it
But it's in my way*

*Your stare was holdin'
Ripped jeans, skin was showin'
Hot night, wind was blowin'
Where you think you're going, baby?*

*Hey, I just met you, and this is crazy
But here's my number, so call me, maybe
It's hard to look right at you, baby*

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*But here's my number, so call me, maybe
Hey, I just met you, and this is crazy
But here's my number, so call me, maybe
And all the other boys try to chase me
But here's my number, so call me, maybe*

And then suddenly, everything - everything except Cary Montalvo and Nemaia - *freeze*. Belle and the backup singers cut off abruptly, frozen in mid-gesture. Staff - especially staff who are sitting right next to participants - also freeze mid-reaction. Hopefully this informs the participants that they should freeze (or at least hush) as well!

Throughout this singing, Cary is clearly conflicted. It's very flattering that Belle is attracted to him all over again. But on the other hand, it's only a physical attraction. She has no idea who he is. And that's killing him.

Also, he's now trying to figure out why he can move when time has stopped for everyone else.

Cary: <he steps slowing into the center of the room, looking around bewildered. He speaks to Nemaia> What the hell? What are you doing?

Nemaia: Don't worry about me. I needed a minute to talk to you. What are you doing?

Cary: I don't think I can do this.

Nemaia: <faux-dismissively> Oh, and see, here I thought you came here because you'd decided to try.

Cary: I did. But... if I try and it fails... it's going to hurt even worse.

Nemaia: Yep.

Cary: I already hurt so much. I don't want to hurt worse.

Nemaia: Nope.

Cary: Promise me it'll work?

Nemaia: Are you out of your mind? I won't promise that. It's almost certainly not going to work.

Cary: Great. Thanks.

Nemaia: Any time.

Cary: You're saying I should try when I'll almost certainly fail. You think it's easy!

Nemaia: <she clasps her hands over her heart> I don't think it's easy. I think it's real hard. And I think you can do hard things.

Cary: So, what, then? Just jump off the dock and try to swim?

Nemaia: No, Cary. Jump off the ledge. And try to fly.

<While saying her line, Nemaia lifts her hands slowly till they're somewhere above her shoulders.>

Cary: And if I fall instead?

Nemaia: Then it'll hurt real bad. It'll hurt for a while.

<She pauses, then drops her hands dramatically. And suddenly everyone unfreezes and time moves forward again.>

Nemaia: <to Cary> And then you'll get up. And you'll jump again.

Cary: <he takes a deep breath> Okay, fine. This is me, jumping.

He turns back to face Belle. And then he takes off his shirt.

Freshly tattooed across his chest, in 3-inch-high letters, it says:

forever

Some of the Peacock Family Singers - Tanya Peacock, Joni Peacock, Shaun Peacock, Donna Peacock, Mick Peacock, Dusty Peacock and Stevie Peacock - step out and finally capture the PIZAZZ! Milton Peacock has been requesting for so long:

September (Earth, Wind & Fire)

Do you remember, the 21st night of September?

Love was changing the mind of pretenders

While chasing the clouds away

Our hearts were ringing

In the key that our souls were singing

As we danced in the night

Remember, how the stars stole the night away, yeah yeah yeah

Hey hey hey

Ba de ya, say do you remember?

Ba de ya, dancing in September

Ba de ya, never was a cloudy day

Maybe it is only then that Milton Peacock understands what his brother Charlie has been telling him all along: that yes, music is a business. But it is more. It is a gift.

And Milton sees the terrible pain in Cary's eyes, and he understands that he can give a gift that might help.

Milton: *<he cuts off the Peacock Family Singers>* Guys, no. Read the room, okay?

And then, without fanfare (or PIZAZZ!), accompanied just by Irena Montalvo's guitar, Milton, Charlie and Elliot Peacock and Miscellania sing:

Try To Remember (from The Fantasticks)

Try to remember the kind of September

When life was slow and oh, so mellow

Try to remember the kind of September

When grass was green and grain was yellow

Try to remember the kind of September

When you were a tender and callow fellow

Try to remember and if you remember

Then follow, follow

And just then, Belle remembers.

Belle: Cary? *<long pause>* I know you! You're Cary Montalvo! I remember now! *<slowly but gaining speed>* October is your favorite month. You like bananas but not banana bread. You love the sound of rain at night. And... oh, you hate being sung to! I'm so sorry!

Cary: Gods, no, Belle. Please, please sing to me.

And she does.

Call Me Maybe reprise

Before you came into my life, I missed you so bad

I missed you so bad, I missed you so, so bad

Before you came into my life, I missed you so bad

And you should know that

I missed you so, so bad

It's hard to look right at you, baby

But here's my number, so call me, maybe

Hey, I just met you, and this is crazy

But here's my number, so call me, maybe

And all the other boys try to chase me

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But here's my number, so call me, maybe

*Before you came into my life, I missed you so bad
I missed you so bad, I missed you so, so bad
Before you came into my life, I missed you so bad
And you should know that
So call me maybe*

<Kissing, etc.>

Eventually, Belle turns slightly away from Cary and looks around.

Belle: Who are all these people?

Cary: You... you don't know?

Belle: <*she doesn't. She remembers Cary... and no one else. She looks around; she isn't upset, just curious*> No.

Cary: Okay. <*he takes a breath, figuring the situation out*> Let me introduce you, then. <*he pulls her over to the bridesmaids*> These are your closest friends.

Belle: Oh my goodness! All of them?

Cary: All of them. So many people love you, Belle.

Belle: Oh! <*she hugs each one in turn*> Oh, I love your dress! You look like so much fun! What a beautiful smile you have! <*etc*>

Cary: <*leads her to Al Bishop*> And this is your father.

Belle: Oh! My father?

Al Bishop: Hey there, BellyBean!

Belle: Oh! You call me BellyBean! That's so, so sweet!

Al: I know!

Belle: You'll have to tell me, because I don't really know: What was I like, when I was little?

Al: Oh, you were the best! See, you ... <*he launches very very briefly into a story that's clearly not true*> <*Except that of course, for Belle, this story and all of her father's stories ARE now true*>

Belle: I can't wait to hear all about it!

Cary: And last but not least... <*he brings her over to Light and Shadow*>. This is Cameron Light-Astor. He's my... <*he cuts himself off*> Well. This is Umberto Dunn. He's my... <*he stops himself again. Takes a breath. Then leads her to Nemaia*> This is Nemaia. She's my best friend.

<*Belle and Nemaia hug*>

Nemaia: <*to Cary*> Took you long enough.

Cary: Yeah. At least I'm pretty.

Nemaia: <*laughs*> That you are.

Belle: Cary, it seems like a lot has happened. Do you... still want to get married today?

Cary: I can't even tell you how much.

Belle: Okay, then. <*Belle beckons her bridesmaids over*> Oh, one thing first! <*she holds up the receiver of the bellaphone*> I added a new feature! You can push this button and take a picture of yourself!

Cary: Why would anyone want... okay, whatever. <*Belle and her bridesmaids cluster together and take several Bellefies*>

Cary: Okay, now I have one more thing as well. I just wanted to say: <*he takes a big breath*> Nemaia. Thank you for everything. But... well, but most of all for the magic ink.

Nemaia: Cary. You're welcome. <*she takes a big breath as well*> But... what magic ink?

Cary: Wait. What do you... <*he touches his tattoo*> This is magic ink. That's why Belle remembered me!

Nemaia: Maybe. Maybe the ink is magic. Or maybe the music was magic. <*she looks him right in the eye*> Or maybe, Cary Montalvo? Just maybe you jumped off the ledge and you flew.

Obsidian: Whatever. I don't have time for this. Can we please get this wedding started before anything else ridiculous happens? And then Cary and Belle kneel before him, their attendants standing by their sides, and the Storyteller enters, because this is

The End

Plot Timeline

This event begins Friday, October 2, in the year 994 of the common calendar.

Thus, references below to “1 day ago” = Thursday

Montgomery & Delia Morgan open the Morgan Theater (905)	89 years ago
Elani Edgewater comes to World's Edge from P'loa; disappears shortly thereafter	67 years ago
Obsidian's wife Alora and both of their children killed by Wolven	49 years ago
Montgomery Morgan dies at age 80 (959)	35 years ago
The Morgan Theater abandoned (969)	25 years ago
Solomon & Bonnie Stillwater come to World's Edge and buy the Inn from Scarlet Billows	2 years ago
Theodora Bright Davies (a.k.a. Diamond Dora Bright, the dancer) dies	10.5 months ago
Evil sorcerer Maledicto dies / Brimstone arrives in World's Edge	6 months ago
Diesel's post-apocalyptic war band begins camping out in Greystone Clearing	4 months ago
Eugenie Bright hosts a séance to communicate with her late sister Dora (June 1)	4 months ago
Lady Carmina Bordeaux arrives in World's Edge	4 months ago
Ember arrives in World's Edge	6 weeks ago
The Sprink family arrives in World's Edge	2 months ago
The Peacock Family Singers arrive in World's Edge	1 month ago
Katherine Carmichael arrives in World's Edge	3 weeks ago
The previously-stolen Crown of St. Mora suddenly appears on the Valerius house doorstep	2 weeks ago
Cal Coleman arrives in World's Edge	2 weeks ago
Solomon Stillwater learns his father is dying, leaves for Keer to say goodbye	11 days ago
A stranger in the tavern identifies a picture of Solomon as Jack Brigham	9 days ago
A different stranger in the tavern also identifies the picture of Solomon as Jack Brigham	7 days ago
Famous jeweled pendant the DawnStar found hidden in the tavern	5 days ago
Professor Daniel Merriweather fails to arrive to give his scheduled lecture (Sunday)	5 days ago
Dorito confesses to killing Professor Merriweather (Monday)	4 days ago
Jack Johnson arrives in town (Tuesday)	3 days ago
Vernon Gill arrives in town (Wednesday)	2 days ago
the Makai arrive in World's Edge to walk the Path of Epiphany	Friday morning
Solomon returns from Keer	Friday morning

Set Guide

We have more set locations than we used to, and we are using more of them for more of the weekend. That means we're spending more money to outfit those locations and more time setting them up and taking them down.

It occurred to us that all this nifty stuff isn't going to matter much if the staff in a given location don't know what's there. There's no sense bringing out firewood if no one has matches; there's no need for music if no one gets it playing.

If you are scheduled to be in a given set location, please read through that location's info so that you're familiar with it. Note that those people who are servers in the tavern may be listed in two locations!

General Advice for All Locations

It's easy to get caught up in the Otherworld and lose track of stuff that's normally obvious. Don't leave a location with candles or a fire burning.

All locations should have some sort of chest/bin/basket/etc. for accessible but out-of-sight storage. Please use this for handbooks, trash, beverage containers, etc. We're spending a lot of effort making the sets look great; let's please not detract from the look because someone's pink windbreaker is sitting out visible.

If you're in a location that's serving a beverage, please bring back all beverage-related items at the end of the day.

Some participants think they "should" steal things. If you have money in your set location, keep an eye on it. Ditto anything else that looks like it's valuable. You know it's just set dressing; participants don't.

How This Information Is Structured

where: The updated map of World's Edge is viewable on the staff_center website.

when: This indicates when a given set location is "active": that is, when there are likely to be staff there. So, for instance, although there are Smirches out on Friday night, they are all in the tavern; the Smirch shop itself isn't open Friday night.

who: This is a listing of the staff who are sometimes in this set location. None of these people are in the location all the time.

site sergeant(s): We chose one or two people in each location to be ultimately responsible for making sure everything is going according to plan. If you're this person, please check in with the EMs before the event starts.

general feel: This provides a general sense of the flavor we're going for in this location.

beverage: On Friday night, each party will leave the tavern to go to a different location for their 4th Friday Encounter. We will be serving a hot decaffeinated beverage in each of these locations for both participants and staff to enjoy. In some locations, we will also serve a beverage on Saturday; this is sometimes weather-dependent.

served: This indicates how that beverage is heated and what utensils are needed for serving it. This information is provided primarily so the kitchen knows what exactly is needed.

music: Some locations have music playing; this information is listed here.

lighting: This is provided both so staff remember to make use of whatever lighting is there and also so we purchase enough candles, etc.

nearest bathroom: This information seems likely to be useful at some point, either for staff to know and/or so they can inform participants.

to bring/to do: There'll be a copy of this list in each set location; please make sure you bring/do whatever is listed here!

to know: If there's anything we can think of you should know, it's listed here.

the Inn at World's Edge

where: first floor of the main lodge (inn is labeled on World's Edge map)

when: Friday 6pm – 11pm / Saturday 8am – 11pm / Sunday 8am – 2pm

who: Solomon Stillwater, Bonnie Stillwater, Pansy Golden, Ned Crochett, Scarlet Billows (alternate timeline only), Danny Donovan, Dimitri, Mila, Esmerelda, Tinker Bill, Valentina, Aleeya Witchborn, Kazmira, Malachi, Natasha, Huxley, Quinoa, Bailey, Brimstone, Samuelson and Bracken. (all of these people are servers. Serving procedures will be explained during staff briefing.)

site sergeants: Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater

general feel: convivial, welcoming (significantly less so in the alternate timeline)

beverage: water available always, coffee and tea at meals

served: we now have two water kegs, plus coffee carafes to hopefully make breakfast servers' lives easier!

music: happy background music, playing during non-mealtimes

lighting: candles in floor candelabra and on tables and the bar

nearest bathroom: right here! (Note that participants are asked to only use the upstairs bathrooms.)

to bring/to do: If candles burn out, please replace them.

to know: This handbook refers to this as both "the Inn at World's Edge" and "the tavern." They're the same thing.

the Valerius house

where: the "horse camp", at one end of Knight's walk (house is labeled on World's Edge map)

when: Friday night / Saturday 8:30am – 7pm (or whenever the final group finishes in the Court of Mirrors)

who: Honoré Valerius, Adina Valerius, Sylvie Valerius, Pascal Valerius, Santiago West Valerius, Nix Valerius, Poppy Golden, Isaiah Cooke, Carmina Bordeaux, Lenora Graves and Danny Donovan

site sergeants: Honoré and Sylvie Valerius

general feel: refined, civilized

beverage: decaf black tea with milk and sugar (Friday, plus Saturday if it's cold/wet)

served: brewed tea in carafes, milk, sugar and stirrers are in silver containers

music: classical music

lighting: candles inside, TBD outside Friday night

nearest bathroom: bathroom in house (sometimes shut down, and accessible only to staff, because it's behind draperies) / cinderblock bathroom at the T of Gilded Way & Knight's Walk

to bring/to do: bring matches for candles

to know: this location has a first aid box

the Roamer camp

where: along Wanderer's Trail (camp is labeled on World's Edge map)

when: Friday night / Saturday 8:30am – dinner / Sunday (but only Esmerelda there then)

who: Dimitri, Mila, Esmerelda, Valentina, Tinker Bill, Aleeya Witchborn, Kazmira, Malachi, Natasha, Huxley and Quinoa

site sergeants: Esmerelda and Aleeya Witchborn

general feel: vibrant, lively

beverage: mulled cherry cider (Friday, Saturday too unless it's very warm out)

served: cider is heated in a cast-iron pot hung on a tripod over the fire, served with a ladle

music: lively music

lighting: campfire, hanging fabric lanterns

nearest bathroom: porta-potty-type structure near Smirches' shop

to bring/to do: bring matches and water bucket for campfire

to know: this location has a first aid box

the Makai camp

where: Starwatcher's Hill (camp is NOT labeled on World's Edge map, the hill is)

when: Friday night / Saturday 8:30am – 4pm / Sunday morning (Dealbinder only)

who: Kemma Runereader, Kira, Kovi Woundtender, Kyson Wayseeker, Kerrick Dealbinder, Kyli Talespinner, Kora Peacekeeper, Kullis Toolforger, Kiko Truthspeaker, Kazim Firestarter and Kable Worldwatcher

site sergeant: Kovi Woundtender and Kyson Wayseeker

general feel: serene, natural

beverage: mulled cider (Friday, Saturday too unless it's very warm out)

served: cider is heated in a cast-iron pot hung on a tripod over the fire, served with a ladle

music: none

lighting: campfire

nearest bathroom: tavern (Note that because of construction, there is NO running water in Hillcrest. There may be Porta-Potties.)

to bring/to do: bring matches and water bucket for campfire

to know: this location has a first aid box

the Peacock Family Singers camp

where: left horse ring along Gilded Way (camp is NOT labeled on World's Edge map, the rings are shown but not named)

when: Friday night / Saturday 8:30am – dinner

who: Milton Peacock, Charlie Peacock, Elly Peacock, Tanya Peacock, Joni Peacock, Shaun Peacock, Donna Peacock, Mick Peacock, Dusty Peacock, Stevie Peacock and Jack Johnson

site sergeants: Joni and Shaun Peacock

general feel: groovy

beverage: fruity herbal tea (Friday, Saturday too if it's cold out)

served: tea is in a camping teapot

music: guitar singalong

lighting: campfire, lanterns TBD

nearest bathroom: cinderblock bathroom at the T of Gilded Way & Knight's Walk

to bring/to do: bring matches and water bucket for campfire

to know: --

Inspirations Unlimited

where: one cabin in Hillcrest (IU is NOT labeled on World's Edge map, Hillcrest is)

when: Friday night / Saturday 8:30am – 4pm

who: Nemaia, Floria, Aesthetika, Melados, Dramina, Teknos, Kulinos, Koreos, Lexia and Miscellania

site sergeant: Melados

general feel: creative and invigorating

beverage: honey tea (Friday only)

served: brewed tea in carafes

music: none

lighting: candles on tables

nearest bathroom: tavern (Note that because of construction, there is NO running water in Hillcrest. There may be Porta-Potties.)

to bring/to do: bring matches for candles

to know: --

Crabtree & Evelyn's

where: one cabin in Hillcrest (shop is NOT labeled on World's Edge map, Hillcrest is)

when: Friday night / Saturday 8:30am – 7pm

who: Crabtree, Evelyn and Buzzkill

site sergeant: Evelyn

general feel: domestic

beverage: cinnamon herbal tea (Friday only)

served: tea is in a thermos container

music: none

lighting: candles

nearest bathroom: tavern (Note that because of construction, there is NO running water in Hillcrest. There may be Porta-Potties.)

to bring/to do: bring matches for candles, cashbox and price list

to know: --

the Prosecutor's pavilion

where: Overlook Hill, at the top of Autumn's path (pavilion is NOT on World's Edge map, the hill is)

when: Saturday 8:30am – 4pm

who: Orion Wilde, Celeste Wilde, Fenwick Michaels and Nina Bliss

site sergeant: Orion Wilde

general feel: official

beverage: none

served: n/a

music: none

lighting: none

nearest bathroom: Rosedale bathrooms

to bring/to do: a fire-circle needs to be set up approximately 15' in front of the pavilion. This is critical for Dolorón's party- path ending. If the weather is chilly, it would be great if the fire were lit on Saturday (although obviously this needs to be far enough away from the pavilion that there's no danger of the tent catching fire.) It's not critical that the circle actually be used, though; it just should look like it was. If there is a fire, bring matches and water bucket

to know: --

FireWaterEarthAirB'n'B

where: one cabin in Rosedale (house is NOT labeled on World's Edge map, Rosedale is)

when: Friday night / Saturday 8:30am – dinner

who: Belle Bishop, Cary Montalvo, Al Bishop, Irena Montalvo, Cameron Light-Astor, Umberto Dunn, Phyllis Fieri

site sergeant: Irena Montalvo

general feel: cramped but also anticipatory and excited

beverage: mint herbal tea with honey (Friday only)

served: tea is in a thermos container, honey is in a jar, plastic spoons are in a mug

music: none

lighting: TBD

nearest bathroom: Rosedale bathrooms

to bring/to do: --

to know: --

the Compound

where: tent canopy in Greystone Clearing (compound is NOT on World's Edge map, the clearing is)

when: Saturday 8:30am – dark

who: Diesel, Equinoxious, Dorito, Bane, Jpeg and Moxie

site sergeant: Dorito

general feel: sexy hellscape

beverage: none

served: n/a

music: none

lighting: trash fire

nearest bathroom: Rosedale bathrooms

to bring/to do: matches and water bucket for fire

to know: --

Smirch & Smirch

where: near Heart's Ease Bluff, at the end of Vernal Walk (shop is labeled on World's Edge map)

when: Saturday 8:30am – 7pm / Sunday 9:30 – 10:30 (only Ursula there Sunday)

who: Phineas Smirch, Ursula Smirch, Karmin Smirch and Karla Smirch

site sergeant: Karla Smirch

general feel: valuable but sleazy

beverage: none

served: n/a

music: none

lighting: none

nearest bathroom: porta-potty-type structure near the Smirches' shop.

to bring/to do: Remove the laminated "Please don't steal this set-dressing" sign when you arrive; replace it when you leave.

to know: The participants are *very* likely to try to steal from the Smirches and we can hardly blame them. *Please* don't leave the cashbox or merchandise unattended! Also, this site has a first-aid kit.

The Prosecutor's Charges

As in the past recent event, this plot's trial is a relatively real-world one. The judge isn't a demon or a Fae queen. He's a human prosecutor who's been appointed by the King to do just this: investigate and prosecute crimes.

Itinerant prosecutors travel set routes around the kingdom. They arrive in a community, investigate crimes and allegations, and then conduct a trial.

Justice Orion Wilde started his career as an idealist, a firebrand determined to bring justice to even the most remote of communities and to prosecute criminals even among Lyria's richest and most powerful citizens. But that was a long time ago. Where he used to think real change was possible, he now realizes this is a pipe dream. Orion Wilde wants only to get done with this trial as quickly as humanly possible. He is a good man, but he has been worn down by years of seeing his hard work undone by apathy. "Justice," as he tells the parties, "is a lot of work, and it's ongoing. Most people simply can't be bothered."

If only he could find himself in a place where everybody actually does care...

As explained in the Plot Overview, Justice Wilde and his staff post these charges at lunchtime. Just after lunch, each party will have a specific charge assigned to them. As we did last plot, this charge assignment happens, not via an angelic vision for the Companion, but instead by some concerned person in town.

The Charges

Milton Peacock, charged with Embezzlement

Kerrick Dealbinder, charged with Petty Larceny

Bracken, charged with Harassment

Katherine Carmichael, charged with Assault with a Deadly Weapon

Eugenie Bright, charged with Desecration

Dorito, charged with Murder

Evelyn, charged with Industrial Sabotage

Aesthetika, charged with Larceny

Danny Donovan, charged with Arson

Huxley and Quinoa, charged with Identity Theft

Solomon Stillwater, charged with Piracy

A Note About Acting

At some point on Saturday, the people of World's Edge become aware that charges – many of them very serious – have been leveled against people they know. If something like this happened in reality, it's likely that these people – along with most people who know them – would talk and think about little else during this time. There would be lots of fear, despair and anger.

Although we want the participants to care about these people, their fate and the crimes with which they're charged, we also want them to have fun. For this reason, it's necessary to downplay the effect that this upsetting news has on the people in town. If participants ask, you should tell them how upset and worried you are, but clearly you shouldn't weep constantly throughout your challenge or anything. This sort of anguish is exhausting to role-play for long and even worse to have to watch.

...and what staff characters need to do with them

The Prosecutor's Indictment

The charges that the Prosecutor's staff post list the person charged, the crime and the date when it occurred, as well as, in some cases the name of the victim and/or another detail or two. This information is also printed up on small pieces of paper the Prosecutor's staff has (theoretically) made available. (I say 'theoretically' because this happens off-screen.) These smaller papers are given out by the people who assign each charge to a party, just as way of helping them remember what they're actually supposed to be working on.

PROP

Common Knowledge

This is information that, in general, all staff people should know. If participants from *any* party ask you questions about a given issue, you should feel free to relay any of the Common Knowledge info to them.

Note: Of course, not everyone in the village knows the same information about a given issue. If your character would be unlikely to know certain parts of the Common Knowledge – because you haven't been in World's Edge very long, or because you're a little bit clueless – then just tell any participants that ask that you don't know anything about it. Please don't make up false information about any of these issues because they're already plenty confusing enough.

Charge Assignments

As in the last plot, each charge is assigned to a party by a person who knows and cares about the accused. Hopefully, this will allow us to imbue the assignment with an even greater sense of urgency and importance. To do that, the person making the assignment needs to be able to tell the party "I don't know what else to do, but I believe you can help."

To be able to sell that, the assigning person needs to have interacted with the party already! In some cases, the person assigning the charge is also one of the early steps on a party's path. In other cases, we've included a listing on your SC&E page so that you can find a time to meet the party. Of course, you don't need to look like you're seeking that party out; it should seem like a chance encounter. Also, this probably goes without saying, but when you first meet them, don't mention the charge at that time.

As noted above, each person who's assigning a charge to a party has a copy of the exact wording of the Prosecutor's indictment. If the party asks, the person can say that one of the Prosecutor's assistants provided this text. Give this paper to the party so that they can remember what the charge actually says!

Assigning the charges will happen right after lunch. It's easiest to follow the party out of the tavern and then talk to them. Doing this immediately after lunch prevents you from having to search the camp for them; doing it outside the tavern (rather than inside) makes it easier for the party to listen and focus.

What the Accused Says

This tells – guess what – what the accused person has to say about their charge. In general, the accused people will only give this information to parties who ask them about the charge; they don't run around randomly proclaiming their guilt or innocence.

The SECRET Truth

A brief summary of the actual truth behind the charge is listed here, in hopes that knowing the real story will help people see how their own information fits in with the larger picture.

Of course, this is still SECRET information. Please read it, but remember that it doesn't get told to the participants!

Clue-Type Information

This is information that the staff people listed in boldface should give only to the party that is investigating that issue.

In some cases, the party may come to you and ask you questions, in which it's relatively easy to pass the specified information along. But in many cases, the party won't ever ask you a question about this, either because they haven't figured out enough yet, or because you have information that possibly even you don't realize is relevant.

In this latter case, you need to work harder to convey your information. Start thinking now about what sort of conversational opening you might use so this information doesn't seem like a completely odd topic of conversation. If, for instance, you need to give out a piece of information about an article of jewelry, you might start by noticing and complimenting a party-member on a piece of jewelry she's wearing. Then, you can segue the conversation into the information you need to give out.

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Each person's paragraph of Clue-Type Information ends with a sentence or two which is italicized and contained within square brackets. This text attempts to explain how the information each person is giving out fits in with the larger picture. DON'T give this information to the party; it's provided only so staffers understand why we're giving out certain information.

Regardless of what info you give out, you should of course try to make this a cool experience for them, so that they really feel like they've discovered the information themselves.

Revelations

This is the information that will hopefully allow the party to figure out the actual truth behind their assigned charge. If a party is really astute, asks the right questions, and/or makes some lucky guesses, it's entirely possible that they'll figure out their charge before Sunday morning. That's fine. However, there's also a very big chance that they won't. After all, they're working on their party paths, fighting monsters, saving the barony, etc. The Revelations are almost all scheduled to happen on Sunday; they help make sure that each group gets the information it needs to solve the assigned charge.

Since this plot centers around a trial, there are two components: The party has to learn the truth, AND they have to present this information in a compelling way during the trial itself. Even before the trial happens, the party may have some difficult decisions to make. Some of the people with accusations against them are hiding the truth in order to protect someone else.

The party will have to decide: do they reveal the truth against this person's wishes? Do they somehow protect the "someone else" from hearing what they have to say? Or do they convince the accused person that there's a good reason to be honest? The choice is up to the party, so as always, we'll all need to be on our toes!

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In

This is something new we're trying!

In the past, many parties presenting their information at the trial are speaking aloud about the charge for the very first time. This leads to including extraneous information and/or omitting critical facts. We're now assigning one staff character to each party. This character will approach the party after all the revelations scenes are complete and will encourage the party to present to them as though they're speaking at the trial. This will be a rehearsal for the party, and hopefully these staff can gently nudge the parties to be clear, concise and compelling as needed!

Note that some of these staff are people the party has already met - sometimes the person who assigned the charge in the first place - while some of them are meeting the party for the first time. In the latter case, the encounter might feel a bit random, but that's okay.

Because each of these staff will be assigned to a specific party, this section reminds that staffer of the key points of this charge. Although we still want to let the party take the lead and present the information in their own way, it is hard to explain the charge without hitting these key points, so if the party isn't mentioning one or more of them, the staffer might need to ask leading questions ("But then why would he have claimed he was guilty?" or whatever) to draw out these points.

Staff doing these check-ins should please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

We'll talk more about this during the Staff Briefing, and staff should also feel free to bring any questions about this to the EMs!

Milton Peacock, charged with Embezzlement

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 849 of the Lyrian Code of Law, Milton Peacock is hereby charged with embezzlement: at some time during the period beginning on or about September the 1st and continuing through till the present day, in this year 994 of the common calendar, the embezzlement of monies totaling at least 12,000 royals from the collective entity known as the Peacock Family Singers and confirmed per the defendant's own freely-given testimony.

Common Knowledge:

About a month ago, a group of musicians called the Peacock Family Singers arrived in World's Edge. Initially, band manager Milton Peacock was seeking songwriting support from Inspirations Unlimited, but although he wasn't taken on as a client, the band has stayed around working on new material. According to rumors, Justice Orion Wilde received an anonymous note accusing Milton of stealing a great deal of money from the band's coffers. Apparently, when questioned about this matter, Milton confessed, saying he had significant gambling debts and had stolen to cover them. Since he manages the group's finances, Milton had clear opportunity to take this money, but most people find the idea surprising, partially because he doesn't necessarily seem the type, but mostly because it hadn't occurred to anyone that the band had this much to steal.

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, JACK JOHNSON approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Milton Peacock. Jack explains that he hasn't known Milton for long, since Jack only arrived in town a few days ago. Still, Milton has been nothing but welcoming, even inviting Jack to stay with the Peacock Family Singers. Jack tells the party that yes, this certainly seems like an open-and-shut case: from what he's been told, Justice Orion Wilde received an anonymous tip accusing Milton of stealing a huge amount - 12 thousand royals! - from the Peacock Family Singers. As the band's manager, Milton is the one with access to this money, and when questioned about the matter, he confessed to everything. Jack acknowledges that this does not look good for Milton. Still, Jack feels sorry for Milton. Apparently Milton had significant gambling debts and used the money to pay them off. Perhaps Milton was being threatened by the people he owed money to! Jack tells the party that maybe Milton can plead that he acted in self defense in this case? Surely there must be some sort of extenuating circumstances here, Jack says. Milton seems like such a good man. Jack tells the party that he'd really appreciate it if they could look into this charge against Milton.

What Milton Peacock Says:

I'm sorry, but it's true: I'm guilty of stealing all that money.

The SECRET Truth:

Milton didn't steal any money from the Peacock Family Singers; no one did. There's almost no money in the bands' account because they were already broke. Milton wrote the anonymous tip because he's trying desperately to keep the band together, and he's hoping that by sacrificing himself, he can generate publicity for the band and make them successful. What even Milton doesn't know is that his semi-secret girlfriend Miscellania is rich. On Saturday evening, she's going to deposit enough money into the PFS account to cover the amount she believes Milton stole.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from WAYLON (orange):

On Friday night, JACK JOHNSON should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Jack needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Jack doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! *[This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]*

There is a poster **PROP** in the tavern promoting the Peacock Family Singers concert, which will be happening Sunday at 8pm. The poster is written in a psychedelic 70's-style font, except that the lowercase i's are all dotted with a stylized peacock-eye shape:



DUSTY PEACOCK tells the party that she can't imagine the rumors about Milton Peacock stealing 12 thousand royals could possibly be true. Milton is the kindest man in the whole world and he would never do such a thing. Dusty acknowledges that Milton confessing to the crime is perplexing. Maybe Milton just... forgot he didn't do this? Dusty tells the party that although she just knows Milton isn't the one who stole the money, it's still exciting to think about the band having earned 12 thousand royals. She knew they were doing well, but she never dreamed they were doing *that well!* [*The Peacock Family Singers weren't doing that well. They were (and are) nearly broke, which is why Milton is trying this last-ditch effort where he sacrifices himself to get publicity for the band. Of course Dusty doesn't know or say this.*]

DONNA PEACOCK tells the party that Milton Peacock has a lot of nerve. Donna clarifies that she doesn't mean that Milton stole 12 thousand royals from them; she knows Milton wouldn't do such a thing. But someone did, and that means the band has been doing better than any of the other Peacocks could have dreamed. Donna tells the party that for years now, she's been asking Milton to get her her own tent, ideally one with a built-in heating and cooling system. Has Milton done this, Donna asks rhetorically? No, he has not! She's also been asking for an upgraded wardrobe. And again, Milton has told her no! Donna tells the party that this is insane, given the band had plenty of money to spend! If Milton had bought her a light-up makeup mirror when she asked, there would have been less money in the account for someone to steal! The least Milton could have done is given her a raise given that the band is doing so well! [*The Peacock Family Singers weren't doing that well. They were (and are) nearly broke, which is why Milton is trying this last-ditch effort where he sacrifices himself to get publicity for the band. Of course Donna doesn't know or say this.*]

JONI PEACOCK tells the party that nothing about this story, where Milton embezzled 12 thousand royals from the band, makes any sense. It's not that Milton couldn't take money out of the Peacock account if he wanted to. He's the one who manages all of the band's finances, so he could absolutely do this. But, Joni tells the party, she can't imagine how the band managed to accumulate that much money. Nor can she imagine how Milton would possibly accrue such significant gambling debts. 12 thousand royals is a huge amount of money! None of this makes any sense, Joni says. [*This is all completely true.*]

EDWIN DAVIES tells the party that only a week or so ago, he heard that rock and roll fellow Milton Peacock expounding about how "all publicity is good publicity." This is patently absurd, Edwin says. Now it's come to light that Milton stole a great deal of money from the band's account. It's lucky some concerned citizen wrote an anonymous tip alerting Justice Orion Wilde to this crime, and lucky too that Justice Wilde was able to force a confession from Milton! Edwin tells the party that Milton is no doubt regretting his foolish stance on publicity now that he himself is notorious! [*Milton isn't regretting his stance at all, since publicity for the band is the whole reason he's manufactured this crime. It's possible this comment will help the party start thinking along these lines.*]

PEARL BRYCE tells the party she's writing an article about the embezzling of all that money from the Peacock Family Singers. She hates to do it, because that Mister Milton Peacock seems like a real stand-up fella. But 12 thousand royals! Golly, that's a lot of moolah, and her readers are gonna want to hear about how those Peacock folks had so much and then had it all taken away. [*Publicity for the band is the whole reason Milton's manufactured this crime. It's possible this comment will help the party start thinking along these lines.*]

CAL COLEMAN tells the party that he'd originally assumed that those Peacock Singers people were some sort of bad joke. Whoever heard of a commercially viable band with 10 people? The band's whole look and feel was lame. Cal tells the party that now he's updating his assessment, because if the band had 12 thousand royals for that manager of theirs to embezzle they must be doing something right. Cal knows a couple guys who're in music promotion and he's going to contact them about booking a gig or two. [*Publicity for the band is the whole reason Milton's manufactured this crime, and comments like this one suggest it's working.*]

HUXLEY tells the party that he's been listening to the Peacock Family Singers for years. He liked them long before they got so popular, and now that the band is in the news because of their manager embezzling all that money, they're probably going to sell out and become completely mainstream. Ugh. [*Publicity for the band is the whole reason Milton's manufactured this crime, and comments like this one suggest it's working.*]

MILTON PEACOCK tells the party that he very much regrets taking all that money away from the Peacock Family Singers. He hid his gambling from the band and from his good friend Miscellania, and recently his debts spiraled completely out of control. Milton says that he knew it was wrong to steal the money, but that he just hadn't known what else to do. He tells the party that he's hopeful the Peacock Family Singers will be able to bounce back from this financial loss. The band's star is really on the rise! They're sounding better than ever before and really upping the PIZAZZ! He asks the party if they've seen the posters in the tavern about the free show the band is performing on Sunday evening. Milton explains that his friend Miscellania made the posters for them - she's done a bit of graphic design - and they came out great! If the party has questions about the gambling, Milton answers them well (that is, he doesn't make it clear he's lying) and as vaguely as possible (e.g. there are bad guys in another town that he owed all the money to.) [*This*

encounter has several goals: it needs to at least sort of sell the idea of Milton's gambling, to balance out all the comments saying he couldn't have done this. It needs to raise the idea that Milton cares for Miscellania and brings her up often without him actually calling her his girlfriend. And as much as possible, it needs to show Milton continuing to turn the focus back on the PFS.]

CHARLIE PEACOCK tells the party that he's not sure most of the other Peacocks know this, but Milton brought the band to World's Edge because he wanted to work with Melados, the muse of music. Charlie tells the party that he tried to tell Milton that this wasn't necessary, that they have a lot of great songs and that Milton continues to write more, but Milton wouldn't listen. Charlie explains that his older brother has always been hyper-focused on making the band a commercial success, and he thought maybe better songs would do that. Charlie says that the reality is that it's really hard to cover expenses with a 10-person band. The Peacock Family Singers are great musically, but they're not necessarily a band that's commercially viable enough to support all those people full time. Charlie says that he doesn't see this as a problem; maybe it means that some or all of them need to work part-time at something else. But Milton didn't want to consider that. Charlie tells the party that Milton went to Inspirations Unlimited and talked to Nemaia, and Nemaia turned him away because she said Milton already has all he needs, musically. Charlie points out that this is in fact what he himself has been saying all along. Charlie says that Milton's visit to Inspirations Unlimited wasn't completely a waste because it seems like his brother has become friendly with Miscellania, one of the muses. *If and only if the party asks about Milton stealing money from the band, Charlie says that he just doesn't understand this and that Milton refuses to talk to him about it. [Charlie's comment is important because he knows more about what's going on with the PFS than anyone but Milton, and he's able to give the party a bunch of context for what's going on here. Charlie is right: it IS really hard to cover expenses with a 10 person band. Although it seems like Milton is focused mostly on success, he's only doing it because he's trying to keep everyone employed while keeping their sprawling adopted family together.]*

ELLIOTT PEACOCK tells the party that his parents died a long time ago - his father before he was even born, and his mother when he was only five - and that his brothers, Milton especially, raised him. Elly says that he doesn't believe these stories about Milton stealing all that money from the band, not even if Milton is the one telling the stories. He tells the party that the Peacock Family Singers have been touring as a band for more than two decades now, and in that time he's never seen Milton do anything that's not in the best interest of the band. They weren't always ten people like they are now. Elly tells the party that he remembers 8 or so years ago, when Mick joined the band. Milton and Elly had gone to see him perform. Mick was so good, but it was almost hard to watch him because there was so much anger in him that you could almost see it spilling out of him. There's a lot of great music that's fueled by rage, Elly says, but this wasn't like that. They'd talked with Mick after the show and gods, this anger just seemed like it was festering in him. It was a bad situation with that band, with the place Mick was in his head. Elly confesses to the party that as much talent as he saw in Mick, it made him nervous, taking someone like that on board. Milton, though, had made up his mind. He convinced Mick to join them, and it turned out Milton was right. Away from those guys he'd been living and performing with, Mick's anger cooled down a lot. Elly tells the party Mick won't ever be the most easygoing guy, but that he seems a lot happier now. And there's no denying he's super talented. Milton is great at that, at seeing what's needed. Elly refuses to believe he'd do anything to hurt the other Peacocks. *[Milton wouldn't do anything to hurt the other Peacocks; his confession is intended to help them. This comment hopefully lets the party see a little bit of Milton's tendency to "take in strays", which is a key part of Milton's personality and helps explain why the band needs money. Hopefully knowing this will also make it more satisfying when the party saves him.]*

SHAWN PEACOCK tells the party that he's been with the Peacock Family Singers for almost 10 years now. He's still not entirely sure why they took him on, except that Milton Peacock is a really good-hearted person and signed Shaun on as a bit of a charity case. That's the kind of thing Milton does all the time, Shaun says. Not that the other Peacocks are charity cases, but just... Milton has a tendency to take in strays. Shaun tells the party he remembers seeing Dusty play for the first time, probably 5 or so years ago. She had the voice of an angel - still does - and just this complete openness about her where you could see right into her heart. The show was wrapping up and there were some guys talking about a party they were going to and asking Dusty to join them. Shaun tells the party that it was very, very clear these weren't good guys... very clear, that is, to everybody except Dusty. She trusts everyone implicitly and she was all set to go off with those men. Milton was watching that and he decided right then and there to talk to Dusty about joining the Peacocks. That's just how Milton is, Shaun says. If Milton took some money from the Peacock Family Singers account, then it's because he needed it. *[This comment hopefully lets the party see a little bit of Milton's tendency to "take in strays", which is a key part of Milton's personality and helps explain why the band needs money. Hopefully knowing this will also make it more satisfying when the party saves him.]*

OBSIDIAN tells the party that he doesn't know what's in Stevie Peacock's history and he doesn't need to know, but it's clear she has reasons to be slow to trust people. He's glad she's found herself a group of people who'll have her back. He doesn't know the specifics of her joining the Peacock Family Singers - the band has been around for almost 25 years, but she's only been with them for the past 2 or 3 - but she told him "Milton Peacock gave me music and it's the only thing I found better than booze to shut up the voices in my head." Obsidian says he hadn't expected the Peacock Family Singers to stay around as long as they have, but it's been nice having them in town, which is not something he says about just anybody. *[This comment hopefully lets the party see a little bit of Milton's tendency to "take in strays", which is a key part of Milton's personality and helps explain why the band needs money. Hopefully knowing this will also make it more satisfying when the party saves him.]*

DORITO tells the party that she admits she didn't take much to Donna Peacock when meeting her for the first time. Maybe that's because Donna's beautiful and knows it. But, Dorito tells the party, there was one late night in the tavern when she and Donna got to talking and it changed her whole opinion. Donna told her that she gives Milton Peacock a hard time, saying he forced her to join the

Peacock Family Singers because she'd glam them up. Donna then said that while this is a little true, she knew if Milton hadn't brought her onboard she'd probably be rich and famous and all alone somewhere. Dorito tells the party that this was a lot more self-awareness than she'd given Donna credit for. She's not sure Donna knows this was likely Milton's motivation all along, but hey, you can't have everything. *[This comment hopefully lets the party see a little bit of Milton's tendency to "take in strays", which is a key part of Milton's personality and helps explain why the band needs money. Hopefully knowing this will also make it more satisfying when the party saves him.]*

DIMITRI is on the party's path and is their penultimate step. When talking with them on Saturday, he tells them where and when he'll meet them on Sunday. At this time, Dimitri decides he should write down the time and place for the party so they don't forget. He pulls a pen **PROP** from a pouch and then pats his pockets looking for a scrap of paper. When he finds one and pulls it out, the paper **PROP** turns out to be an autograph from Milton Peacock. Dimitri confesses that he was kind of joking when he'd asked Milton for the autograph, but it was clear Milton was excited to be asked so Dimitri just went with it. But he's fine giving the paper to the party. After Dimitri writes the time and place on the paper and hands it over, the party will see that it says "Dimitri - Thanks for being a terrific fan! Milton Peacock" The i's in the note are dotted with Milton's quick version of the "Peacock i" like on the poster. Note that Dimitri doesn't call attention to the handwriting at all. *[Recognizing Milton's handwriting will matter on Sunday, when the party sees the anonymous note.]*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Milton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'M' at the beginning.

KORA PEACEKEEPER tells the party that she met that nice man Milton Peacock. He was writing out a list of things he needed to do, and Peacekeeper couldn't help but noticing how fancy Milton's handwriting is. She tells the party that she'd asked him if all Lyrians had such elaborate penmanship and he'd laughed and told her no. Apparently Milton taught himself to write in a fancy way because it has more of something he called "PIAZZ." Peacekeeper tells the party that she's not sure she knows what that means, but that Lyrians are very interesting to her. *[Although Peacekeeper doesn't specifically reference the "Peacock i's" in Milton's handwriting, this comment reminds them a little that Milton's handwriting is unique, a fact that will matter when they see the anonymous note on Sunday.]*

MALACHI tells the party that he's heard Milton Peacock stole money to cover his gambling debts. Malachi says that he doesn't like to trash talk anyone, but it doesn't surprise him that Milton is losing money gambling. He explains that he played poker with Milton several weeks ago. During that game, Malachi says, he had to keep reminding Milton of the ranking of the different hands. Milton was all set to give the pot to Malachi because Malachi had a pair of kings and Malachi had to explain that Milton's full house was a bunch better than a pair. *[Malachi doesn't say this, but it might strike the party as strange that anyone could gamble enough to lose thousands of royals without knowing at least a little bit about poker.]*

KULLIS TOOLFORGER tells the party that it's very exciting to be here in World's Edge! He's hoping to learn as much about Lyrian culture as he can while here! Toolforger says that he heard that Milton Peacock was a real gambler and he asked Milton to teach him to play cards. He tells the party that Milton attempted to do this but that nothing Milton said made much sense to him. Toolforger thought he simply wasn't following, and Milton appeared to want to cut the lesson quite short, so he dropped the matter. He tells the party that he has since heard that Milton has very significant gambling debts. Toolforger wonders if perhaps Milton isn't a very good card player and this is why he has lost so much money? *[Toolforger doesn't know or say this, but Milton really isn't a card player. It might strike the party as strange that anyone could gamble enough to lose thousands of royals without knowing at least a little about card games.]*

KOREOS tells the party how much he enjoys working with Miscellania. He's not sure he's ever known anyone who's good at so many things! She's great at interior design and winemaking! She's done a little investing here and there, and dabbled in cartography. She's really good at kickboxing! Oh, and masonry! *[Koreos can list a bunch of diverse skills, but the one that matters more as far as the party's concerned is investing. The party doesn't know it yet, but Miscellania is rich, a fact that's going to matter on Sunday.]*

LEXIA tells the party she's so glad she's friends with Miscellania. Miscellania is so friendly and down-to-earth despite being good at so many things! She's skilled at origami and archery! She's done more than her fair share of investing and taxidermy. Oh, and whistling! She's great at both bookkeeping and beekeeping, although maybe not at the same time. Although.... *[Lexia can list a bunch of diverse skills, but the one that matters more as far as the party's concerned is investing. The party doesn't know it yet, but Miscellania is rich, a fact that's going to matter on Sunday.]*

HONORÉ VALERIUS tells the party that he wishes he could do more to help the Peacock Family Singers, especially now that so much money has been stolen from them. Honoré tells the party that the band's manager Milton Peacock has been talking to him for several weeks, asking if Honoré had any contacts with venues that might want to book the band. Honoré tells the party that he hadn't realized how much money the band had accumulated. He confesses that Milton seemed very anxious about lining up bookings for the band, which made Honoré think they weren't having much success in that area. Of course, there are rumors now that it was Milton Peacock himself who stole from the band, so perhaps he was so focused on lining up jobs because he knew the band's coffers had been emptied. The rest of the band seem like very good people, and Honoré feels for them. *[Honoré doesn't know or say it, of course, but this inability to find bookings is what motivated Milton to make his false claim in a last-ditch attempt to get publicity for the band.]*

ARIA MORGAN tells the party that she wishes she could do more to help the Peacock Family Singers, but now that the theater has burned, there's not much she can offer them. It's such a shame, because there are so many talented musicians there. Aria tells the party that the band's manager Milton Peacock had been talking to her for several weeks now, encouraging her to book the band for a show in the Morg, even though renovations weren't yet finished. Milton had a real vision for the show, Aria says, but it was also evident that he was feeling really anxious about getting something lined up. Aria got the sense that the band hadn't been having much success getting bookings. She tells the party that she understands the difficulty. After all, not all venues can accommodate a band of that size, and not all budgets can pay a band of that size. This is all a moot point now, Aria says sadly, given that the theater is gone. *[Aria's comment reinforces that part of the PFS's difficulty is that the band is quite large and also re-establishes that Milton was struggling to find bookings for the band. Aria doesn't know or say it, of course, but this inability to find bookings is what motivated Milton to make his false claim in a last-ditch attempt to get publicity for the band.]*

PHYLLIS FIERI tells the party that she's a little worried about Milton Peacock. Every time she sees him, he seems more and more anxious about finding some bookings for the Peacock Family Singers. Phyllis tells the party that not everyone knows how to manage stress like she does. Her method is a 55-minute kickboxing class followed by 3 glasses of chardonnay. Milton needs to try that before he gives himself an ulcer, Phyllis says. Although... dammit! She was supposed to be at kickboxing right now! *[Phyllis doesn't know or say it, of course, but this inability to find bookings is what motivated Milton to make his false claim in a last-ditch attempt to get publicity for the band.]*

NEMAIA tells the party that Miscellania has seemed really happy lately, which she loves to see. She's been spending a lot of time with Milton Peacock and Nemaia is guessing that this is the source of Miscellania's happiness. Nemaia confesses that she's worried about what will happen if Milton is convicted of embezzlement. Nemaia acknowledges that her muses are all adults, but still, she hates to see them hurt, and she's afraid there is hurt in Miscellania's future. *[This serves to remind the party about Miscellania and Milton's budding romance. It's also a little foreshadowing, because Miscellania is also worried about what happens if Milton is convicted, so much so that she's working to prevent that from happening.]*

EMBER tells the party that she heard someone saying that Miscellania had been spending a lot of time with Milton Peacock. Ember says that hadn't made any sense to her, because Miscellania has a lot going for her and Milton is... whatever. But then Ember heard that Milton had embezzled 12 thousand royals, which she has to admit is kind of a baller move. So maybe she understands his appeal after all. *[This serves to remind the party about Miscellania and Milton's budding romance.]*

ESMERELDA tells the party that sometime this summer, she read Miscellania's palm for her. When she did, she told Miscellania that she saw a tall and mysterious stranger about to come into her life. At the time, Miscellania had laughed at that, but now here she is, spending all her spare time with this Milton Peacock. Esmerelda doesn't like to say "I told you so", but in this case she will anyway. *[This serves to remind the party about Miscellania and Milton's budding romance.]*

SYLVIE VALERIUS tells the party that she was concerned about Milton Peacock. He takes his responsibilities as the manager of the Peacock Family Singers very seriously, she knows, and he's been increasingly anxious about finding bookings for the band. Sylvie tells the party that she's seen Milton with Miscellania a number of times recently, and every time, both of them are animated and laughing. This is so nice to see, Sylvie says. *[This serves to remind the party about Miscellania and Milton's budding romance.]*

BELLE BISHOP tells the party that she does *not* want to be one of those awful brides who thinks everybody should get married but that she's seen Milton Peacock going for walks with Miscellania and they are *adorable* together. Are they a couple? She doesn't know. Perhaps they're good friends. Or maybe Milton is a client of Inspirations Unlimited. Belle asks the party if it would be too terrible if she encouraged Miscellania to bring Milton as her plus-one to the wedding? Yes. That would be overstepping. She won't do that. Which is a shame because Milton and Miscellania? *Adorable.* *[She's not wrong.]*

Saturday after 10pm, **FENWICK MICHAELS** approaches the party. He's visibly distressed. He asks the party if he can talk to them someplace quieter. Once there, he tells the party that something has happened and he doesn't know what to do about it. Fenwick explains that just a few minutes earlier, that device - the Bellaphone, people call it? - in the prosecutor's pavilion made a terrible ringing sound. Fenwick has never touched one of those things before and he didn't know what to do, but no one else was there and the thing kept ringing and ringing, so eventually he picked it up. At this point, someone Fenwick couldn't even see began speaking to him. The voice wanted to talk to Nina, but Nina wasn't there. Then it asked for Celeste, who also wasn't there, and then for Justice Wilde himself who of course also wasn't there. It was clear the voice wanted to talk to anyone but Fenwick and to be certain, Fenwick himself also wished very much for this. But there was nothing to be done about it. The voice told him it was coming from the bank in Mystal. It explained that when Nina contacted the bank earlier, it had checked very thoroughly before telling her that the account there registered to the Peacock Family Singers contained 23 royals. Fenwick tells the party that the voice then got agitated and explained that it had checked the account again just now but that the account now contains 12,023 royals. Fenwick reports that the voice then informed him that this is 12 thousand more royals than before, which Fenwick found a little insulting, since he is perfectly capable of basic math even if he does not care for speaking to disembodied voices. He tells the party that he suggested that there must have been an error previously about the bank account containing only 23 royals, but then it was the voice's turn to be insulted. It asserted strongly that no, the 12 thousand royals had not been there previously. Fenwick asked the voice where the money had come from, but it told him that that information was not available at this time. It then reminded him that today is Saturday and quite late and the Rites of Remembrance, all of which Fenwick already knew. Since he couldn't think of anything else to ask, he told the voice goodbye. Fenwick tells the party that he doesn't know what to do now. He has attempted to find Nina but she is nowhere to be found. He

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attempted to talk to Justice Wilde or to Celeste, but Justice Wilde reminded him that he - Justice Wilde, not Fenwick - is off duty and not to be disturbed. Fenwick doesn't know who else to talk to and he heard the party had been looking into the charge against Milton Peacock, so he's talking to them now. Fenwick tells the party that he was there when Milton Peacock was questioned. Milton Peacock was assuredly not coerced in any way, and he definitively confessed to stealing the 12 thousand royals. But in this case, Fenwick asks, why is this money now in the account? This seems deeply problematic. Milton Peacock should not be convicted of embezzling if no money is missing. Fenwick doesn't know what to do. *[Fenwick doesn't know or say it, but the money that's in the account now was deposited earlier in the day by Miscellania. The party probably won't know that yet, but hopefully this will help them make sense of their Sunday revelations.]*

Neither **MILTON PEACOCK**, **MISCELLANIA** or **NINA BLISS** are out Saturday after 10pm.

ORION WILDE and **CELESTE WILDE** are out but are unwilling to speak to the party about this charge Saturday after 10pm.

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, lightens, to the hot glistening gold of midday. The sand burns beneath your feet and the sun glitters, tricksy. Nothing is as it seems.

Far in the distance you see it, and you race in that direction. Respite, in this dry and deceptive place. Lush green and saturated blue, this beautiful oasis. The birds wait around the water. Exotic and lovely, their eyes shine in the desert brightness. They crowd together - a flock, a flight, a family - and their emerald and sapphire feathers ruffle in the welcome shade. As one, they raise their faces to sing and then dip their beaks to drink.

But what is this? Not an oasis. Only a mirage. They are not truly birds, they are not truly family, and there is naught but sand here to drink. Nothing is as it seems. They lift their heads again in the arid air, their song a shriek of confusion and betrayal, and they scatter.

She comes into the clearing so quiet you almost miss her. She is all things beautiful and bountiful. Her gown is as white as the shimmering sand, her hair and jewels are the lustrous gold of the sun, but her eyes are the cold sweet blue of the far-distant ocean. Those cool knowing eyes meet yours. She lifts a pitcher and her gaze never leaves you as she begins to pour. The water runs out upon the thirsty sand. Surely her pitcher cannot hold such a flood, and yet in truth, the waters begin to puddle. The birds turn their heads, unsure. They want to be called back into the fold. The pool ripples clear and clean and refreshing at her feet. Maybe the deceit and the truth are one and the same. Maybe she has enough to give, if only there is willingness to take. Maybe things are indeed what they seem, and as you ponder, the darkness rises once more and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision suggests there's something deceptive going on among the Peacocks - specifically, Milton's confession - and hopefully also raises the idea of Miscellania providing the replacement money.

Sunday morning at breakfast, DRAMINA approaches the party. She apologizes for bothering them so early, but tells them that a strange thing has happened. She tells them that they seem like kind people and that she's not sure where else to turn. She explains that she's just heartbroken about the loss of the theater in town. It was being restored, but it burned on Thursday and no one knows why. Regardless, it's a huge loss for the community. Dramina tells the party that late yesterday, she had an idea: this probably isn't something she should really be talking about much, but her dear friend Miscellania is really well-off, financially speaking. Actually, better than well-off. Rich, as Dramina understands it. It's not surprising, probably; Miscellania is good at everything and she invested some money and turned it into a lot. Anyway, Dramina says, she went to Miscellania late yesterday, with the idea that Miscellania could loan some of that money to the theater, so it could be rebuilt. Dramina knows this is a very big request, but she also knows that Miscellania loved the theater. Miscellania cried with her over the loss of the theater, but then she told Dramina that unfortunately, she couldn't help because... her money was gone. Dramina tells the party that Miscellania absolutely refused to say anything more on the subject. She explains that she's now very worried about her friend. Could Miscellania be in trouble of some sort? Dramina doesn't know what to do. It's not her place to pry into Miscellania's private affairs, of course. Truly, she shouldn't even be telling the party about this. But... Miscellania is her good friend, and if she's in trouble, Dramina really wants to help. She's just not sure what to do. [Although Dramina doesn't know or say it, Miscellania's money is gone because she secretly deposited it in the Peacock Family Singers account, to replace the money she thinks Milton stole. Note that although Dramina says she's very concerned about the theater burning, she shouldn't actually let the party get too focused on that, since another party's charge focuses on this heavily! Lastly, note that if Dramina is able to interact with the party at all on Saturday, this will help her approach here feel much less random!]

*Sunday around 10:15am, after the party has finished their party path, **CELESTE WILDE** approaches them. (Note that the party will likely have **URSULA SMIRCH** with them. Although Ursula is under the influence of the Testimony'd wine, she should stay largely quiet during this scene.) During this scene, Celeste should act mostly as though she's just thinking aloud rather than actually sharing information with them. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]*

For the rest of the weekend, Celeste has been an upbeat figure, but now the party sees her at her lowest point. She's talking largely to herself, saddened by the fact that her husband Orion no longer seems to care much about the justice he is tasked with meting out. This bizarre case against Milton Peacock, Celeste says, is the kind of conundrum that would formerly have captivated Orion. He wouldn't have rested until he'd made sense of its contradictions, but now, he seems willing to ignore them completely. Listing those contradictions aloud, Celeste recaps for herself (and for the party):

- An anonymous tip accused Milton Peacock of embezzling a huge amount - 12000 royals - from the band.
- When Nina Bliss contacted the bank in Mystal on Friday, they confirmed that the Peacock Family Singers' account was nearly empty.
- When confronted with this accusation, Milton Peacock confessed to the crime, citing outstanding gambling debts as the reason he'd stolen the money.
- Last night, the bank in Mystal contacted the prosecutor's pavilion via Bellaphone and talked to Fenwick. The bank asserted that the 12000 royals *was* in the band's account, which doesn't make any sense.
- Celeste would like to speak to the writer of the anonymous accusatory note, but of course they don't know who that is.

As she says this last point, Celeste gesticulates with the paper **PROP** she holds, the anonymous note. Unlike everything else she's said, which the party has already heard, the party hasn't ever seen the note. Hopefully they ask to see it now; if they don't, Celeste should recap a bit more, continuing to call attention to it where possible.

The note doesn't say much: "To whom it may concern: Milton Peacock has stolen at least 12000 royals from the Peacock Family Singers. Don't take my word for it. Check the band's account: #009342 at the Federated Bank of Mystal. It's almost empty. - a concerned friend" Except that the i's in the letter are dotted with Milton's distinctive "peacock i." Hopefully the party notices this and comments on it. If they don't, Celeste should check in with the Basement.

Neither **MILTON PEACOCK** or **MISCELLANIA** are out Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, **MILA** approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Milton Peacock. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Mila encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Milton Peacock lied about embezzling money; in truth, there never was any money to embezzle.
- He did so in the hopes that it would make the band seem successful and generate publicity so that the band - and, more importantly, the family - could stay together.
- Unbeknownst to Milton, Miscellania deposited 12,000 royals into the account from her own funds because she loves Milton and wants to save him.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Mila can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Mila can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

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Kerrick Dealbinder, charged with Petty Larceny

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 91-Section D of the Lyrian Code of Law, Kerrick Dealbinder is hereby charged with petty larceny: On the day of October the 2nd, in this year 994 of the common calendar, the theft of an item belonging to Tanya Peacock, described as "a silvertone tiara set with simulated gemstones", valued at 8 royals.

Common Knowledge:

As many people know, Tanya Peacock (of the Peacock Family Singers) will celebrate her birthday on Sunday. An excitable person who enjoys her birthday very much, Tanya ordered a costume tiara for the occasion. Although she received a notification that the item was delivered, Tanya never got the package. On Friday mid-morning, the Makai sect arrived in World's Edge to Walk the Path of Epiphany, and when Kerrick Dealbinder came into the tavern at lunchtime, he was wearing the crown. **PROP** Outraged, Tanya asserts Dealbinder stole her package. Dealbinder, however, says he found the crown in a chest hidden near Starwatcher's Hill and maintains that the item is rightfully his.

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, **KULLIS TOOLFORGER** approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Kerrick Dealbinder. Toolforger tells the party that when the Makai arrived in town on Friday morning, they began setting up their camp site. He himself was making some repairs to their canopy, which had been ripped on their journey. Dealbinder had no specific responsibilities around the camp and had gone for a short walk. Toolforger explains that, when his friend returned, Dealbinder was sporting surprising headgear: a crown! He told the other Makai that he had found the crown in a chest hidden in the woods nearby and that he intended to wear this item from now on. Toolforger acknowledges that this seemed a rather incredible story. The Makai have heard stories that the strong magical energy in Moreth sometimes manifests treasure out of thin air, but Toolforger confesses that he never believed such things were possible... and yet it now seems these tales are true after all. Not everyone is a believer, however. A woman from town named Tanya Peacock claimed that the crown was actually hers and that, rather than finding this item in the woods, Dealbinder had stolen it from her! Toolforger tells the party that this accusation is both upsetting and worrisome. Although the Makai are not Lyrian citizens, they have always had a good relationship with the people of World's Edge. He tells the party that he is very concerned for his good friend Kerrick Dealbinder, who he knows is not a thief. What's more, he is afraid that if this accusation is not shown to be false, it will damage the trust the townspeople have in the Makai. Toolforger tells the party he wishes Dealbinder would simply give the crown to this woman, but that his friend can be stubborn at times and has refused to do so. Toolforger says that he would greatly appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against Dealbinder.

What Kerrick Dealbinder Says:

I didn't steal anything! I found this crown, and as the Lyrian saying goes, finders are keepers!

The SECRET Truth:

The crown Kerrick Dealbinder found isn't Tanya Peacock's, which is merely delayed in shipping. *This* tiara is actually one of the crown jewels of Lyria, and it's worth a *lot* more than 8 royals. It was stolen from the royal vault in Dolorón by a ring of thieves helmed by mastermind Karla Smirch, who hid it in the woods to keep her family from finding it. The man World's Edge knows as Jack Johnson is actually an inept palace guard who's trying to recover this valuable item before anyone there learns it's missing.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from NOCTARA (purple):

On Friday night, **KULLIS TOOLFORGER** should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Toolforger needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Toolforger doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! *[This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]*

The party's traveler has lore about the Gilt Crew - trigger: the word 'Gilt' or 'Gilded' on a sign - which appears on page 210.

ADINA VALERIUS tells the party that Tanya Peacock, one of the women with that visiting family of singers, is upset about a situation, and while the Baroness is sympathetic, she is unsure that there's terribly much she can do. Adina tells the party that - as Tanya explained to her *at great length* - Tanya's birthday is coming up soon and she ordered a mail-order tiara to wear on the occasion. Tanya received a notice stating that her package had been delivered, but unfortunately the package had actually *not* been delivered. Adina tells the party she informed Tanya that this was a matter for the catalog's customer service department rather than the Baron. Perhaps this would have resolved the matter but then the visiting delegation of Makai arrived in town and Kerrick Dealbinder - one of the Makai, and a man the Baroness has met before - came into the tavern wearing what Tanya believes to be her stolen tiara. Mr. Dealbinder asserts that he found this crown in a box hidden in the woods. Adina explains that she is exceedingly grateful that Justice Orion Wilde has arrived in town and that this matter is now placed in his very competent hands rather than her own. *[This reminds the party of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

CHARLIE PEACOCK tells the party that his sister-in-law Tanya is having a birthday on Sunday. Tanya always likes making a big deal of her birthday and ordered a tiara from the Tirothian Trading Company catalog. Charlie tells the party that he thought this was a good plan, so much so that he's a little annoyed he didn't think of it first, because 8 royals - plus probably 20 more for shipping and handling; that's how they get you - seems like a small price to make Tanya so happy. Anyway, he hadn't thought much more about the subject, but then Tanya got a notice saying the package had been delivered despite the package being nowhere to be found. Charlie tells the party that he and his brothers had asked around, figuring someone else had signed for the package and it was just misplaced, but so far it hadn't turned up. Maybe that would've been the end of the matter - although knowing Tanya, there's a good chance it wouldn't have - but then on Friday a group of Makai had shown up in town and one of them walked into the tavern wearing Tanya's tiara. That, Charlie explains, means that this is now *a situation*. And to be fair, you can't blame Tanya for wanting the tiara she ordered. At this point, Charlie is just trying to stay out of the line of fire. *[This reminds the party of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

MALACHI tells the party that here's the story as he understands it: Tanya Peacock, one of those Peacock Family Singers that are currently in town, ordered a crown from a mail order catalog. Malachi had no idea you could just order a crown if you wanted one! Crazy, right? Malachi tells the party that, sadly, Tanya's crown was never delivered, even though she got a notice from the company saying that it had been. Tanya was real mad about that, and who could blame her? Malachi tells the party that on Friday, a bunch of Makai arrived in World's Edge, which is something that happens every once in a while. One of them is a friend of Malachi's, a man named Kerrick Dealbinder. He's a good guy. Malachi tells the party that he was in the tavern when the Makai came in to get some lunch, and his friend Dealbinder came in wearing a fancy tiara! The Makai have some different traditions and whatnot, but as far as Malachi knows, wearing tiaras isn't one of them. Tanya Peacock was there and she got all upset, accusing Dealbinder of stealing her crown. Dealbinder had explained that no, he'd found his crown in a box out in the woods, which Malachi agrees means this crown belongs to Dealbinder fair and square. Tanya hadn't seen it that way, or maybe she didn't believe Dealbinder's story. Malachi wishes he had another crown sitting around so he could give it to Tanya and everyone would be happy, but he doesn't. *[This reminds the party of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

NED CROCHETT tells the party that he is doing his best to make everybody happy and insure everybody gets their meals in a timely fashion, despite the unexpectedly large volume of customers this weekend and the holiday wrapping up and the trial *and* the wedding happening on Sunday. Ned explains that what he *cannot* do is verify that everyone's packages arrive safe and sound. That is beyond his control. Ned tells the party that Tanya Peacock, one of those Peacock Family Singers, ordered a crown from some mail-order catalog. Ned doesn't have a terribly high opinion of any crown you can order through the mail, but since no one asked Ned's opinion on the subject, he will keep that information to himself. Regardless, Tanya received a notice telling her that the crown had been delivered. This, Ned tells the party, is where this becomes a problem. Suddenly Tanya was very upset because apparently it was Ned's job to make sure that every package that arrives in town gets delivered to the correct person. Ned tells the party that it is in fact *not* his job to do this. Tanya made a series of accusations about "porch pirates" and et cetera. Ned does not like pirates of any sort, porch or otherwise, but there is only so much he can do here. He was hoping that this matter would die down, but then on Friday, the Makai arrived in town and one of them came into the tavern wearing exactly the sort of gaudy tiara a person might expect from a lousy mail-order catalog. Ned tells the party that he has no opinion as to the rightful ownership of the tiara but that it would make it easier to serve lunch if tavern patrons were not accusing each other of theft when everyone is just trying to eat lunch in peace. *[This reminds the party of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

TANYA PEACOCK is on this party's path and is their penultimate step, so they will be seeing her on Saturday and again on Sunday. She tells the party that the past several days have been some of the best and worst of her life. First, her very dear new friend Belle asked her to be a BRIDESMAID and obviously she said YES. Tanya tells the party that she absolutely ADORES Belle. And THEN she learned that Belle and Cary's wedding - Tanya adores Cary as well and he and Belle are SO GREAT TOGETHER - is on Sunday which is ALSO Tanya's BIRTHDAY. Tanya tells the party that she decided to order herself a beautiful TIARA to wear on the non-wedding parts of the day and she found the EXACT ONE she wanted in a catalog! Tanya explains that she was SO excited for the tiara to arrive and when she got a notice saying that it had been DELIVERED she basically SCREAMED. But then, when she went to the tavern to collect the package, it wasn't there. It wasn't outside the door or inside the door or by the back door or behind the bar. Tanya tells the party that she was just GUTTED. People were so kind and helped her look but the package was just NOWHERE. And then a group of people arrived in town - the Makai? - and one of the men - Something Something Dealbinder? - came into the tavern and he was WEARING TANYA'S TIARA. Well. Tanya tells the party that the next few hours are a bit of a BLUR but apparently this Dealbinder person is claiming that the tiara is HIS which is a BALDFACED LIE. Tanya explains to the party that she does not want

this Dealbinder man to be sent to prison but that she absolutely needs her tiara back RIGHT NOW. This is not just about the 8 royals for the tiara plus the 16 royal shipping fee but rather is about the PRINCIPLE OF THE THING. And also possibly about her PAIN and SUFFERING which has been INTENSE. *[This reminds the party of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

KIRA tells the party that she has known Kerrick Dealbinder her entire life and knows him to be a good person. Once, back when Kira was a little kid, she had a squirrel named Smoky she thought was a pet. She now understands that the squirrel was actually probably a collection of squirrels, all of whom would eat nuts out of the hands of a dumb little kid, but at the time she was very attached to Smoky. Kira tells the party she was heartbroken when she saw a coyote with a squirrel in its mouth and she'd gone crying to the nearest grownup, who happened to be Dealbinder. Dealbinder could have just laughed at her, but he hadn't. Instead he'd taken Kira into a clearing and sat real quiet with her until a squirrel happened by. Kira had been so relieved to see that Smoky was all right! She tells the party that, again, she now knows most squirrels look a lot alike, but it was a kind thing that Dealbinder had done, giving up his morning to make a little kid feel better about her non-pet. Kira then tells the party that this story Dealbinder has, of finding a crown in a box out in the woods? Sounds super fake. Kira is sure it's probably real, because Dealbinder is a very good guy. But it sounds really fake. *[All of this is totally true. Let the party make of it what they will.]*

TEKNOS tells the party that he has had the pleasure of meeting Kerrick Dealbinder before and knows him to be a good and honest man. Teknos acknowledges that this makes the current situation, where Dealbinder is claiming to have found a box out in the woods that contains a crown, rather perplexing. This story seems unlikely to be true. It is possible, Teknos says, that someone stole the box containing Tanya Peacock's tiara and then hid that box deep in the woods, but he cannot personally think of a reason anyone would have done such a thing. Perplexing! *[This comment may make the party doubt Dealbinder's story, although it is indeed true. Either way is fine.]*

KAZMIRA tells the party that she herself has had several crowns and tragically, they have all been stolen away from her. One of them was crusted all over with sapphires; it was stolen by a highwayman who wanted to present it to his own lady-love. Another of her crowns - plucked straight off her head by a bald eagle! - was made of silver set with a thousand diamonds. Kazmira's personal favorite was a crown made of crystalline laughter and the sound of singing. That one was not technically stolen; the moon himself asked her for it so pleasantly that she gave it as a gift, although she later regretted doing so. Kazmira tells the party that this story Kerrick Dealbinder is telling, where he just happened to be walking though the woods and found a box with a tiara in it? Obviously untrue. Kazmira does not believe it for a minute. *[This comment may make the party doubt Dealbinder's story, although it is indeed true. Either way is fine.]*

LINCROFT SPENCE tells the party that he's heard the unfolding drama surrounding Tanya Peacock's stolen crown. He tells the party that one of the visiting Makai, a man called Dealbinder, has the crown and claims to have found it in a box out in the woods. Lincroft tells the party that this story obviously strains credulity. In his experience, that means it's probably true. If Dealbinder were to make up a story, surely he'd craft a story more believable than this one, right? Lincroft says that he supposes it's possible Dealbinder is rather dim and this is honestly the best story he can come up with. Or perhaps Dealbinder is a genius and has purposely crafted a fiction so laughably implausible that it appears conversely true! Lincroft tells the party that sadly, the truth is probably less interesting than either of these. But he does not know what that truth might be. *[This comment may make the party doubt Dealbinder's story, although it is indeed true. Either way is fine.]*

KYSON WAYSEEKER tells the party that this is not his first trip to World's Edge, but that it is the most unsettling of the visits. He explains that he routinely scouts the perimeter of the encampment, just as he does anywhere. Multiple times since arriving in town, he has found boot prints outside the clearing. There are always two distinctly different sets of prints. Wayseeker tells the party that this is strange and worrisome. Why would anyone be watching the Makai? He tells the party that he has set multiple snares which will rain down stones or branches on anyone approaching the clearing but not on the path. Several of the snares have tripped already. Wayseeker is hoping this is enough to deter whoever is watching them. *[Wayseeker doesn't know or say it, but the Makai are being watching by both Jack Johnson and Karla Smirch, both of whom are looking for an opportunity to steal the crown back. We don't expect the party to understand this now, but perhaps it will be amusing later when they learn that both these people were thwarted by the Makai.]*

KEMMA RUNEREADER tells the party that she makes a practice of reading the runes more often when they are in an unfamiliar place, such as this visit to World's Edge. She tells the party that, strangely, she has repeatedly pulled the same runes from her bag: first the dragon rune, then the jewel, and then, surprisingly, the dragon again. It is unusual to receive the same rune twice in a reading, and yet this has happened three times now. Runereader tells the party that the dragon often signifies danger or a threat of some sort, so it was worrisome to see it appear doubled. Each time this has happened, she says, she has responded the same way: by spreading all the runes out on the ground, waving her hands and chanting a series of nonsense syllables. Runereader explains that the Makai have no hex - what the Lyrians call magic - among them, but not everyone knows that. Maybe if there is danger threatening them, she thinks, perhaps it will be scared away by the idea that she is going to use some powerful hex. Runereader has no idea if this might work or not, but it was all she could think to try. *[Runereader doesn't know or say it, but the Makai are being watching by both Jack Johnson and Karla Smirch, both of whom are looking for an opportunity to steal the crown back. We don't expect the party to understand this now, but perhaps it will be amusing later when they learn that both these people were thwarted by the Makai.]*

Any time on Saturday, **KAZIM FIRESTARTER** tells the party that he never sleeps well in an unfamiliar place. This is mostly because he is always so excited to make breakfast that he has a hard time falling back to sleep. He explains that, twice last night, he

experienced troubling dreams where someone had snuck into the encampment. Firestarter tells the party that of course this is very unlikely. The Makai have traveled to World's Edge before and have always been perfectly safe there. Still, the dreams seemed so real that when Firestarter awoke, he wasn't sure if they were dreams or reality. In fact, the first time he woke, he threw his heaviest frying pan at what was either an intruder... or possibly a shrub. Firestarter confesses that the second nightmare that woke him seemed even more real, and he flung a handful of his spiciest pepper flakes in the direction of the imaginary attacker. Firestarter admits that he should probably stop eating honeycake right before bedtime. Honestly, he is relieved that none of his fellow Makai were hit with flying cookware or spices in the middle of the night! *[Firestarter doesn't know or say it, but the Makai camp has been visited by both Jack Johnson and Karla Smirch, both of whom are looking for an opportunity to steal the crown back. We don't expect the party to understand this now, but perhaps it will be amusing later when they learn that both these people were thwarted by the Makai.]*

MICK PEACOCK tells the party that there's something disturbing about talent scout Jack Johnson, which is that he's... not a total sleazeball? Jack showed up in town on Tuesday, and in that time he hasn't made any blatantly false promises to any of the Peacock Family Singers. He hasn't made any backhanded compliments designed to play on anyone's insecurities, nor has he propositioned anyone for sex. Mick tells the party that he doesn't know what's going on here. Are they supposed to believe Jack is just a good-hearted guy who has the band's best interests at heart? Who is Jack really? *[Although Mick doesn't actually know it, Jack is indeed not a real talent scout. But he does actually have the band's best interests at heart, and maybe the party will remember and care about that on Sunday.]*

MELADOS tells the party that he's met several talent scouts in his day and that Jack Johnson is a breath of fresh air. Although Melados doesn't like to speak badly about any group of people, he has not, as a whole, found this profession to be one that encourages its practitioners to treat musical artists with much care or respect. Melados tells the party that this just serves to remind him why stereotypes are such a dangerous idea. *[Although Melados doesn't actually know it, Jack is indeed not a real talent scout. But he is actually a caring and respectful person, and maybe the party will remember and care about that on Sunday.]*

CAL COLEMAN tells the party that it's just as well talent scout Jack Johnson is sticking to backwater communities like World's Edge and cut-rate musical acts like the Peacock Family Singers, because Jack will get chewed up and spit out if he ever tries to play in the big leagues. Cal tells the party that Jack came to town on Tuesday. It should not take that many days to promise the band what they need to hear and then get them to sign on the dotted line. Jack Johnson strikes Cal as a real time-waster. What is Jack even doing with the Peacock Family Singers, listening to every single song and learning all their histories?!? If Jack ever wants to see how business actually gets done, he should take a look at Cal and maybe learn a thing or two! *[Although Cal doesn't actually know it, Jack is indeed not a real talent scout. But he is actually listening to the Peacocks and learning their histories, and maybe the party will remember and care about that on Sunday.]*

CAMERON LIGHT-ASTOR asks the party if they've ever had the experience where they're sure they've met someone before, but they can't figure out where? Light says that he could swear he's met that talent scout Jack Johnson, but he has no idea when. He asked Jack, but Jack had no recollection of ever meeting Light, so probably Light is just mistaken. Maybe Jack just has one of those faces. *[Light has indeed seen Jack before, in passing in the palace in Dolorón. Of course, Jack very much wants to keep this fact secret.]*

JACK JOHNSON doesn't need to approach the party, but if he can manage to do his goofing-up-his-alias thing, alternately referring to himself as John Jackson or whatever, that's great. Also note that Jack very much does not want to be in the same place as **UMBERTO DUNN**. If Jack and Shadow can coordinate a scene where Jack is near the party and departs rapidly when Shadow approaches, that's great, although it's not at all critical. *[Jack is, of course, not using his real name, and he's doing his best to avoid connecting with Shadow, who knows his real identity. We don't want to hammer the the party with this too hard, but if they realize it after the fact, that would be fun.]*

Any time when this charge is not being discussed, **URSULA SMIRCH** tells the party a little bit about her beautiful daughter Karla. Ursula gushes about her perfect little princess and at some point in this, she casually refers to Karla as Fang. This, she explains off-handedly to the party, was Karla's childhood nickname among their family members. "She was a biter," says Ursula affectionately, by way of explanation. *[Knowing Karla's nickname will help the party ultimately connect her to this crime, so this is important. It needs to be handled light enough so as not to seem weird, but we do also want the party to hear it. If Ursula does this interaction on Friday, that's fine; in this case she might want to casually use the name in front of the party one more time later in the weekend.]*

Any time when this charge is not being discussed, **BUZZKILL** tells the party that one of the things he, like, totally did not miss when he wasn't working at Crabtree & Evelyn's is having to wait on the Smirches when they come in the shop. The Smirches aren't there to actually make purchases, of course, but they like to "check out the competition." Buzzkill tells the party that Karla Smirch is the absolute worst to deal with. First of all, Karla is - pardon him for dropping a truth bomb - dumb as a box of rocks. Okay, whatever. Buzzkill could vibe with that. But, he tells the party, the real problem is that no matter how careful he is, he'll get busted later by Ursula for being not polite enough to her quote-unquote "little princess." Pukesville. Just because Karla has gotten everything she's ever wanted handed to her on a silver platter doesn't mean Buzzkill should get reamed for not bowing in front of her. Buzzkill tells the party that, not gonna lie, it pisses him off. Ursula Smirch should get bent, and her stupid princess of a daughter as well. *[This comment is important because it reminds the party about Karla's (seeming) lack of intelligence and the fact that she is Ursula's little princess, a fact that will help them interpret their Sunday vision correctly.]*

Any time when this charge is not being discussed, **QUINOA** tells the party that she hates to criticize, but Karla Smirch is maybe not the ripest avocado in the bowl, if you know what she means. Just that morning, she says, she encountered Karla in front of the Roamer

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camp and Karla was concerned because she wasn't sure how to find her way home. Quinoa thought she'd misunderstood at first, because... you could see the Smirches shop from where they were standing. So it really, really wasn't complicated. She tells the party that she pointed that out to Karla, but after Karla'd taken three or four steps, she turned around and said, "Um, there's a lake in the way?" In the end, Quinoa just walked Karla home. It was easier than trying to explain. [*This comment is important because it reminds the party about Karla's (seeming) lack of intelligence, which sets the stage for much of this charge..*]

Any time when this charge is not being discussed, JPEG tells the party that Ursula Smirch approached him about doing a tattoo for her. JPEG tells the party that the tattoo was supposed to be on Ursula's back, a portrait of her daughter, Karla. JPEG told Ursula he could do that. But then, he says, her list of demands for the tattoo kept growing. She'd told him she wanted Karla - her "little princess", Ursula calls her - to look completely lifelike. Ursula told him that if the design's eyes weren't as beautiful as Karla's, she wouldn't pay. And if the smile wasn't as serene, she wouldn't pay. If the nose wasn't as exquisitely perfect... hopefully the party gets the idea. JPEG tells the party that he can tell when a job is going to be not worth his while, so he'd politely informed Ursula that his schedule was already full and he'd have to turn the job down. It was probably all for the best, JPEG says. While he was talking to Ursula, Karla got upset because she wouldn't be able to see the tattoo, what with it being on Ursula's back. JPEG tried to explain that although Ursula would need a mirror to see it, Karla would be able to see it just fine. But that idea... was beyond Karla. Some jobs, JPEG says, you just walk away from... [*This comment is important because it reminds the party about Karla's (seeming) lack of intelligence and the fact that she is Ursula's little princess, a fact that will help them interpret their Sunday vision correctly. And also just because it's creepy as hell.*]

Saturday after 10pm, UMBERTO DUNN approaches the party and tells them that he just had the oddest experience. Shadow says that Light has been telling him for days now about a guy in town, Jack Johnson, whom Light was certain he knew from somewhere or other. Shadow tells the party that he'd assumed Light was mistaken... until just tonight. He explains that he was coming into the tavern just as a man was leaving, and it wasn't until the man was gone that Shadow realized he recognized the man. His name is Ethan Frank, and he's a guard at the palace in Dolorón. Shadow didn't recognize him, what with Ethan not being in uniform. Shadow tells the party he came into the tavern and asked about the man who'd just left, and someone told him that the guy in question was Jack Johnson. Shadow admits that it's pretty dark in the tavern, so he can't be positive. Maybe this guy Jack is just a real close match for Ethan Frank? That must be the case, Shadow thinks. What would a guard from the palace be doing all the way in World's Edge? Ethan is certainly not in town for the wedding, Shadow says. Ethan's a good-enough guy, Shadow says, but he's a minimally competent guard. The rumor was always that Ethan has terrible eyesight, that he only got promoted to palace security because of family connections or something. There's no way Ethan would be invited to the wedding; Cary loathes situations like that, where connections take precedence over actual skill. Of course, now something terrible has happened to Belle and there isn't going to even be a wedding, Shadow says. It's odd, though; that guy looking so much like Ethan. Shadow wonders if there's someone out in the world who looks just like him? [*The man World's Edge knows as Jack Johnson is of course Ethan Frank. Although Shadow doesn't know this, this will be important to the party on Sunday. It also matters that Ethan is incompetent but a good person, since that's critical for the party to understand his story and find him sympathetic.*]

JACK JOHNSON is not out Saturday after 10pm.

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, lightens, to the glimmer-glow of midday. The sun is a bright amber jewel in the pale blue brocade of the sky. The little princess sits before you, sleekly content upon her cushioned throne, and why should she not be, her whole world perfectly gold and cerulean around her? On her brow, a shimmering corona alights. She is cosseted and coddled, beloved golden catkin, opulent and indulged pet. She raises a hand, languid, to grasp her treasure but then... what is new, sweet pussycat? Is it a trick of the yellow light? Only a minute before, there was a diadem, diamond-perfect upon her guileless brow, but now where is it? Gone completely? You see this register in her eyes and a sudden sharp brightness rises in her face. She opens her pretty kitten mouth and within it you see, fierce and deadly, her glistening razor teeth. Only then do you realize, now that it is too late. Her gilt is apparent. Her eyes flash brilliant and her incisors find your throat and then the darkness rises feline-quick around you and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows Karla Smirch, the coddled kitten with saber teeth and shows what she will do to protect "her" crown.

On Sunday morning at 9:15, the party meets TANYA PEACOCK in the tavern to get the last item they need for their party path. Tanya has the item for them, but asks of them one additional favor: after they have completed their party path, she'd like them to accompany her to talk to Kerrick Dealbinder about her stolen tiara. Tanya accompanies them to Serenity Point, staying quiet and out of the way for their encounter with Bonnie Stillwater. After this encounter is completely finished, Tanya reminds them that she wants to talk to Kerrick Dealbinder, in the Makai camp. It's possible, depending on what the party thinks, that they might want to seek out Karla Smirch. Given that they'll be near the Smirches' shop already, they might ask to do this first. So long as it's before 10:15am, it's fine for Tanya to go with them to the Smirches' to look for her. Karla won't be in the shop, although Ursula will. Ursula won't give the party any information and should engage with them as little as possible. If it's after 10:15am, Tanya and the Companion should steer them away from the Smirches' shop, since Waylon will be finishing their own party path there! (The only reason we're letting the party go to the shop if it's earlier is so they don't waste lots of time walking back later.)

*On Sunday morning after their party path is complete (around 9:30), Tanya Peacock brings the party to the Makai camp. There, they find an agitated **KERRICK DEALBINDER**. He has captured an intruder! This intruder is currently trapped inside a very large cloth sack **PROP**. Dealbinder is periodically poking the sack and demanding that the intruder confess, which the intruder has thus far refused to do. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]*

After the party presumably removes the intruder from the sack, they learn that it's **JACK JOHNSON**. This revelation should have a sort of zany, madcap feel to it in keeping with this charge, and in the beginning, all the staff present are talking at once. Dealbinder is trying to interrogate Jack, Jack is outraged that Dealbinder captured him but is otherwise proclaiming his unwillingness to talk, and Tanya is loudly insisting that Dealbinder give her the tiara. Ideally the party will have at least some ideas about what has gone on here, but even if they understand little, we hope they will take control of the scene and restore some semblance of order! Eventually, lead as much by the party as possible, the staff can reveal the following information:

- "Jack Johnson" isn't really a talent scout. His real name is Ethan Frank, and he's a palace guard in Dolorón, a job he hates (and is frankly terrible at.) He has his employee ID badge **PROP** with him.
- The crown Dealbinder has isn't Tanya's missing tiara. It's part of the crown jewels of Lyria, and it was stolen on Ethan's watch. He's trying to return it before anyone else at the palace learns it's missing.
- The crown was stolen by a ring of jewel thieves people are calling the Gilt Crew. Surprisingly, Ethan was able to track some of them down. (Ethan is, in fact, a pretty smart guy. He just can't see well.) He knows there is a mastermind behind this heist, but not who it is. (As far as he's concerned, that doesn't matter; he just wants to return the crown.)
- Ethan heard rumors that the crown had been taken to World's Edge, so he came here looking for it. He hadn't been able to locate it... until Kerrick Dealbinder walked into the tavern wearing it.
- Ethan has been trying to steal the crown back from Dealbinder for the past several days, but every time he's tried, he's been thwarted. By the Makai.
- Ethan has a note **PROP** in his possession, and he eventually shows it to the party. It was sent to one of the members of the Gilt Crew by the person who masterminded the heist. It says: "*Leave the crown in the pre-arranged drop location. Once its authenticity has been verified, your share of the proceeds will be sent to you.*" It's signed not with a name but with a symbol:



- It's likely the party won't learn all this information before being interrupted again (see below), which is fine. Still, the staff do ultimately need to convey the above info.

*After the party has been interacting with Tanya Peacock/Kerrick Dealbinder/Jack Johnson for 5-10 minutes, **PHINEAS SMIRCH** enters the Makai camp. Phineas is oblivious to whatever drama is currently unfolding and he makes an announcement to Dealbinder: this is Dealbinder's lucky day, because Phineas is prepared to buy the crown from him for 10 royals! That's (Phineas thinks) 2 royals more than the crown is worth, and given that (Phineas thinks) Dealbinder stole the crown in the first place, this is pure profit for him! 30 seconds later, the **KPS (Kingdom Parcel Service) GUY** arrives and announces he has a delivery for Tanya Peacock. Sorry he's running late! Hopefully these additional intrusions plunge the scene back into chaos and the party can again gain control! Once they do, additional info is revealed:*

- When Phineas went to bring Karla her breakfast tray, she was talking in her sleep, saying something about needing the crown. Obviously Phineas wants his little girl to be happy, which is why he's here with this extremely generous offer for Dealbinder.
- Tanya's package **PROP** obviously contains the tiara **PROP** she ordered from Tirothian Trading Company. 8 royals was probably overpaying for it. Tanya, however, is DELIGHTED by it. Once she realizes he didn't steal her crown, Kerrick Dealbinder is her new best friend. TWINNING!
- Phineas has no idea that Karla is the mastermind behind this heist or anything else. If the party seems to have no idea about this, Phineas can casually refer to her as Fang once. Hopefully this won't be necessary. If the party tells him about her involvement, he is proud but extremely surprised.

There are so many people involved in this scene that it's challenging to say exactly how it will go. The staff should convey their info as best they can and be ready for whatever. If something unexpected happens, we'll fix it afterwards.

82 - Charges

Ultimately, Ethan won't leave the Makai camp without the crown. He and Tanya leave the camp with the party; the remaining staff should play this by ear. Because the party is about to get attacked, it is much easier if staff are at the rear of the party or at least the middle, rather than being out in front!

As the party is leaving the Makai camp, they encounter the HIRED WOLVEN HIT SQUAD. Although there aren't terribly many Wolven in this squad, they are imposing foes. When they see the party, one of them says "They have it! Move in!" and then they engage. The Wolven put up a very good fight but are eventually killed. If the party doesn't think to search their bodies, Tanya says "Ooh, I wonder if they have any TREASURE?" They don't, but they *do* have a note, which reads: "*Half the payment is enclosed; the remainder will be placed in the usual location upon completion of the job. On Sunday morning, retrieve the crown from Starwatcher's Hill and leave it in the drop spot. Kill anyone who stands in your way.*" It, too, is signed with the sabertooth symbol.

If the party captures and/or magically questions any member of the hit squad, the Wolven reveal that they were paid 800 royals down with the promise of 800 more upon completion. They don't know who hired them. Their "drop spot" is a random obscure spot far out in the woods.

KARLA SMIRCH is not out on Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, TINKER BILL approaches the party. He tells the party he heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Kerrick Dealbinder. He reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Tinker Bill encourages them to present the info they've learned to him as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- The crown Kerrick Dealbinder found isn't Tanya Peacock's, which is merely delayed in shipping, but rather is actually the crown jewels of Lyria, worth a lot more than 8 royals.
- It was stolen from the royal vault in Dolorón by a ring of thieves helmed by mastermind Karla Smirch, who hid it in the woods to keep her family from finding it.
- The man World's Edge knows as Jack Johnson is actually an inept palace guard who's trying to recover this valuable item before anyone there learns it's missing.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Tinker Bill can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Tinker Bill can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) He can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

The more of a 180-degree shift Karla Smirch can do, when she drops the stupid act and reveals herself to be a Criminal Mastermind, the more effective and awesome this will be.

Bracken, charged with Harassment

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 782 of the Lyrian Code of Law, Bracken is hereby charged with harassment: During the period beginning on or around August 10th, in this year 994 of the common calendar, and continuing through to the present time, the persistent and malevolently-intended harassment of Miss Angelica Sprink.

Common Knowledge:

Bracken has indeed been spending a lot of time around Angelica Sprink. She doesn't seem to be minding this, although her parents Bartleby and Geneva very vocally object. Perhaps their over-protectiveness is understandable, given how sheltered and vulnerable Angelica is. And yes, Bracken wouldn't be the first young man to have a crush on a pretty young woman, nor would he be the first poor person to try to better their finances by marrying someone wealthy. Still, Bracken grew up in the turbulent environment of the orphanage, and many people agree that, with his disheveled appearance and questionable skillset, there's something dodgy about him.

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, ANGELICA SPRINK approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Bracken. Angelica is aware that Daddy and Mum have pressed this charge against Bracken. They don't like him one little bit and they especially don't like him having anything to do with Angelica. It never used to bother her, Angelica tells the party, them treating her like an absolute *infant*, but just lately she has had *enough*. Bracken isn't harassing her in the slightest. They're friends, and the sooner her parents come to grips with that, the better it'll be for everyone. Of course, this whole thing where her parents - Daddy especially, but Mum can be just as bad - have accused Bracken of an actual *crime*, well, it's *not cool*. She'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against Bracken.

What Bracken Says:

I often spend time with Angelica. Respectfully, I have no intention of stopping. I regret any misunderstanding in this matter.

The SECRET Truth:

Bracken isn't harassing Angelica, and he's not interested in her romantically or financially. He's attempting to join a secretive order of knights, and one of his missions requires that he rescue a damsel in distress. Bracken has interpreted this to mean he should teach the helpless Angelica the life skills she was lacking, and this, as well as the other quests he is in the process of completing, explain his potentially questionable behavior. Although Bracken doesn't yet know how special and unusual this particular order is, he will (with the party's help) ultimately be deemed worthy of entry into this secretive and fabulous Knight Club.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from ARDEN (dark green):

On Friday night, ANGELICA SPRINK should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Angelica needs to convey, but she'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Angelica doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, she'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if she's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! *[This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]*

At any point(s) prior to Sunday, BRACKEN should make sure to meet and/or be seen by this party. There's no specific information he needs to convey, but it would be good if they could see him displaying his steadfast, knightly sort of behavior and also good if they like him. *[This helps ground every other part of the charge.]*

KARLA SMIRCH tells the party that she doesn't understand why anyone chooses to be poor instead of rich. Rich is much nicer, Karla says. That boy Bracken had only two shirts when he arrived in World's Edge, an old one and a *very* old one. One day, Karla tells the party, she saw Bracken giving his less-old shirt to a beggar. If Bracken were smarter, he would've given away his very old shirt, and if he were smarter than *that*, he'd have given away nothing at all. Duh, says Karla. *[Bracken has given away some of his belongings to those poorer than himself, a fact that will prove important on Sunday morning.]*

DUSTY PEACOCK tells the party that she's heard some people saying that that young man Bracken has been bothering Angelica Sprink, hanging around her all the time and that sort of thing. Dusty says that this would be totally not cool, if it's actually happening. Nobody should be pestering someone if they want to be left alone! Dusty tells the party that Angelica is just lovely and she for sure doesn't want to see anyone bothering her. On the other hand, Bracken also seems to be a very nice young man and Dusty just can't believe that he'd be doing anything wrong. *[This serves to reinforce the common knowledge of this charge.]*

GENEVA SPRINK tells the party that she and her husband intend to see that rascal Bracken prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law for his harassment of their sweet Angelica. She has no doubt that once the prosecutor hears what Bracken has done, that upstart will be locked away for the rest of his life! The conversations he's subjected Angelica to! Simply outrageous! At one point, he told Angelica that it was possible she might be attacked by chitters or skeevers or even worlogs! There are no such things, Geneva tried to assure her baby girl, but that scoundrel persisted! Looked her right in the face, bold as brass, and said, "I'm reluctant to contradict you, ma'am, but they are all quite real." Well! Geneva tells the party that where Angelica is concerned, she and Bartleby get to decide what is real and what is not, thank you very much! But that hoodlum wasn't satisfied with terrifying poor Angelica out of her wits, oh no! He also suggested that Angelica formulate a plan to defend herself from these beasts! Unbelievable! No doubt this has given Angelica nightmares and palpitations and probably vapors as well! Frightening her sweet girl just for his own amusement! Geneva promises the party that she will see Bracken locked away or she will have that prosecutor fired! *[Bracken has been attempting to teach Angelica a number of life skills, including how to defend herself if necessary, a fact that will prove both important and useful on Sunday morning.]*

BARTLEBY SPRINK tells the party that he and his wife insist that that punk Bracken be locked up and the key thrown out with the bathwater! This is an unconsumately reasonable punishment. Bartleby tells the party he'd made it abundantly clear Angelica wants nothing to do with a dirty vagrant such as Bracken. And what happens in response? That young reprobation had the nerve to look Bartleby right in the eye and say "With all due respect, sir, that is Angelica's decision to make." No doubt Bracken learned that sort of cheek in the orphanage! Perhaps Bracken is not aware, but Bartleby routinely throws away items worth more than the orphanage's entire operating budget, so next time Bracken should be mindful of whomsoever he's speaking to! Bartleby tells the party that, while on the subject of speaking, it's not bad enough that that would-be romancer continues to come around, but there's also the matter of the uncouthful things Bracken has been telling Angelica. Just three days ago, he overheard the boy describing in lurid detail how Solomon had made that day's soup! Bartleby obviously put a stop to that, and frankly that young lecher should be glad Bartleby was wearing his 400-royal silk trousers, because otherwise Bartleby might well have taken matters into his own hands! His Angelica is not some orphanage trollop who needs to know how food is made! And yet no sooner had he turned around that Bracken was conversing about washing the dishes! Poor Angelica had had no idea the bowl she was eating out of had been used already before, and by a complete stranger! This was traumtical for her, Bartleby says, and he himself is furious just remembering it! *[Bracken has been attempting to teach Angelica a number of life skills, including how to prepare food, as part of "rescuing" her from her previous helplessness.]*

PHINEAS SMIRCH tells the party that it's patently obvious why Bracken has been sniffing around Angelica Sprink. Phineas says Bracken is a thug and a menace, and the sooner he's locked up for harassing that girl, the better. Some people are just born bad, Phineas says. Born. Bad. *[Although he obviously doesn't say it, Phineas' disgust stems not from anything to do with Angelica, but rather because the Smirches rightly suspect Bracken stole the Crown of St. Mora from them. They can't accuse him of this, because no one knows they had the stolen Crown in the first place. The party may well not notice this, but if they remember it, it may be a cool thing when they learn what Bracken did.]*

LENORA GRAVES tells the party that, while she certainly doesn't like to be alarmist, it's quite possible that Bracken has scarred poor Angelica Sprink for life. Lenora says she overheard Bracken talking to Angelica, and while she understands that the young people are prone to drama, he was telling her all sorts of grisly details of attacks and blood and whatnot. Hearing things like that is bound to be upsetting for Angelica, especially because Bracken does seem to be hanging about nearly constantly. *[Bracken has been attempting to teach Angelica a number of life skills, including how to defend herself if necessary, a fact that will prove both important and useful on Sunday morning.]*

SAMUELSON tells the party that, for years now, he has made certain Miss Angelica's boots are laced each morning. After a meal, he will raise a napkin to Miss Angelica's mouth. If it is wintertime, it is has always been Samuelson's role to tell her that it is likely to be cold out and to suggest that a coat is warranted. Just as his father and grandfather and great-grandfather would have done. But lately, Miss Angelica has spurned these services. Just a few days ago in the tavern, she asked the barkeep how much her meal cost! Samuelson is filled with shame! He has always prided himself on paying the bills so quietly and quickly! The young miss has learned that meals in the tavern must be paid for because he has not been quick enough in his duties! Samuelson's father would weep to know this. *[This isn't Samuelson's doing. This is Bracken, teaching Angelica life skills. Of course Samuelson doesn't know or say this.]*

PANSY GOLDEN tells the party that, when the Sprinks first arrived in World's Edge, Angelica Sprink didn't have the first idea how the world worked. One time, Pansy brought her a bowl of hot soup - it was very obviously hot, with steam rising up and everything - and Angelica'd cried after putting a spoonful in her mouth. Pansy acknowledges that sometimes she herself finds it hard to wait when Solomon makes stew, because it's her favorite and sometimes she takes a bite even though she knows it'll burn her mouth. But Angelica cried as though she were 3 years old, as though there was no possible way anyone could have anticipated the situation. There were lots of situations like that. It must be nice to be rich, Pansy thinks. Never having to learn to do anything for yourself. Still, Pansy tells the party, Angelica is okay. Lately she's been a lot better. Just yesterday she asked Pansy if she needed help carrying dishes

back to the kitchen! Pansy didn't need help, but still. That's huge, for Angelica to even think of that. *[Pansy doesn't know or say it, but this change in Angelica is the result of Bracken's life-skills coaching.]*

KULINOS tells the party that he is always delighted when someone - anyone! - takes an interest in food and food preparation. But goodness, when the Sprinks first arrived in World's Edge, Angelica Sprink didn't have any idea about... well, anything. Kulinos remembers being in the tavern one morning, and Angelica was served a bowl of oatmeal. Apparently the Sprinks' cook at home always adds sugar to Angelica's oatmeal before it is brought to the table. Kulinos tells the party that Angelica had taken a bite of oatmeal and been startled that it wasn't sweet. There's nothing really wrong with that. The problem is it seemed Angelica had no idea what she might do to make the oatmeal sweeter, even when there was a bowl of sugar right there on the table. It's not really his place to judge, Kulinos says, but the lack of this knowledge rather surprised him. Perhaps that was an anomaly, though. Recently he was in the tavern and Angelica informed him that rhubarb leaves are toxic. Which, to be clear, he already knew. But he was pleasantly surprised to learn that Angelica knew. Perhaps the oatmeal thing was simply an odd blindspot in Angelica's understanding of the world. Either that, or someone has recently taken it upon themselves to educate her about... well, everything. *[Kulinos doesn't know or say this, but Bracken has indeed recently taken it upon himself to educate her about nearly everything.]*

ALEEYA WITCHBORN tells the party that when the Sprinks first arrived in World's Edge, she was honestly nervous that Angelica Sprink might get herself lost and perish within sight of the tavern. Or, rather, that's that what would have happened if the girl had ever gone anywhere alone. Angelica never did, Aleeya says, and a good thing, too, because Aleeya had never met anyone with less sense of direction than Angelica. Maybe that's not even right. Maybe it's that Angelica didn't seem to understand that she *could* find her way anywhere. She didn't try, so of course she couldn't do it, even if the place she was headed was visible from the place she was currently standing. Aleeya confides that she'd thought that that sort of helplessness was unlikely to ever go away, but this is a case where she's happy to be proven wrong. Bracken - he's a friend of Angelica's - has seemingly been teaching Angelica a thing or two on the subject. Basic things, like the sun setting in the west, or simple strategies like repeating directions aloud to help remember them. You wouldn't think those would be new ideas to a near-adult like Angelica, but apparently no one had ever told her before. Amazingly, this teaching seems to be helping. Aleeya tells the party she's pleased to see that. You don't need to be an expert at everything, but basic competence? Aleeya is a fan. *[Bracken's coaching is indeed making Angelica less helpless than she was.]*

KYSON WAYSEEKER tells the party that although not all Makai adults carry weapons or achieve great proficiency in combat, all Makai children are taught basic survival skills such as how to recognize toxic plants and how to defend themselves from attacks. He confesses that he'd assumed this was true of Lyrian children as well, but that he was speaking with Angelica Sprink - who is nearly an adult, at least by Makai standards - and she'd told him she'd never learned any such thing, at least not until very recently. Wayseeker says that when he replied that he was glad her parents were now teaching her these things, Angelica had laughed. It is a friend of hers who's doing the teaching, she'd said, not her parents at all. This is not really any of Wayseeker's business, but still, better late than never, he supposes. *[The friend in question is of course Bracken, and his coaching is indeed making Angelica less helpless than she was.]*

EQUINOXIOUS tells the party that she's heard about this business where Bartleby and Geneva Sprink are accusing that kid Bracken of harassing their daughter. Equi says she can't say whether or not Bracken is harassing Angelica or not; some women like the whole bad-boy thing. If that's what Angelica's looking for, Bracken probably fits the bill. Equi knows enough about the Western Moreth Home for Children - that's where Bracken grew up, after his grandfather Reynaldo died, back when Bracken was just a kid - to know that it's a rough place. You don't last in a place like that without some survival skills and the willingness to use them. Equi tells the party that she was there the day Solomon locked his keys in the tavern. Bracken had the lock picked in maybe 15 seconds, Equi says, and it's not a cheap lock. Bracken may be perfectly fine, but he certainly comes from a very different world than the Sprinks do. Still, Angelica Sprink is nearly grown, so this is her decision to make. Maybe she's looking for a boy who's trouble. It can get old after a while, though, Equi says. Ask her how she knows. *[This comment reinforces Bracken's backstory and his possibly-questionable skill-set. If it makes the party think he's possibly guilty of harassment or something else, that's fine.]*

ISAIAH COOKE tells the party that he's heard Bartleby Sprink has accused that ruffian Bracken of harassing Bartleby's daughter. Isaiah doesn't like to comment either way on an ongoing investigation, but one doesn't need to see much of Bracken's swaggering posturing to know the young man is trouble. There are reports - unsubstantiated but from *very* credible sources - saying Bracken has been spotted heading toward the Wild Lands at all hours of the night. And his clothes are little more than rags! He carries himself with a braggadocio at odds with his slovenly appearance, but that doesn't change the fact: he's an orphan and essentially a stranger, and an unkempt one at that. It's not hard to surmise what his intentions with Angelica Sprink are. *[This comment reinforces Bracken's backstory and his possibly-questionable activities in World's Edge. He has indeed been sneaking into the Wild Lands, as part of his attempts to slay Morgoth. If it makes the party think he's possibly guilty of harassment or something else, that's fine.]*

Any time this charge is not being discussed, **CRABTREE** tells the party that, a couple weeks ago, the Crown of St. Mora was left anonymously on the doorstep of the Valerius family house, where Santiago West Valerius, a keeper of Summer, found it. Once the Rites of Remembrance are over, Santiago will take the Crown to the cathedral in Mystral. The Crown was stolen from the cathedral several years ago, and no one has seen it in the intervening time. It's an important holy relic, and it will be good to have it restored to the church. *[Crabtree doesn't know or say that Bracken had anything to do with restoring the Crown. This was one of his quests to become a Knight. The party may or may not realize any of this before they talk to Bracken; either way is fine.]*

Any time this charge is not being discussed, AESTHETIKA tells the party that, a couple weeks ago, the Crown of St. Mora was left anonymously on the doorstep of the Valerius family house. The Crown was stolen from the cathedral several years ago, and no one has seen it in the intervening time. As a holy relic, it's very important to the Church to have it restored, of course. It's also a beautiful and profoundly significant item artistically-speaking, which is presumably why it was stolen in the first place. [Aesthetika doesn't know or say that Bracken had anything to do with restoring the Crown. This was one of his quests to become a Knight. The party may or may not realize any of this before they talk to Bracken; either way is fine.]

Saturday before 4pm, SANTIAGO VALERIUS is telling multiple parties about the Crown of St. Mora so that people have context for an important plot overview scene, but he gives this party information he doesn't share with anyone else. Before doing so, he asks if he may speak with them privately. Santiago explains that the Crown of St. Mora is an important sacred relic which was stolen several years ago from the cathedral in Mystal. This was a very upsetting theft, the Crown being a significant holy artifact. Its loss was devastating to the church. Then, two weeks ago, it suddenly appeared on the doorstep of the Valerius family's house. Once the Rites are past, Santiago will travel to Mystal to return it to its rightful home in the cathedral. All of that is completely true, Santiago says, and he has told many people the story. There is, however, an element of the story he hasn't shared with anyone, but which he now tells the party: he was awake very late on the night the Crown was left, and he is almost positive that it was the young man Bracken who left it. [If it is after lunch, Santiago tells the party that he's giving them this information because he heard they're investigating the charge against Bracken. If it's before lunch, he can say that it's because they seem particularly trustworthy.] Santiago tells the party that Bracken - if that is indeed who it was - didn't see Santiago, and that Santiago hasn't said anything about this to anyone, including Bracken. Returning the Crown is a very honorable thing to do, Santiago says. But... why did Bracken have the Crown in the first place? And why leave it anonymously? Santiago says that he has been praying for guidance on this matter, but if Summer has sent him any visionary dreams on the subject, he has been unable to interpret them. [Santiago's story is true, and it was indeed Bracken who left the Crown. For the past two years, the Crown has been in the Smirches' vault. Bracken stole it from them and left it for Santiago because restoring a holy relic is one of his quests to become a Knight, and he did so anonymously because this order of knights is particularly secretive. Santiago doesn't know any of this and thus can't tell the party any additional info.]

If the party asks him about the Crown of St. Mora, BRACKEN tells them he knows very little about it. Is that the thing that was left at the Valerius house? If they present him with Santiago's story about him returning the Crown, Bracken tells the party that, respectfully, Lord West Valerius is mistaken. If and ONLY if the party uses truth magic on him, Bracken acknowledges that he was the one who left the crown. What else he admits will depend entirely on what else the party asks. (Did Bracken steal the Crown? Yes. Did Bracken steal the Crown from the cathedral? No. Etc.). [The Knights are a highly secretive order, so Bracken will reveal as little as possible about his quests until Sunday. Bracken will be polite as always, but he has no qualms whatsoever about lying.]

Any time this charge is not being discussed, DIMITRI tells the party that he heard a rumor that the Smirches had the Crown of St. Mora. Dimitri has no idea if this is true or not. He can't offhand think why the Smirches would want the Crown, since although it's incredibly valuable, it's well known enough that you couldn't actually fence it, not without finding a very specific buyer. Still, he tells the party, he could believe that the Smirches might well want a thing just for the pleasure of owning something no one else has. Of course, if the rumor is true, that doesn't explain how the Crown got left on the Valerius doorstep. Maybe, Dimitri says, the Smirches did have the stolen Crown and then suddenly developed consciences and returned it anonymously! And maybe Dimitri will sprout wings and learn to fly! [This rumor is true; the Smirches did indeed have the Crown. Learning that this is a possibility provides context for the scene when the party learns the whole truth from Bracken. Dimitri, of course, doesn't know or say anything about Bracken's involvement.]

Any time this charge is not being discussed, FENWICK MICHAELS tells the party that in his line of work, he hears all sorts of crazy rumors and speculations. Several months ago, he says, he heard a rumor that the Crown of St. Mora - which was stolen from the cathedral in Mystal a couple of years ago; it was all anybody talked about back when it happened - was in a little town at the far western edge of Moreth called World's Edge. The rumor at the time was that a merchant family in the town had the Crown. Nobody could prove it, it seems and nothing ever came of it. Fenwick admits he'd pretty much forgotten all about the Crown and the story, but then Justice Wilde's entourage got here to World's Edge and apparently the Crown of St. Mora had recently showed up again! Fenwick tells the party that the Crown got left on the doorstep of the Baron's estate, so if that merchant family did have it squirreled away, either they gave it back or someone swiped it from them. Who knows? [This rumor is true; the Smirches - the merchant family in the story, obviously - did indeed have the Crown. Learning that this is a possibility provides context for the scene when the party learns the whole truth from Bracken. Fenwick, of course, doesn't know or say anything about Bracken's involvement.]

PEARL BRYCE tells the party that Bracken asked her at one point if dragons were real, and if so, if she knew were any could be found. Pearl assumes he was just flirting with her, which happens a lot. Obviously dragons aren't real. Everyone knows that. *[Bracken believes he needs to slay someone or something to become a Knight, which is why he's considering the idea that dragons might be real. The party likely won't think much of this until they talk to Bracken, but if they remember this conversation, it provides just a bit of context.]*

KORA PEACEKEEPER tells the party that Bracken asked her at one point if dragons were real. This surprised Peacekeeper. Dragons are only in stories, of course, and that's what she told Bracken. The boy hadn't seemed surprised by this, but he was a bit disappointed. *[Bracken believes he needs to slay someone or something to become a Knight, which is why he's considering the idea that dragons might be real. The party likely won't think much of this until they talk to Bracken, but if they remember this conversation, it provides just a bit of context.]*

*Saturday at lunchtime, TINKER BILL serves lunch to the party. While doing so, he places a coaster next to each person's place. The coasters **PROP** are visually distinctive, with glossy black printing on a matte black circle. In the center is a graphic of a lantern. Around the outside of the circle are the words "Ever Vigilant * Ever Fabulous". Tinker Bill doesn't say anything about the design, but he tells the party that he found a stack of the coasters propping up a table leg in the tavern. He says he tried to return them to Solomon and Bonnie, but the Stillwaters say that they didn't buy the coasters and don't have any idea where they came from. Tinker Bill tells the party they're welcome to keep the coasters. They're very useful if anyone needs to protect a table or prop up a table leg. If the party gets up to leave and doesn't take any coasters with them, their Companion should save a couple if possible "just because they're kind of cool." [Although neither Tinker Bill nor the Companion know anything about the coasters and won't call too much attention to them then, the graphic and the motto will prove important later, which is why it would be good if the party still had a few of them in their backpack.]*

The party's traveler has lore about the Order of the Black Lantern - trigger: the name "Knight's Walk" on a sign - which appears on page 209.

*Saturday after 10pm, KYLI TALESPINNER approaches the party. She tells them that she saw that young man, Bracken, drop a piece of paper. Normally she'd just have handed it right back to him, but she confesses that the paper was very strange - all black! - and that she's heard some people saying that Bracken can't be trusted. He's even been accused of a crime! Talespinner tells the party that she held onto the paper for a few minutes, working up her courage to return it to Bracken, but that by the time she was ready, she couldn't find him anywhere. She's heard that the party was looking into that crime Bracken's been charged with, and so she thought she'd give them the paper **PROP**. Surely they'll know what it all means.*

The paper is well-worn, and a portion of it is ripped away. It is black-on-black. At the top is the same lantern that appears on the coasters the party got at lunchtime, although without the words. Printed on the paper is the following:

To gain entry, complete the quests.

Do so and then we shall find you.

- *restore a holy relic*
- *give to those poorer than yourself*
- *rescue a damsel in distress*
- *slay*

The paper is torn away on a diagonal such that the remainder of the 4th quest line is missing.

BRACKEN is not out on Saturday after 10pm.

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The murk of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, but only barely. The lantern glows black. The air pulses and throbs with sound, the drums like the beating of a mighty heart. It is everywhere, reverberating through you. A needle-thin lance of light pierces the darkness. It beams brittle-bright against the crystals and then splinters into a million rainbow shards that shatter, scatter, fall to the floor, trampled beneath the pounding feet of the mob. And o, the crowd! They are many but they are one, a writhing mass of limbs and sweat and want. It is the darkest hour but they are miles from sleep, driven into a welcome mass madness. They raise their voices but you cannot hear them over the great chanting thrum. They are anonymous here, this disordered order, held secret under the black lamp, lit shimmer-dark by its unearthly light. If the dawn is coming, it is no concern of theirs, and they gyrate in the hot velvet shadows and then the throbbing and the wanting and the writhing pulls you under and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows the Order of the Black Lantern and suggests that it is a club of a different sort than the party (and Bracken) might have originally thought.

On Sunday morning on their way to breakfast, the party encounters ANGELICA SPRINK standing over the body of a DEAD WOLVEN. Angelica is slightly winded but not unduly upset. She tells the party that she had gone out for an early morning walk. Normally, she says, she would have taken a book with her, because she's always liked reading while walking around. Bracken told her she should reconsider doing that, that it was a good idea to be paying attention to what's around her. It's probably fortunate she listened, Angelica says, because she was attacked by three Wolven. Angelica doesn't have a sword with her, but when one of the Wolven stepped in close to her, she did the thing Bracken showed her and slammed the heel of her hand upward into his nose. She must've connected just right, she thinks, because he fell down and, as the party can see, he hasn't gotten back up again. She brought the heel of her boot down hard on the instep of one of the others and then the two of them ran off... although the one she'd stepped on didn't run terribly fast. She's just about caught her breath, Angelica says, so she can now head back to the tavern with the party.

On Sunday morning starting at 8am, BRACKEN is out in a visible spot in or near the tavern. Ideally, the party will have at least some ideas about this charge and hopefully they'll approach him to talk. If they haven't approached him by 9:35am, he will approach them, in which case this encounter will change slightly (see below) but will overall be the same. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this

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scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!] Bracken takes them someplace private to talk, and should very reluctantly reveal the following information - this is, after all, a big secret! - in whatever order makes sense, and depending on what the party's doing/asking:

- The paper he dropped last night was given to him by his grandfather Reynaldo, shortly before Reynaldo died. (Bracken doesn't know the party has the paper unless they tell him, so he doesn't bring this up if they don't. Of course, if they tell him they have it but don't immediately give it to him, he will *not* be happy!)
- The paper lists the steps to become a Knight of the Black Lantern, which Reynaldo was. Bracken has dreamed of becoming a Knight in the order since he was a small boy, and even though he's not old enough yet, he feels strongly that he shouldn't wait any longer.
- To complete his 1st quest, he needed to restore a holy relic. Bracken heard rumors that the Smirches had the stolen Crown of St. Mora in their vaults, so he broke in and stole it back. He left it on the Valerius doorstep knowing Santiago West Valerius would return it to the Church.
- Completing his 2nd quest, giving to those poorer than himself, was challenging only because Bracken himself had almost nothing, and it was difficult to find someone with less. Still, he has done that, as his ragged clothing attests.
- Bracken originally thought the 3rd quest, about rescuing a damsel in distress, was - with all due respect to the Knights of the Black Lantern - a load of antiquated patriarchal bullshit. But then he met Angelica Sprink, a young woman who'd been coddled to the point that she was essentially helpless. He's tried to help her learn as many life skills as he can think of, even though doing this has incurred the wrath of her parents, who attribute ulterior motives to his actions. Bracken hasn't heard yet about Angelica successfully defending herself against the Wolven this morning, but assuming the party tells him, he is delighted. Angelica is now a self-rescuing damsel!
- The 4th quest, though, has thwarted Bracken. If only the paper were not ripped! He doesn't know who or what he's supposed to slay. Bracken originally thought that perhaps he was supposed to slay a dragon, but apparently those aren't actually real. The only other possibility that occurred to him was that he was supposed to slay a terrible villain or villains. He has in fact tried to kill Morgoth himself, since Morgoth is the most villainous person Bracken can imagine, but although he got close, he failed to do so. (This is because Morgoth can only be killed by a caster, although Bracken doesn't know or say this.) Since he has been unable to kill Morgoth, he's taken it upon himself to eradicate as many Wolven as he can.
- Reynaldo told him once that a young Knight-to-be would just instinctively *know* when the time was right to complete the final quest. Bracken hasn't yet experienced any sort of instinctive knowing, even the times he got closest to killing Morgoth. His grandfather was very insistent on this point. Bracken worries maybe this means he isn't cut out to be a Knight after all.

Hopefully the "ever fabulous" on the coaster as well as their keeper's vision has given the party at least a hint that the Order of the Black Lantern isn't an entirely conventional chivalric order. It doesn't matter if the Knight Club pun occurs to them, but ideally they'll realize that the slaying Bracken must do isn't about killing anyone, but rather about being generally epic. If they suggest this to Bracken, he's very interested. There's something that sounds cosmically *right* about that, he says. How would he go about doing that, he wants to know. Bracken should take any and all suggestions the party has to offer to heart!

Bracken will go along with the party when they do their Ritual of Location, and then also asks to go with them to the Wild Lands. Although he likes their idea about slaying (if they've had one!) he wants to hedge his bets. Certainly it can't hurt him to kill a few more Wolven, just to be on the safe side, right?

After the party has returned from the Wild Lands, if they haven't offered any ideas about what Bracken needs to slay, he should let the Basement know and we'll figure something out.

At some point before the trial, if the party hasn't suggested that he could use a nicer outfit, Bracken can bemoan that he is so disheveled. **KARMIN SMIRCH** will be in (or near) the tavern at this time selling items, and will have a set of clothing **PROP** for sale that is, remarkably, just Bracken's size. Hopefully the party will offer to buy it for him or to help him acquire it in some way.

Hopefully the party has fun teaching Bracken to slay. If so, they may well be expecting other Knights to show up to induct Bracken right then. If so, Bracken tells the party that - just as Reynaldo told him - he feels like his time is getting closer, but that it's not quite there yet. (This, of course, is because Bracken doesn't actually have his scene with the other Knights until during the trial. We don't want the party worrying too much that they need to keep doing more, because nothing will make this scene happen until then.)

Note: If it gets to be 9:35am and the party hasn't approached Bracken, he'll need to approach them. If this is the case, he tells them that he heard a rumor they were looking for the Sconce of the Wood. Bracken knows where the Sconce is, in fact: Morgoth has it. Bracken saw it there when he tried unsuccessfully to kill Morgoth. Bracken tells the party that he's on a quest to slay as many Wolven as possible and asks if he can accompany them. They still need to do their Ritual of Location, which will confirm what Bracken says as well as give them additional info. Hopefully, Bracken being with them for all this time as well as mentioning his quest to slay Wolven will encourage the party to ask him about the black paper et al. If they get back from the Wild Lands but haven't asked,

Bracken should let the Basement know! Again, these instructions are only if the party fails to approach him. If they're taking the lead, he doesn't need to mention the Sconce.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, **ADINA VALERIUS** approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Bracken. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Adina encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Bracken is attempting to join a secretive order of knights.
- Since one of his missions requires that he rescue a damsel in distress, Bracken has interpreted this to mean he should teach the helpless Angelica Sprink the life skills she was lacking, and this, as well as the other quests he is in the process of completing, explain his potentially questionable behavior.
- Although Bracken doesn't yet know how special and unusual this particular order is, he'll ultimately be deemed worthy of entry into this secretive and fabulous Knight Club.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Adina can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Adina can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

Just before the trial, Bracken tells the party that he's too nervous to speak in front of all those people. He's also disappointed: he thought he had done everything, but the Knights haven't reached out to him. They must not want him after all. At this point, there's no need for him to keep his quests a secret, and he will be obliged if the party will speak in his defense. After they do, Bracken suddenly steps forward. It's time! he says. **PASCAL VALERIUS** and **PHYLLIS FIERI** also step forward. "You are worthy, young Bracken," says Pascal, "of gaining entry to... the Knight Club!" The music **PROP** starts! Dance number!

Once the dance number is complete, Bracken bows his head briefly. He is so grateful to have been chosen to join the Order of the Black Lantern, he tells them. "It's actually the Black Light," Phyllis says. "Everybody gets that wrong." Regardless, Bracken says, he must be honest with them. He is only 17... not old enough to enter. "That's okay," Pascal says. "If you're cool enough, you can get in anyway."

Katherine Carmichael, charged with Assault with a Deadly Weapon

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 67 - Section B of the Lyrian Code of Law, Katherine Carmichael is hereby charged with assault with a deadly weapon: On the day of May the 1st, in the year 984 of the common calendar, the assault of Vernon Gill with two bolts from a 85-pound draw-weight crossbow, these injuries resulting in permanent limb damage, loss of gainful employment and ongoing pain and suffering.

Common Knowledge:

Katherine Carmichael is an author and sharpshooter who's spent the past 25 years regaling her mostly-female young readers with the exploits of "Kit Carnage", Carmichael's thinly-veiled alter ego. Although the violence in her stories is implied rather than explicit, the books make it abundantly clear the protagonist doesn't take nonsense from anyone, and that she's willing to resort to physicality when she deems it necessary. This all felt theoretical for the first several weeks after Katherine came to World's Edge, but on Wednesday it became tangible when Vernon Gill arrived in town. A former soldier, Vernon has been unable to use his right arm for the past decade, after he claims Katherine Carmichael shot him twice. Katherine admits guilt in this case and says she'll pay Mr. Gill whatever the court mandates and serve the requisite prison sentence.

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, PEARL BRYCE approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Katherine Carmichael. She tells the party that she grew up reading the Kit Carnage stories - *Shadows on the Trail, Journey into the Ghostlands*, and her favorite one, *Across the Great Prairie*. They're swell stories, every last one of 'em, and they're a big part of why she decided to become a writer herself. Golly, the party can't even imagine how excited Pearl was when she got to World's Edge for Belle's wedding and found that Ms. Katherine Carmichael herself was here! Pearl tells the party that sometimes it's a bad idea to meet your idols because they so rarely live up to the hype, but Katherine Carmichael exceeded expectations. She's real, real smart and brave as all get-out! Pearl has been interviewing Katherine for an article about the 25th anniversary of the very first book, *Resolute: The Kit Carnage Story*. Everything was swell until that awful Vernon Gill came to town. Pearl tells the party that Vernon arrived midday on Wednesday, making claims that Katherine'd shot him twice, once in the forearm and once in the shoulder. Pearl tells the party that she'd been in the tavern when he arrived and she'd asked him if he had any proof of these claims. He claimed Katherine shot him and then when he fell the ground, she'd stood over him and yanked the bolts back out of his arm. According to Vernon, it was 10 years ago that this happened. Pearl tells the party that 10 years is a long time and maybe Vernon Gill is confused or mistaken, but Katherine has said that yes, she did this. Katherine says she'll pay Mister Gill fair and square whatever the court orders, which is liable to be a lot on account of him bellyaching about how much pain and suffering he's endured. Plus, there'll be time in jail! Pearl confesses that if it were her, she'd probably just head for the hills and hope the law never caught up, but Katherine is a better person than that. Pearl tells the party that still, it gets her goat just thinking about this. Maybe there's a loophole or something Katherine doesn't know about! Gosh, she'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against Ms. Carmichael.

What Katherine Says:

Guilty as charged.

The SECRET Truth:

Katherine has never shot anyone. She started writing Kit Carnage stories purely as escapism, imagining a world in which she was confident and brave; it's only because she based her heroine so closely on herself that people started thinking the Kit Carnage exploits were actually real. She did actually teach herself to shoot a crossbow over the years, but the sight of blood makes her faint. Katherine knows Kit has become a legend among readers who draw courage from her, and she's confessing to a crime she didn't commit rather than disillusion all those girls and women.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from DOLORÓN (rose):

On Friday night, PEARL BRYCE should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Pearl needs to convey, but she'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Pearl doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, she'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if she's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! *[This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]*

MILA tells the party that she was in the tavern when Vernon Gill arrived in town on Wednesday. Mr. Gill apparently used to be a soldier until 10 years ago, when he was badly injured and thus no longer able to use his sword-arm. Mila says Mr. Gill explained that it was Katherine Carmichael - the author who's been in town for several weeks now - who shot him, and he came to town after tracking her down because he's seeking damages for the debilitating injuries. Mila was surprised to hear that Katherine would shoot someone for no reason, but Mr. Gill said that he'd mouthed off to Katherine just before the shooting occurred. Regardless of how obnoxious his comments were, that doesn't warrant him getting shot, Mila says. Mila tells the party that she was feeling very sorry for Mr. Gill - how terrible it must be to permanently lose the use of your arm, especially when your whole livelihood depends upon it! - and she's not proud of the fact that after hearing him go on and on about the injuries, she was feeling just a *tiny* bit less sympathetic. *[This serves to reinforce the common knowledge of this charge.]*

MELADOS tells the party that he was in the tavern when Vernon Gill arrived in town on Wednesday. Vernon apparently came to World's Edge because he'd heard Katherine Carmichael was there, seeking restitution for injuries that occurred more than a decade before. Apparently, Vernon had been a soldier until Katherine Carmichael - the well-known author, who's been in town for several weeks now - shot him. Melados tells the party that he has found Katherine to be a pleasant individual, and that this story was thus surprising to him, but that Katherine herself has confirmed it to be true, which just goes to show that we are all complicated creatures. Melados says that this shooting apparently happened after Vernon mouthed off to Katherine in some tavern in Arden. Melados tells the party that he doesn't excuse shooting someone regardless of their comments, but that he confesses he finds Vernon Gill a somewhat challenging person to be around. Probably that is uncharitable of him, Melados acknowledges. It must be terrible to permanently lose the use of your arm, as Vernon has. Still, it is wearisome to listen to Vernon complain about the service in the tavern and the weather in World's Edge and everything else. *[This serves to reinforce the common knowledge of this charge.]*

JACK JOHNSON tells the party that he himself had only been in town for a day when Vernon Gill arrived on Wednesday. Vernon was a career soldier, having attained the rank of sergeant, before a shooting ten years ago permanently damaged his right arm. Jack tells the party that apparently it was Katherine Carmichael who shot Vernon, and that it was only this past week that Vernon successfully tracked his assailant down and came to town to demand justice. This was quite an incredible story, but Katherine has confirmed it to be true! Apparently Vernon mouthed off to Katherine and, outraged, she shot him twice in the arm. It's a wonder Vernon wasn't killed! This is unacceptable, Jack tells the party. It's fortunate that Justice Wilde is now here and Katherine will be made to pay up and also serve jail time for this assault! *[This serves to reinforce the common knowledge of this charge.]*

KYLI TALESPINNER tells the party that she's heard the story of Katherine Carmichael's attack on Vernon Gill a decade ago, and it's a sordid one. As Vernon told it to her, the attack took place in a little village in Arden. He'd been having a few drinks in a tavern there when Katherine came in. She tells the party that Vernon made a few comments to Katherine of an insulting nature. He couldn't remember the specifics; Talespinner guesses that his "few drinks" were rather more numerous than he was suggesting. From the sound of it, Katherine took great offense at the comments, and when Vernon left the tavern, she was waiting for him outside. Vernon says that Katherine called his name and when he turned to see what she wanted, she shot him, first in the forearm and then, when he was reeling in shock from the pain, shot him again just below his shoulder. The second shot knocked Vernon to the ground. Talespinner tells the party that Katherine then walked over to where Vernon lay. He told everyone he was terrified she'd shoot him again, this time fatally, but instead she brutally yanked both crossbow bolts from his body. Vernon explained that the bolts Katherine carries have her initials etched into the shafts, and that she didn't want to leave him with proof of her attack. He passed out from pain and blood loss at that time and when he regained consciousness, she was gone. Vernon Gill had been a soldier prior to the attack, but - as he told everyone in the tavern - he was no longer able to hold a sword, much less serve as a soldier. The whole thing is very upsetting, says Talespinner. *[This serves to reinforce the common knowledge of this charge, as well as introducing the element of Katherine reclaiming the crossbow bolts, which will be important later.]*

MOXIE tells the party that she was in the tavern when Vernon Gill arrived in town on Wednesday, and frankly the whole experience was very unnerving. She tells the party that Vernon told everyone the story of Katherine Carmichael's attack on him 10 years ago. Vernon was a soldier at that time. Moxie clarifies for the party that he wasn't one of those terrifying special-forces Phantom soldiers, but rather was a garden-variety-but-still-very-scary regular soldier. According to Vernon, he'd been in a bar in some small town in Arden, when Katherine Carmichael was also there. Moxie tells the party that Vernon apparently said something upsetting or annoying to Katherine. After he left the bar, he heard Katherine call his name - Moxie always finds it jarring when someone calls her name when she's not expecting it! - and when he turned to look, Katherine shot him. Moxie personally has never been shot with a crossbow or anything else but she is quite sure that this is also jarring for nearly everyone! According to Vernon, she first shot him in the forearm and then in the shoulder. When he fell to the ground - something Moxie herself nearly did just *hearing* this story! - Katherine then approached and pulled both crossbow bolts from his body. When Vernon related this in the tavern, Moxie had to breathe into a paper bag for several minutes, but even so, she heard him explain that the bolts Katherine carries have her initials etched into the shafts, and that she didn't want to leave him with proof of her attack. He passed out from pain and blood loss at that time and when he regained consciousness, Katherine was gone. Moxie is now being very careful not to say anything upsetting or annoying to Katherine.

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Carmichael, or really, anything to her at all. Terrifying! [This serves to reinforce the common knowledge of this charge, as well as introducing the element of Katherine reclaiming the crossbow bolts, which will be important later.]

At any point(s) Saturday before 4pm, VERNON GILL should take every opportunity to complain to the party about their behavior as well as the behavior of staff characters. Some possibilities: Vernon peevishly tells the party that they're being too loud and asks them to keep it down as he doesn't like to eat when there's noise around. Bonus points if, after doing this, he then complains that they're being too quiet, that their silence is unsettling. Vernon tells the party that he wants them to switch servers with him because he doesn't care for his server's attitude. Bonus points if Vernon's server is Bonnie or some other utterly attitude-free person. Vernon tells the party that the fact that there are so many visiting adventurers here has made the service very slow. Vernon complains in the party's hearing that his tea is too cold and then, when he is brought a fresh cup, complains that it is too hot. Vernon should ideally work with a server or two to do these at a time/place that won't disrupt actual serving. *If and only if the party asks about Katherine Carmichael shooting him*, Vernon says that the shooting occurred ten years ago, outside a bar in a small town in Arden. Katherine called his name and when he turned to see what she wanted, she shot him, first in the forearm and then, when he was reeling in shock from the pain, shot him again just below his shoulder. The second shot knocked Vernon to the ground. Katherine then walked over to where Vernon lay. He was terrified she'd shoot him again, this time fatally, but instead she brutally yanked both crossbow bolts from his body. Vernon explained that the bolts Katherine carries have her initials etched into the shafts, and that she didn't want to leave him with proof of her attack. He passed out from pain and blood loss at that time and when he regained consciousness, she was gone. *[Although this charge will largely be satisfying to solve because of Katherine Carmichael's heartwarming commitment to her readers rather than because of Vernon's comeuppance, it is still helpful if they understand his largely-unpleasant personality. Ideally, most of his complaints about them should be about Otherworldly things (like there being too many adventurers in town) rather than things like being too loud, which they might hear as a staffer admonishing them for real.]*

At any point(s) during the weekend before Saturday 4pm, KATHERINE CARMICHAEL should meet the party. There's no specific information she needs to convey - she shouldn't bring up Vernon Gill or anything about the charge unless they ask - but she should be likable and straightforward. She can be interested in them and ask about their adventures in World's Edge, because that's the quickest way for the party to like her. She should come across as competent and no-nonsense without bragging (e.g. "Yeah, Skeevers are a headache. Sounds like you did a good job getting rid of them.") Katherine has a crossbow **PROP** hanging from her belt, but if the party (or any party) asks, she tells them that in light of recent events, she has turned over the bolts to Justice Wilde's bailiff. *If and only if the party asks about Vernon/the shooting/the charge*, Katherine tells them she'd rather not discuss it. She doesn't get flustered, but she's very comfortable setting boundaries and this is a clear one for her. *[In addition to establishing her as a competent, modest badass, it's most important that the party like Katherine, since saving her will be much more satisfying if they do.]*

ANGELICA SPRINK tells the party that she only just recently read her first Kit Carson book but that now she cannot get enough of them. She had always heard that the books were dangerous and unrealistic - her father does not like them one little bit! - but that this clearly isn't true. How could they be unrealistic, when Katherine Carmichael - that's the lady that writes all of them - actually *is* Kit Carson? Angelica tells the party that she was shocked how good the books were after hearing her father complain about them, but they're really just wonderful! She read *Resolute* all in one day because she was so excited to find out what would happen next! It's a funny thing, Angelica tells the party, but after she read it, she felt like maybe she herself could be braver. She clarifies that she is not going to ride into a canyon that has rattlesnakes in it, because unlike Miss Carmichael, Angelica does not have a crossbow to fire a warning shot at a rattler. But she thinks there are things she could certainly be braver about. *[This comment serves to remind the party about Katherine Carmichael's writing and what it means to its many readers, as well as the common (mis)conception that it's all based on her real life.]*

NIX VALERIUS tells the party that Sylvie read lots of books to her, back before she could read herself, and as a general rule, they sucked ass. Nix thinks there should be a special punishment for people who write terrible books for little kids, books where every damn thing has a moral and the action is boring and predictable and you want to punch every single one of the characters right in their smug mouths. Nix tells the party that little-kid Nix was just about to refuse to have any more reading time, which would have crushed Sylvie, but then Sylvie showed her a book called *Resolute*. Nix knew right away that it was different, she tells the party. First of all, the girl in the book was called Kit Carnage, and when Sylvie told her what "carnage" was, she was, all, "oh, hell yes." Nix tells the party that her name wasn't the only badass about Kit. She didn't take any shit from anyone. Nix tells the party that she liked how Kit was an orphan, how the books talked about her "ice blue eyes" and "unmanageable curls." Nix admits that maybe she'd liked the books a little extra because she was also an orphan and also had unmanageable curls, even though her eyes are not blue. Mostly she liked that even when Kit Carnage was afraid - which wasn't often, but still - she did whatever needed doing. Nix tells the party that it was pretty cool when Katherine Carmichael - actual real-life Kit Carnage in the flesh! - came to World's Edge. Now that man Vernon Gill has shown up, telling everyone about him getting shot after he mouthed off. Good, Nix says. Let him keep telling that story to everyone who'll listen. Maybe a couple other assholes will think twice before they mouth off to some woman in a bar. *[This comment serves to remind the party about Katherine Carmichael's writing and what it means to its many readers, as well as the common (mis)conception that it's all based on her real life. It also reinforces that what Kit Carnage looks like, which helps explain why Katherine is thought to actually be her.]*

ARIA MORGAN tells the party that they're probably going to think this is a little silly, maybe, but that she still rereads her old Kit Carnage books sometimes, when she is feeling anxious. She tells the party that she's read them so many times that the covers are creased and falling off. There is a scene in *Across the Great Prairie* she pretty much knows word-for-word by heart. Aria tells the

party that it's the part where a bandit gang has taken over the schoolhouse in that one little town, where they're using it as their headquarters and so the kids in the town can't go to school. The part where Kit goes into the schoolhouse and there are apples on the teacher's desk and she makes eye contact with all the different bandits, one by one, while she shoots a crossbow bolt into each apple? Aria tells the party that there's that one line in there, just before the bandits turn tail and run, when Kit is shooting the apples. Kit says, "I was afraid, yes, but I could not - I did not - let my hand shake." Aria tells the party that maybe they'll think she's silly, but that she tells herself that line now, when she's afraid. And it helps. It was so exciting, Aria tells the party, to meet Katherine Carmichael - the actual Kit Carnage - when she came to World's Edge and to see the very crossbow that convinced those bandits to get out of the schoolhouse. [This comment serves to remind the party about Katherine Carmichael's writing and what it means to its many readers, as well as the common (mis)conception that it's all based on her real life.]

BELLE BISHOP tells the party that she read the first Kit Carnage story twenty years ago, when she was babysitting Pearl Bryce and read it to Pearl as a bedtime story. Belle tells the party that the book was good enough that she'd gone out and bought the second book for herself right then and there. She loved the fact that Kit was willing to admit when she was wrong and also to stand up for herself when she knew she was right. Unlike some of the two-dimensional characters you find in children's books, Kit felt so *real*... which isn't surprising, of course, since she is in fact Katherine Carmichael, who obviously is indeed real. Belle tells the party that it was a thrill to meet Kit - well, Katherine, she should say - when she came to World's Edge. Belle hopes she didn't take up too much of Katherine's time, but she'd just had to tell Katherine about the times when she'd inspired Belle to do something difficult or frightening or even just unpleasant. In the books, sometimes, Kit gives herself a little pep talk and says "Deep breaths, Kit. Deep breaths." Belle admits that she's told herself "Deep breaths, Belle. Deep breaths." more times than she can count. It's funny how even a simple line will stay with you, Belle says. [This comment serves to remind the party about Katherine Carmichael's writing and what it means to its many readers, as well as the common (mis)conception that it's all based on her real life.]

DONNA PEACOCK tells the party that, when she was little, all her friends read the Kit Carnage books and so she read them too. The books were all right, Donna admits. Donna tells the party that she's not going to go around fangirling Katherine Carmichael - the actual Kit Carnage - unlike some people she could name. Although... Donna tells the party that this might sound weird, but... back when she was a little younger, she had a boyfriend and... well, let's just say that he was a real piece of work. He was always putting her down - her! Donna! Insane, right? - and making it seem like she was lucky to have him. She has no idea why she put up with it, but as she said, she was younger. Anyway, Donna says, this is the weird part: there was a scene in one of those old books where Kit gets thrown in jail for something she hasn't actually done; Donna can't remember what. Anyway, in the scene Kit is behind bars and wearing the same filthy clothes she's had on for days, and some important rich man - maybe he was the bank president or something? It doesn't matter - he comes into the jail. He looks at Kit through the bars and he makes some rude comment or other. Donna tells the party that Kit lifts her chin up and she looks the man right in the eye and says "*Watch your tone, sir.*" Just like that, like she's a queen, even though she's locked up and filthy. Donna tells the party that one night, her then-boyfriend had started in on her, telling her she'd be prettier if she wore her hair different or some bullshit thing, and she's not even sure what part of her brain it came from, but she looked at him, right in the eye, and said "*Watch your tone, sir.*" Not angry, but like she was made of steel, just the way Kit Carnage said it. Donna tells the party that the guy didn't stick around much longer after that, after he realized Donna wasn't going to be taking any more of his shit. She has no idea why she even remembered that scene from a book she read back when she was little. Crazy! [This comment serves to remind the party about Katherine Carmichael's writing and what it means to its many readers, as well as the common (mis)conception that it's all based on her real life.]

LEXIA tells the party that it has been a real pleasure meeting Katherine Carmichael, author of the Kit Carnage books. She says that she loves all the books and that she is an especial fan of *Wide as the Sky*, the latest book. One of the astonishing things, Lexia tells the party, is that Kit actually ages in the books. Perhaps this isn't really surprising, given that Kit is Katherine and obviously Katherine herself has aged in the twenty-five years since *Resolute: The Kit Carnage Story* came out. But the fact that the books continue to be devoured by young readers when the protagonist is significantly older than they are is a remarkable feat. It's also one reason Katherine - or, rather, Kit - is such an inspiration to lots of women: she continues to be powerful and respected even though she is no longer a young woman. Lexia would like to see more books like this. [This comment serves to remind the party about Katherine Carmichael's writing and what it means to its many readers, as well as the common (mis)conception that it's all based on her real life.]

LINCROFT SPENCE tells the party that shortly after *Whatever* became really popular, all sorts of journalists wanted to interview him, and one of the questions he got asked constantly was what his favorite book was. Lincroft tells the party that this is an absurd question. Does any devoted reader really have *one* favorite book? He tells the party he got in the habit of listing five or ten of his favorite books from that year. One of the books he always mentioned to reporters - and one they were always surprised by - is *Wide as the Sky*, the latest Kit Carnage book. This, he tells the party, made it rather thrilling when he came to World's Edge and found that Katherine Carmichael - the author of the Kit Carnage books - was here as well. It has been a real pleasure to meet her, he says. Lincroft tells the party that he'd thought at first that Ms. Carmichael had come to town to work with *Inspirations Unlimited* just as he has, but this is seemingly not the case. This is no wonder, Lincroft says; Katherine's own life clearly provides plenty of inspiration and unlike him, she is able to write without it being a tortuous process. Lincroft explains that he was always irritated at the shock interviewers expressed when he listed the Kit Carnage book as one of his favorites. Apparently he was supposed to look down on the books because they were "only" written for younger readers, or maybe because they were written for girls. A good book is a good book, Lincroft says, regardless of who the intended audience is. The Kit Carnage books are great stories. Yes, they're obviously based closely on Katherine Carmichael's real life, but they're also full of sly humor and insightful observations. Lincroft says that he can only hope and pray he'll create something half as good, assuming he ever manages to write anything else. [This comment serves to

remind the party about Katherine Carmichael's writing, as well as the common (mis)conception that it's all based on her real life. It also reveals a lot of the bias against that writing.]

KARMIN SMIRCH tells the party that he's obviously never read any of those Kit Carnage books. His sister Karla did, when she was very young. How stupid does a person have to be, Karmin asks the party rhetorically, to write a series of books where she shoots people with a crossbow and then to act surprised when she gets arrested for *shooting someone with a crossbow*? At the same time, he says, he supposes any person with half a brain would be writing books for *adults*. Or would, better yet, have a real job. *[This comment reinforces the common (mis)conception that Kit Carnage and Katherine Carmichael are one and the same, and also expresses the general dismissive attitude that some people hold toward the books.]*

BARTLEBY SPRINK tells the party that he certainly hopes that whatever book-making company makes those dreadful Kit Corsage books will think twice before making any more of them, now that poor brave Vernon Guilt has come forward with his sad story! Bartleby assures the party that he has never read any of the books himself but that he has always known they were no good. Not only is it very lazy work, writing a story that's not even made up but is rather just an armoire of her very own life, but also the books breed young girls to be violent and combatatory and not nice at all. Books like that should be against the law and probably are, and that's the truth. *[This comment reinforces the common (mis)conception that Kit Carnage and Katherine Carmichael are one and the same, and also expresses the general dismissive attitude that some people hold toward the books.]*

CARMINA BORDEAUX tells the party that it is outrageous the things people are able to get away with these days. Take, for example, this woman Katherine Carmichael. From what Carmina has heard, the Carmichael woman has written books in which she encourages children to break the law by bragging about her own felonious exploits! Preposterous! Well, this Carmichael person was so excited for the world to know about her criminal activities and now the world shall know just that! The books are apparently very poorly written and are only popular because most people don't know any better. Disgusting! *[This comment reinforces the common (mis)conception that Kit Carnage and Katherine Carmichael are one and the same, and also expresses the general dismissive attitude that some people hold toward the books.]*

EDWIN DAVIES tells the party that frankly, the situation with Katherine Carmichael - where she grievously wounded that soldier chap and got away with it for more than a decade - is as predictable as it is sordid. When children are exposed to garbage such as that Ms. Carmichael peddles, it is small wonder that society grows ever more accepting of lax morals, criminality and general bad behavior. Edwin tells the party that it will do no good for Ms. Carmichael to assert that it was "Kit Carnage" and not she herself who shot that man because people are well aware that Carmichael and Carnage are actually the same person. Edwin supposes that he should be grateful Ms. Carmichael was not intelligent enough to devise a more clever subterfuge. Then again, if she were a more intelligent person, no doubt she could write books at an adult level rather than only for little girls. *[This comment reinforces the common (mis)conception that Kit Carnage and Katherine Carmichael are one and the same, and also expresses the general dismissive attitude that some people hold toward the books.]*

Saturday between 12-2pm, BONNIE STILLWATER asks the party if they've seen Katherine Carmichael recently? Bonnie explains that Katherine was sitting with Electra in the tavern earlier when Electra got a nosebleed. It happens sometimes, Bonnie says, and so she was prepared with a cloth to bring to Electra. Bonnie tells the party that, at the sight of the blood, Katherine turned extremely pale and came very close to passing out. Bonnie confesses that she was mostly focussed on helping Electra - it is lots of work to get blood out of the tablecloth! - and even after Electra had the bleeding stopped, Katherine was still very shaky. Bonnie feels awful about this and she just wants to be certain Katherine is all right. *[Bonnie doesn't know or say it, but the fact that Katherine grows faint at the sight of blood means that Vernon Gill's story, where Katherine yanked crossbow bolts from his body, is very unlikely to be true. The party may or may not realize this; either way is fine.]*

Saturday between 4-6pm, ELECTRA asks the party if they've seen Katherine Carmichael recently? Electra wants to make certain Katherine is feeling all right again. Electra explains that she - that is, Electra - is prone to nosebleeds, especially if she doesn't get enough sleep, which has been the case for the past several nights. Electra tells the party that she got a nosebleed at lunch, which is unpleasant but not dangerous. She was sitting with Katherine at the time, and at the sight of the blood, Katherine turned extremely pale and came very close to passing out. Electra confesses that she was mostly focused on not making a mess of the tavern and even after she'd stopped the blood and cleaned off her hands, Katherine was still very shaky. Electra feels awful about this and she just wants to be certain Katherine is all right. *[Electra doesn't know or say it, but the fact that Katherine grows faint at the sight of blood means that Vernon Gill's story, where Katherine yanked crossbow bolts from his body, is very unlikely to be true. The party may or may not realize this; either way is fine.]*

KATHERINE CARMICHAEL is not out Saturday from 4-10pm. She is out Saturday after 10pm.

If and only if the party asks how she could pull crossbow bolts from Vernon Gill's body without fainting at the sight of blood, **KATHERINE CARMICHAEL** gets very shaky and tells them she doesn't want to talk about it. She should sit down quickly and look as though she might faint or get sick. Unless the party completely disengages and walks away right then, Katherine will do the scene described below as happening on Sunday at 10am. *[Katherine is squeamish enough about blood that even the description of this scene is enough to trigger her. If the party does question her, hopefully this response will confirm their suspicions.]*

The party's traveler has lore about Kit Carnage - trigger: a crossbow **PROP** [which Katherine wears hanging from her belt] - which appears on page 209.

Saturday at 10pm, CAMERON LIGHT-ASTOR approaches the party. He has committed a real breach of etiquette, he tells them, and he feels just terrible. He tells the party that he was talking to Sergeant Vernon Gill just a few minutes ago. Light tells the party that Sergeant Gill served - up until his terrible injury 10 years ago - with Lyria's standing army, rather than with the Phantoms or some other specialized unit. Sergeant Gill seemed unhappy, Light says, because his apple crisp was made with cinnamon, rather than with cloves as he prefers, and so Light was hoping he could do something to raise Sergeant Gill's spirits. He launched into a chorus of "Towers of Dolorón", the admittedly-raunchy marching song, but he fears he made Sergeant Gill's mood even lower because the man didn't know the song in question. Light confesses to the party that it hadn't occurred to him Vernon wouldn't know the song, because it gets hammered into the heads of every soldier, regardless of which branch they serve in. Perhaps Sergeant Gill is old enough that he enlisted before the song was widely known? Light thinks this must be the case, except that he's heard Cary Montalvo talk about the old-timers who taught *him* the song. Regardless of why Vernon doesn't know the song, Light is kicking himself for making the man feel even worse. Perhaps Light should order a fruit basket or something for Sergeant Gill? [*Although Light doesn't know or say it, Vernon Gill doesn't know the song because he was never actually a soldier. This doesn't prove Vernon is lying about his injuries, but if the party makes the connection, it suggests that he's lying about something, which might help them piece things together later.*]

VERNON GILL is not out after 10pm on Saturday.

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens with the shady filtered glow through branches. At the base of the tree, a nest of twigs. It is too small, shoddily made. This wee barracks of sticks, sharp and uncomfortable. Nothing is nearly good enough.

Nearby you see him, robin rose-breast. Poor sad thing, his dull brown-black wing hangs broken. He hops piteous, limp-limbed in his distress, easy prey, and his squawk is a wretched lament.

The light is fading. In the dusky gloom, you almost miss it: the shimmer-glint beneath his feet. Perhaps you are mistaken? But no, it is there. The flash of gold in his talons. He clutches it close and reaches out greed-grasping for more.

Night marches in on swift soldiers' feet. You can barely see, but there is a sound, the feathered beating against the air. Just before he takes flight, the robin turns your way. His glittering eye meets yours. He cocks his head - o! clever trickster! - and then with one strong unfettered flutter he takes to the sky and is gone and then the darkness is complete and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows Vernon Gill and suggests both that his injury is feigned and also that he's motivated by greed.

Sunday at 10am, KATHERINE CARMICHAEL is out in front of the tavern. Soon thereafter, the party should have finished their party path ending. It's possible they'll know/suspect most of what's going on here (although probably not why) and will approach Katherine directly. If this happens, that's great! On the other hand, if the party has shown up outside the tavern and it's been 5-10 minutes and they haven't approached her, she should approach them. The scene works either way!

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

If Katherine approaches the party, she tells them she's heard they've been asking around about the charge that was leveled against her. She tells them she greatly appreciates their concern, but that she needs them to please not say anything more on the subject. (If they approach her, she lets them tell her what they think/know and then does the above.) When the party (hopefully!) wants to know why she wants this matter dropped, she slowly and reluctantly confides in them. She explains that she didn't shoot Vernon Gill, that she's never actually shot anyone. She is not Kit Carnage and she never has been. Then Katherine tells the party about the letters she gets from her readers. There are letters from little girls who talk about standing up to bullies because they think about what Kit would do. There are letters from teenaged girls and from grown women. They write to let her know they've stood up for themselves. Sometimes they write that they've gotten away from men who yell at them, or men who hit. They write about finding courage, she tells the party, and they say that Kit Carnage taught them to be brave.

Katherine tells the party that she cannot tell all those women and girls that Kit Carnage is a lie. Katherine tells the party that, although she appreciates their efforts and their concern, she cannot tell the truth. It's better for her to pay Vernon Gill and to serve a prison term than it is to reveal the truth. She will hear nothing else from them on the subject and then hurries away as quickly as possible.

KATHERINE CARMICHAEL is (probably!) not out after this scene concludes until the trial.

Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael, the party encounters a group of women - **PEARL BRYCE, NIX VALERIUS, JONI PEACOCK, DONNA PEACOCK** and **NINA BLISS** - all feverishly discussing a plan. Pearl pulls the party over and tells them what's happening. She explains that they cannot allow Katherine Carmichael to go to jail for shooting Vernon Gill. Vernon is an odious person, she says, and surely Katherine must have had a valid reason for shooting him. [Remember: none of these women know that Vernon is faking his injuries or that Katherine didn't really shoot him!] Joni tells the

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party that they all love the Kit Carnage books so much. Kit has been so important to all of them. Donna reiterates that they cannot let Katherine go to jail.

Nix tells the party that Pearl has come up with a plan to keep Katherine from going to jail. When Katherine's charge comes to trial, Pearl is going to claim that *she* was the one who shot Vernon. And then Nix is going to say that no, *she* shot him. Then Joni and Donna are also going to claim that *they* were the ones who shot him. With so many other people confessing, Justice Wilde can't possibly rule that Katherine is guilty! [Note: yes, this plan is 100% us ripping off the "I'm Spartacus" scene.]

Nina interrupts here. She tells the others - as she has already been doing - that this plan isn't going to work. First of all, they cannot get up and lie in a Lyrian court of law. Second of all, even if they're willing to commit perjury - which they should not be! - this plan is likely to result in a legal situation the law calls Merrick's Conundrum. In a case like this, it's not at all impossible that Justice Wilde could simply declare all of them - Katherine Carmichael *and* Pearl and Nix and Joni and Donna - guilty! He could require *all* of them to pay damages to Vernon Gill, resulting in the unpleasant Mr. Gill receiving a very, very large amount of money indeed! And he could send *all* of them to jail.

The group then resumes arguing amongst themselves, because Pearl is still insisting that they need *some* plan to save Katherine, while Nina is sympathetic but vehemently opposed to this particular plan. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

Hopefully at some point in here the party confides in these women and tells them the truth about Katherine, that she didn't shoot Vernon or anyone else. Assuming the party does this, all these women are overcome. Katherine is an inspiration! She's so brave! Hopefully, the party then makes the leap to the fact that telling Katherine's real life story will inspire women and girls just like Kit Carnage's stories do... and Katherine is actually real.

If the party *doesn't* tell these women the truth here, or if they propose a different plan, someone should tell the Basement and we'll make a plan from there! Also, if it's early enough and if it seems like the party really wants to have this scene with Katherine pre-trial, then we can send her back out at that time.

VERNON GILL is not out on Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, **DIESEL** approaches the party. He tells the party he heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Katherine Carmichael. He reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Diesel encourages them to present the info they've learned to him as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Vernon Gill lied about everything; Katherine never shot him and he isn't actually injured.
- Katherine was willing to take the fall for this crime because she believes her readers will be disillusioned if they learn she's not actually courageous like her heroine Kit Carnage.
- In actuality, the true story of Katherine being willing to sacrifice herself for others is even more inspiring.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Diesel can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Diesel can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) He can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

Eugenie Bright, charged with Desecration

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 795 of the Lyrian Code of Law, Eugenie Bright is hereby charged with desecration of a sacred structure, space or object: On the evening of Saturday the 28th, in this year 994 of the common calendar, the desecration of a wayshrine sacred to the memory of Matthew O'Dell and a wayshrine sacred to the memory of Terese O'Dell, by a being of demonic nature summoned by the defendant.

Common Knowledge:

Early this summer, Eugenie Bright conducted a séance with the goal of communicating with the spirit of her sister, Theodora Bright Davies, who died late last fall. Not only did the séance fail to reach Theodora's spirit, but it actually summoned a demon, a horrifying infernal creature that smashed the séance table before racing off into the night. Eugenie learned her lesson about dabbling in the occult and everyone more or less forgot the incident. This past Saturday, when the Rites of Remembrance began, people set out wayshrines for loved ones who died this past year. Late that night, the demon returned. It smashed the wayshrines dedicated to Matty and Terese O'Dell, both of whom died in the springtime flood, and was moving toward Dora Davies' shrine, presumably intending to destroy that as well. Electra had been sitting in front of the tavern and her quick intervention stopped the demon, which again ran off. The damaged shrines have been reconstructed and the area has been magically warded, something that has never before been necessary. Because Eugenie's séance was responsible for summoning the demon in the first place, she is liable for the damage it has inflicted.

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, EDWIN DAVIES approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled against his aunt, Eugenie Bright. Edwin tells the party that the death of his beloved mother Theodora Davies was of course very hard on both him and Aunt Eugenie. He himself is still wearing mourning black, and even carries a jet-handled cane **PROP**, and while Eugenie herself traipses around in bright colors, he does not hold this against her. Edwin tells the party that he feared something terrible would happen when he heard Aunt Eugenie's ill-advised plan to hold a séance, but she was insistent. If only he had been able to make her see reason on the subject! But alas, he was not. Edwin tells the party that his aunt held the séance at the beginning of the summer - early in June, he believes - and that just as he feared, dabbling in the supernatural proved extremely unwise. Although Edwin was not present at the session, he has heard the demon described as terrifyingly tall with powerful musculature. Attendees said it appeared in a cloud of noxious fog. The demon ran into the night, and Edwin is only grateful no one was hurt or killed! It seems the foul creature is still present in this plane of existence, because it showed itself again a mere week ago, smashing several wayshrines in town. Edwin reminds the party that wayshrines are protected by the most stringent of laws, and because dear Aunt Eugenie's actions resulted in the destruction of several of them, she is sadly being prosecuted to the fullest possible extent. Edwin is concerned sweet Aunt Eugenie doesn't fully understand how dire this situation is. He himself went to talk to Justice Orion Wilde, suggesting the case be tried as property damage rather than desecration, where a conviction incurs mandatory jail time. Edwin reminded the prosecutor that Eugenie is just a little old lady who acted misguidedly, but Justice Wilde was unswayed. Edwin is not certain anything can be done to help his poor elderly aunt, but he would greatly appreciate it if the party could look into this charge.

What Eugenie Says:

I am so very sorry for all of this. I had no business meddling with the occult.

The SECRET Truth:

There is no demon, but there *is* Edwin Davies in a demon costume. Edwin poisoned his mother to hasten his inheritance, and - fearful a séance would allow her to accuse him from beyond the grave - dressed up as a demon to disrupt it. Just this past week when the wayshrines were erected, Edwin learned his aunt still had the poisoned bottle of his mother's sherry. He donned his costume again in an attempt to destroy the very-publicly-displayed evidence, but Electra stopped him before he was able to do so. Although this plan wasn't successful, Edwin is now hoping his aunt will be placed in jail, hopefully netting him a second inheritance very soon.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from URI-KESH (red):

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On Friday night, EDWIN DAVIES should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Edwin needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Edwin doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief interaction with the party! Note that this is Friday night, so Edwin shouldn't be too awful to/around the party, but if they dislike him at least a little, that would be good. [This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]

The party's traveler has lore about Theodora Bright Davies - trigger: the name "Diamond Dora Bright" on a sign - which appears on page 211.

There are wayshrines **PROP** along the fence that runs in front of the tavern, each one sacred to the memory of a different individual, whose name is on a small plaque on the shrine. Within the shrine are items that were important to that person. There are shrines for Matty O'Dell, Terese O'Dell and Elizabeth O'Dell, all of whom died in the springtime collapse of the Silverspan Bridge. There is also a wayshrine for Theodora Bright Davies, who died last November. It is the sign **PROP** on this shrine, which also lists her stage name (Diamond Dora Bright), that triggers the traveler's lore.

SYLVIE VALERIUS tells the party that she adored Theodora Davies and was heartbroken when the older lady passed away last year. Theodora and her sister Eugenie - who is also delightful - lived in town their whole lives, although Dora travelled sometimes. Sylvie explains that Dora was a dancer, both up until her marriage to Harold Davies and then again years later, after Harold's death. Sylvie probably shouldn't say this, but she personally never warmed to Harold. He was very focussed on what people thought of him, if the party knows what Sylvie means? His son Edwin is quite a bit like him, although again, that's probably not very nice of Sylvie to say. Harold liked having a pretty wife like Dora, but he wasn't wild about people knowing she'd been a dancer. He probably saw it as not respectable enough. After he died, Dora went back to dancing and if anything, she was more popular with audiences than she'd been when she was young. Maybe it's crass of Sylvie to say, but Dora made a nice amount of money dancing. Not that you'd know it, most of her life, because she was also very frugal. Sylvie tells the party that as children, she remembers Edwin being annoyed that his lunch would be a cheese sandwich or whatever, instead of something fancy, something that would impress people. Maybe it was because Dora and Eugenie had grown up poor, but Dora was very careful with money, even when she was making a lot of it. Sylvie tells the party that that changed a couple years ago. It was like Dora decided that she couldn't take the money with her and she started spending it accordingly. She bought herself some jewelry and perfume and some nice sherry, but a lot of it got spent on gifts for people. She gave lots of presents to Eugenie, but she was generous with everybody. Oh, and she started throwing parties, wonderful parties with so much food and drink and music and always dancing. They were the best. Sylvie misses her terribly. *[This comment serves multiple purposes. In addition to reminding the party about Theodora, Eugenie, and Edwin's histories and characters, it lets them know that a year or two before she died, Dora finally started spending some of the money she'd made. No one knows or says it yet, but this was Edwin's motive for killing his mother.]*

VALENTINA tells the party that Dora Davies was a hell of a gal, and she's not sure how a woman like that ended up with a stick-up-his-ass son like Edwin. Actually, Valentina says, she *does* know: Dora's husband Harold was just like Edwin. The dreary apple doesn't fall far from the dreary tree. Harold liked having a hottie of a wife well enough, but he did *not* like people knowing that Dora had been a dancer. Well, it served him right, boring old Harold, because after he died, Dora went *back* to dancing professionally. Valentina tells the party that Dora made a bunch of money dancing. She was one of those women who just got better and hotter the older she got, and then she got rich as well. Not that you'd know it, because Dora and her sister Eugenie grew up without two royals to rub together, and even when Dora was making all sorts of cash, she wasn't spending any of it if she could help it. A year or two ago, though, Dora must've finally decided the money wasn't going to run out and she actually started spending some of it. She bought herself some nice clothes and whatnot, but most of it went to gifts for other people, and these all-day parties. Valentina loves a good party, and these that Dora threw, they were the best. Food and booze and dancing till all hours. There was one party where Valentina drank so much champagne she propositioned Edwin. *Edwin!* He'd looked at her like she was some sort of nasty stain on the upholstery. Your loss, Edwin. Valentina tells the party that she hopes she keeps dancing till the end, just like Dora did. *[This comment serves multiple purposes. In addition to reminding the party about Theodora, Eugenie, and Edwin's histories and characters, it lets them know that a year or two before she died, Dora finally started spending some of the money she'd made. No one knows or says it yet, but this was Edwin's motive for killing his mother.]*

PHYLLIS FIERI tells the party that she didn't know Theodora Davies all that long, but that Dora treated everyone like a close friend, so you got to know her quickly. Phyllis says that she met Dora about a year before she died. Dora had this fabulous rose garden all full of esoteric flowers that were very expensive and very high-maintenance to grow. Terrible property investment, but Dora wasn't the kind of person who made decisions like that. She was very extravagant, very generous. Phyllis tells the party that it was funny, because she'd just assumed that that was how Dora had always been. But apparently that wasn't the case at all. Someone told her that Dora used to be loathe to spend any money, but that at some point, she'd just decided to live it up. Well, it was Dora's money to spend, Phyllis says. She made it dancing, which you could easily believe, meeting Dora. She carried herself like she was on stage, always. Phyllis didn't know Dora for long, but she won't ever forget her. *[This comment serves multiple purposes. In addition to reminding the party about Theodora's histories and character, it lets them know that a year or two before she died, Dora finally started spending some of the money she'd made. No one knows or says it yet, but this was Edwin's motive for killing his mother.]*

EVELYN tells the party that probably all relationships look odd to the people who aren't in them. She was thinking about this just now after walking past Dora Davies' wayshrine. Dora was a great lady, just like her sister Eugenie is. But Dora's husband, Harold... well, Evelyn never understood what Dora saw in Harold. The opposite wasn't true, Evelyn tells the party. Dora was beautiful, which

Harold clearly valued, and loads of fun, which... Harold tolerated, it seemed. But rather grudgingly. Evelyn tells the party that Dora was a dancer before she got married, which Harold seemed to treat as an embarrassing little secret. After Harold passed away, Dora went back to dancing professionally. As far as Evelyn knows, Dora did rather well for herself, although she stashed away most all the money she earned. Evelyn remembers Dora sewing all her own clothes, and Edwin's clothes as well, which Dora didn't seem to mind but Edwin probably did. She was frugal like that for years, only relaxing her stance on money relatively recently. It was like Dora decided that she couldn't take the money with her and she started making up for lost time. She planted fancy rose bushes that needed special care just to bloom and bought herself perfume in gorgeous cut-glass bottles, and she gave presents to all her friends, which was everybody. Harold must've been rolling over in his grave, Evelyn says, although that's not very kind of her. *[This comment serves multiple purposes. In addition to reminding the party about Theodora, Eugenie, and Edwin's histories and characters, it lets them know that a year or two before she died, Dora finally started spending some of the money she'd made. No one knows or says it yet, but this was Edwin's motive for killing his mother.]*

PANSY GOLDEN tells the party that she worked cleaning house for Miss Dora, before she died. Pansy clarifies that it was only a paid job for the final 18 months of the older lady's life, but that for years before that, Pansy used to stop by once a week or so to handle any jobs that were too heavy for Miss Dora. You'd think maybe that useless son of Dora's could've helped out, but no, apparently not. Pansy tells the party that she never minded helping, but it was the principle of the thing: her and the elderly woman cleaning while Edwin sat around doing nothing. A waste of space, that man. But anyway. Before the final year and a half or so, Miss Dora would bake her cookies or whatever as a thank you for helping out, and then at some point it had turned into a paid job, and one that paid very nicely. It was funny, Pansy tells the party: Miss Dora was frugal her whole life, but then once she decided she might as well start spending money, she started buying all sorts of things. Near the end of her life, Miss Dora was always buying presents for people: fancy earrings for her sister Eugenie, or a bracelet for Pansy, even when it wasn't her birthday. Most of the money got spent on other people, but there were a few indulgences she'd buy herself. Pansy tells the party Miss Dora had rosebushes that cost more than some people make in a month. Oh, and then there was the fancy perfume the old lady would buy. The thing that made it funny is that Miss Dora had no sense of smell; she'd lost it when she had pneumonia one time and it never came back. That didn't stop her from buying perfume, though. She always told Pansy it made her feel so elegant, having those beautiful glass bottles on her vanity table. Pansy laughs that, because Dora couldn't actually smell the scent herself, she'd slather so much of it on that you couldn't hardly breathe around her. There were a couple times Pansy had to put a clothespin on her nose while she was cleaning the house, just because the smell was so strong. But that was Miss Dora: full of joy and life. She was a character for sure, and so generous and fun. Pansy misses her a whole lot. *[In addition to reminding the party about Dora's history and personality, this comment is important because it lets them know she had no sense of smell. This explains how Edwin was able to kill his mother with a strongly-scented poison, although of course no one knows or says that.]*

POPPY GOLDEN tells the party that her sister Pansy used to work cleaning house for Dora Davies. Poppy says that she was just reminded of it, seeing Dora's wayshrine. One of the things in there were Dora's perfume bottles. Poppy tells the party that she remembers Pansy coming home reeking of the old lady's perfume. Apparently Dora had no sense of smell, because she'd lost it one time she got sick and it never came back. You'd think that someone with no sense of smell wouldn't care about perfume, of course, but Pansy said that Dora just liked the bottles and that they made her feel fancy. Which is all well and good, Poppy says, but of course means that Dora used rather a heavy hand when she'd put the perfume on. Poppy says that she'd completely forgotten that until she saw the bottles in the wayshrine, and then the smell of that perfume came right back to her. It's funny how memories are like that, Poppy says. *[This comment is important because it lets the party know Dora had no sense of smell. This explains how Edwin was able to kill his mother with a strongly-scented poison, although of course no one knows or says that.]*

EUGENIE BRIGHT tells the party that it was so foolish of her, trying to conduct a séance to talk to her sister Dora. She misses Dora so much, but surely her sister knows that already. Eugenie tells the party that her nephew Edwin tried to dissuade her from doing it - Edwin was always the voice of reason, even when he was a little boy - but she didn't listen. Edwin told her she shouldn't be playing around with forces she didn't understand, and he was completely right. Now that terrible demon is still out there in the world and it's all because of her. She had just wanted to hear Dora's laugh one more time. She tells the party how Edwin implored her to reconsider her idiotic plan, and when she'd refused, he himself had declined to attend. Edwin doesn't believe in meddling with the occult, and he's always been one to stick to his principles. If only she had listened! Eugenie tells the party that she should have stuck to simply remembering her sister as best she can. She admits that she never wore mourning clothes, because Dora loved bright colors so much that Eugenie couldn't bring herself to dress in black for her. She tells the party what fun she and Dora always had, even all the years when neither of them had any money to spend. They'd make up stories to tell each other, making jokes about every little thing. Dora's husband Harold was always scandalized at how loud she and Dora would get laughing about some silly thing or another. She misses Dora so much. It gave her great comfort to be able to set up the wayshrine with Dora's things, and then that awful demon smashed the shrines of poor Matty and Terese O'Dell. Eugenie tells the party that she'd helped rebuild those shrines, but still, it was a heartbreaking thing to have happen. She knows it is her fault and no amount of rebuilding or apologizing will change that. She is so deeply ashamed and sorry. *[There's a whole lot of info here. Besides Eugenie's guilt about the demon, it's important the party hears how Edwin tried to talk Eugenie out of the séance (which of course he did because he didn't want her hearing from his mother) and that he declined to attend it (which of course he did because he was dressed as a demon during that time.). Eugenie doesn't need to overstate these pieces, and it's important to remember that Eugenie thinks Edwin is an upstanding and responsible person. Eugenie thinks that she's letting her sister down by not dressing in black, but of course she's actually doing more to honor Dora's memory than Edwin is with his showy but meaningless mourning. Oh, and lastly, it was Eugenie who assembled Dora's wayshrine, not Edwin. This*

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matters for Eugenie's Sunday scene, but is just one more sign that Edwin is a useless prat. But again, Eugenie speaks only favorably of Edwin. Ultimately, this will make him look even worse.]

Sometime on Saturday, hopefully before 4pm, FLORIA tells the party that it was always a pleasure talking to Dora Davies about the roses she grew. Dora loved all sorts of flowers, but her favorites were the most temperamental varieties of roses, the ones that wanted very specific and onerous care in order to thrive. Floria tells the party that she used to make special fertilizer for Dora's rosebushes. It worked well and smelled just like roses itself, but it was toxic to humans. Floria always wore two pairs of gloves when making it. She tells the party that she doesn't miss having to make the pesky stuff, but she does miss Dora, who was simply lovely. *[This toxic fertilizer is the substance Edwin used to poison his mother's sherry. Dora had no sense of smell, so she didn't detect it there, but hopefully the party will smell roses when they open the sherry bottle on Sunday. This is a critical clue and Floria is the only one giving it, so she needs to make sure this encounter happens. At the same time, she also shouldn't say more than is written here lest it raise too many suspicions for the party too early.]*

NIX VALERIUS tells the party that it entertains her, how much Edwin Davies wants to reprimand her and can't. Nix tells the party that she doesn't care where anyone falls in the social order, but Edwin sure does, and that means he can't tell her off, no matter how much he clearly wants to. The other day, her brother Pascal asked her to bring some paperwork to Edwin. While Nix was in Miss Dora's house - she supposes it's technically Edwin's house now, but she refuses to think of it that way - she sat herself on the back of his fancy velvet settee, with her boots on the upholstery, just to see what he'd do. Nix tells the party that Edwin had looked visibly pained but of course hadn't dared say anything. If she weren't a noblewoman he'd probably be pressing charges against her right now. Asshat. *[Edwin is not a mustache-twirling sort of villain, but comments like this will hopefully make his particular brand of sanctimonious nastiness evident.]*

SOLOMON STILLWATER tells the party that he is *this* close to barring Edwin Davies from coming into the tavern. Nothing is ever good enough for Edwin! His tea is too cold or too hot or not in the sort of cup he likes! Patrons at another table are making too much noise for Edwin's liking! The girl who brought him his stew didn't smile at him, or maybe she smiled too much... and never mind that "the girl" in question is Pansy Golden who cleaned his mother's house for years, and surely Edwin could have learned her name by now! Edwin is never satisfied. And he when he's not satisfied - which is always - he snaps his fingers. Solomon loves his customers but Seasons save him, he cannot stand a finger-snapper. *[Edwin is not a mustache-twirling sort of villain, but comments like this will hopefully make his particular brand of sanctimonious nastiness evident.]*

KIKO TRUTHSPEAKER tells the party that it is almost always a pleasure, having the chance to interact with Lyrians. Most people are welcoming and kind, she says. Of course, there are exceptions that prove this rule. Edwin Davies is one of those, alas. Truthspeaker says that perhaps Mr. Davies believes he is being helpful, speaking to the Makai slowly and slightly louder than he does to other Lyrians. Maybe Mr. Davies struggles to remember that they are Makai, not idiots. *[Edwin is not a mustache-twirling sort of villain, but comments like this will hopefully make his particular brand of sanctimonious nastiness evident.]*

SHAUN PEACOCK tells the party that it's to be expected, when the Peacock Family Singers arrive in a new town, that some people will be excited to have them there, while others will not. He tells the party that he can't really blame people who fall into that latter category, because people are worried having a traveling musical group is going to make a lot of noise and disturbance. Certainly Edwin Davies had made it very clear that he didn't like the idea of the Peacocks being around. Shaun tells the party that Edwin wanted to know if they had a permit for camping where they are (they do, thanks to Milton) and whether they were aware of local noise ordinances and vagrancy laws (they are, again because Milton checks on these things.) Shaun says that Edwin seemed rather disappointed they weren't in violation of anything. Luckily, Edwin had gone on his way then, after telling them he wouldn't be attending any shows they put on but before Mick or Stevie could make any 4-letter suggestions to Edwin. *[Edwin is not a mustache-twirling sort of villain, but comments like this will hopefully make his particular brand of sanctimonious nastiness evident.]*

BRIMSTONE tells the party that he doesn't like to talk much about his time before coming to World's Edge. Maledicto's castle was a bad place and the plane Brimstone came from was even worse. Still, sometimes people want to hear about all that, and Brimstone tries to make people happy, so he obliges. Brimstone tells the party that shortly after he came to town, in the spring, someone in the tavern had asked him about demons. Demons are awful, Brimstone says. Very very tall, with horrible greenish skin, and always coming and going in a puff of putrid smoke. Just awful. And they're drawn to anger, Brimstone had explained. It strengthens them, makes them even more ferocious. Brimstone tells the party that he never thought a demon would be able to just walk around here, like this one that smashed up the wayshrines. *[Brimstone's description of demons provides context for the stories the party will hear, but it's also important that he was describing demons to people in the tavern, because this is the description on which Edwin based his demon disguise. Note that if the party asks, Brimstone cannot remember who was in the tavern when he had this conversation.]*

BELLE BISHOP tells the party that the séance Eugenie Bright held was very strange. Belle wanted to attend both because it was important to Eugenie, who is a total darling, and also because it's fascinating from a scientific communications standpoint. If the dead can speak to us, how do they do it? Is it auditory communication, or neuropathic, or something else entirely? Belle tells the party that Eugenie had a table set with a velvet tablecloth sewn all around the edges with tiny bells. There was a picture of Eugenie's sister Theodora in the center of the table, and candles circling it, and once they were all present, Eugenie instructed them to hold hands and close their eyes. Eugenie had bowed her head and was just starting to speak, something about calling on spirits, and all of a sudden there was a bang and Belle smelled smoke. She opened her eyes thinking maybe a candle had tipped over, but no, there was a tall figure in the room! It was hard to see through the smoke, but Belle is reasonably certain its skin was green, and as it came closer to

her, she realized that it was very, very tall. Eugenie had gone so pale Belle was afraid she would faint, and then the thing brought a fist down on the table. Lenora Graves was there, and she started screaming something about “Think happy thoughts! Think happy thoughts!”, which seemed pretty unlikely to accomplish much, as far as Belle is concerned. And then the creature sort of lurched and stumbled to the door and went out into the night. Belle would have liked to follow it, but she wasn’t certain it was a good idea to leave Eugenie. *[This is as accurate an explanation of what happened at the séance as anyone is likely to get.]*

LENORA GRAVES tells the party that the séance Eugenie Bright held was simply terrifying. Lenora tells the party that Eugenie had a table set with a velvet tablecloth sewn all around the edges with tiny bells. There was a picture of Eugenie’s sister Theodora in the center of the table, and candles circling it, and once they were all present, Eugenie instructed them to hold hands and close their eyes. Eugenie had bowed her head and was just starting to speak, calling on the denizens of the spirit realm to guide them, when Lenora felt a malevolent presence in the room. The air was filled with a foul sulfurous smoke, like the miasma of The Beyond. Lenora opened her eyes to find a horrifying figure standing over them! It was 8 or 9 feet tall and its skin was a sick green, the color of mouldering leaves. It stepped closer and closer, slamming a clawed fist down upon the table. Lenora knew immediately that this could only be a demon, that grimdest of fiends. Demons feast on anger, growing stronger in the presence of negative emotions, so Lenora thought quickly and called out to everyone, telling them to free their minds from anger. The demon let out a howl of rage at being thwarted and then bolted out into the night. Lenora tells the party that the experience was incredibly frightening but that she is not certain what would have happened had she not been there. *[Belle’s explanation of the séance, above, is more accurate than this one, but this still shows the party what it felt like to be there.]*

NATASHA tells the party that the séance Eugenie Bright held was amazing. She had been hoping Eugenie’s sister Theodora would actually manifest, but you can’t have everything. Natasha tells the party that Eugenie had a table set with a black velvet tablecloth sewn all around the edges with tiny bells. There was a picture of Theodora in the center of the table, and silver candles circling it. Not gonna lie, Natasha was loving the look of it all. Once everybody was there, Eugenie instructed them to hold hands and close their eyes. Eugenie called on the denizens of the spirit realm to guide them, when the air was suddenly all smoky. Natasha tells the party she opened her eyes to see a really tall figure with greasy green skin, and she knew right away it was a demon. It slammed a hand down on the table. Lenora Graves was there, and she started yelling at everybody to think happy thoughts, which Natasha already was, because hello? Séance and a demonic sighting? Best day ever, basically. The demon ambled away then. Natasha tells the party that everything about the experience was great except for the demon returning to smash up some wayshrines. So not cool. But otherwise: 5 skulls, would attend again. *[Natasha’s explanation of the séance is relatively accurate.]*

ORION WILDE tells the party that he’s not at liberty to comment on any ongoing investigation, but that he hates desecration charges. Hates them! There’s extra paperwork far beyond what you get with regular destruction-of-property cases, and there’s already far too much paperwork as is. He tells the party he was visited by Edwin Davies on behalf of that woman, Eugenie Bright, who’s apparently Davies’ aunt. Whatever. Orion says that it doesn’t matter what Mr. Davies wants, barging into the prosecutorial pavilion first thing in the morning, going on and on about “I know there’s a mandatory prison sentence of at least ten years in cases where a defendant is found guilty of desecration, but perhaps you could make an exception for my poor elderly aunt?” Orion tells the party that he’ll tell them just like he told Mr. Davies: no, he cannot make an exception for anyone. That is what “mandatory” means. The justice department of Lyria takes matters of desecration very seriously, because if it did not, you can bet every church bureaucrat in the kingdom would be sending in angry letters. And Orion Wilde likes angry letters even less than extra paperwork. *[This comment is mostly important because it lets the party know what a serious charge this is, what with the mandatory ten years of prison time. If they’re really listening, they might notice that Edwin’s comments to Justice Wilde actually served to make sure the prosecutor remembered the mandatory sentence, but it’s fine if they don’t notice this.]*

HONORÉ VALERIUS tells the party that he knows Eugenie Bright is wracked with guilt over her role in the destruction of Matty and Terese O’Dell’s wayshrines. He says that Eugenie was there to assist in rebuilding the damaged shrines, just as he was. They were lucky that Electra was there last Saturday night when the demon returned, because otherwise all the shrines might have been destroyed. From what Honoré understands, the demon knocked Terese O’Dell’s favorite teapot **PROP** from her shrine, cracking it, and then moved to Matty’s, where it shoved at the shrine itself and pushed the contents to the ground. It was just heading toward Dora Davies’ wayshrine when Electra intercepted it. *[In addition to reminding the party about the common knowledge of the destruction of the wayshrines, this matters because it tells them/reminds them that the “demon” was moving toward Dora’s shrine, which was, of course, secretly the goal all along.]*

STEVIE PEACOCK tells the party that she’s never heard of anyone disturbing a wayshrine before, ever. There are plenty of bad people in the world, of course, but wayshrines are... well... sacred. Of course, it’s hardly surprising that a demon doesn’t care about that, or maybe is even drawn to that sort of destruction. *[Although this is theoretically something everyone would know, the comment lets the party know that disturbing a wayshrine is essentially unheard of as a crime.]*

KOREOS tells the party that Dora Bright - well, her married name was Dora Davies, but she danced as “Diamond Dora Bright”, and that’s how he always thought of her - came to him for inspiration about a year after her husband Harold died. She was in her 40s then, he tells the party, and she’d danced professionally when she was younger, before she was married. The thing is, she really didn’t need Koreos. Or, rather, she didn’t need his help with dancing. She was astonishing to watch, graceful and strong, yes, but the thing that really set her apart was that it was like she glowed from inside. You just couldn’t help smiling, watching her. Koreos tells the party that honestly, the help she’d really needed from him was simply permission to dance again. Dora had worried about what people would say, her going back to dancing professionally. She was a widow and a mother, and she wasn’t a young woman any more. Koreos tells

the party that he'd looked into her face - she had these beautiful expressive eyes; you could always tell what she was thinking and feeling, and he'd seen just how much she wanted to be back on a stage - and he'd said, "Well, Dora. There are certainly people who won't appreciate you dancing and who won't want to watch you. And those people should go to hell." Koreos tells the party that Dora had laughed and told him that this was excellent advice, and truly, that was seemingly all she'd needed. He tells the party that of course he himself was a much younger man back when he and Dora had that conversation. He hadn't understood, maybe, how much pressure there was on her not to get back on stage again. He understands, maybe, a little bit more now. And he is very glad that he told Dora what he did, and very glad that she listened, because she did go back to dancing and everyone who saw her was happy they had. [This is just a nice story, honestly.]

AL BISHOP tells the party that he saw Diamond Dora Bright dancing a time or two back ten years or so ago. She was something else, that woman. He tells the party that he was delighted when he learned she was from World's Edge and that her sister Eugenie is still here. Eugenie's not a dancer, he says, but she still seems like a hell of a nice lady. It's a real shame, that whole mess with the demon and all. Obviously people can't just be summoning demons left and right, of course, but still. A real shame. Eugenie is a damn fine lady. [This is completely true.]

Saturday between 4-8pm, ELECTRA tells the party that she was at the séance Eugenie Bright held at the beginning of June. Electra isn't sure if it's actually possible - or a terribly good idea - to speak to the spirit of someone who's died, but it was important to Eugenie, so she went. Electra tells the party that Eugenie had asked any spirits present to speak to her, and all of a sudden there was a bang and the smell of smoke. Electra opened her eyes to find a demon in the room. She knew what it was because she'd heard Brimstone talking about demons, and just as he said, it was very tall, with mottled greenish skin. She remembered what Brimstone had said about demons being drawn to anger. Good thing they're not strengthened by fear, because Electra assures the party that she was very afraid. It smashed a hand down on the table and then ran from the room. Electra says that Eugenie looked like she might faint and she and Belle Bishop had gone to make sure she was all right. That was the end of the séance, of course, and maybe foolishly, they all assumed it was the end of the demon as well. That seemed to be the case for almost four months, and then last Saturday, they'd all gathered to set up wayshrines. She'd seen Eugenie that morning, setting items into Dora's shrine. It was late on Saturday night and Electra was sitting in front of the tavern when she'd seen a figure moving through the darkness. It almost looked a little unsteady on its feet and she wondered if maybe someone needed help, but then she saw it go to one of the wayshrines and shove items out of it! Electra tells the party that she'd run over. She's seen some things in her life, but she never thought she would see someone disturbing a wayshrine. But that's exactly what was happening. Electra heard a smashing sound that she only later learned was Terese O'Dell's teapot, the one Matty gave her when they got married that she loved so much. By this point, she was close enough that she could see the figure in the shadows. Even in the dim light, she could tell it was the demon. There was no mistaking its strange, stilted walk. It had moved to Matty O'Dell's wayshrine and again, it shoved at the items within. Electra tells the party she held up her Sacred Shield and placed her hand on the maple-leaf pendant **PROP** she wears, waiting to feel the power of Autumn flow through her and drive the demon back. But... there was nothing. The demon moved toward Dora's wayshrine. Electra tells the party that she knows what Brimstone says, about anger strengthening these creatures, but right at that moment, she just... couldn't help herself. These lovely people, Terese and Matty and Dora, the people in town just wanted to remember them and honor them, and here was this disgusting *thing* breaking and ruining the pieces of their lives that were left. Electra says that she was so, so angry that she just... ran at the demon. Ran at it and punched it and kicked at it. If her anger made it stronger or fiercer, she didn't notice. It certainly made *her* stronger. The demon was at least a foot and a half taller than her, but it fell back as she punched at it. She kicked it several times, as hard as she could, and she thinks she heard it made a pained noise. Eventually it moved away from Dora's wayshrine and then stumbled away. Electra tells the party she's glad it didn't manage to destroy any more of the shrines. [In addition to providing a complete look at the demon's two visits, this comment is also important because it conveys that the demon wasn't driven back by a Sacred Shield, nor was it actually strengthened by Electra's anger. This is, of course, because it wasn't a demon at all, although of course Electra doesn't know or say that.]

Saturday after 10pm, KABLE WORLDWATCHER approaches the party. He was helping tidy up after the ritual in Windvale, he tells the party, and while moving some unused firewood, he found something very strange. He shows it to the party: It's a canvas bag **PROP**, and inside it is a small jar of green greasepaint, a few smokebombs, a ragged black tunic and a pair of platform boots. Worldwatcher tells the party that it was wedged in a hollow spot under the stage, very well-hidden. He only saw it because the fire was so bright. What could it mean?

EDWIN DAVIES is not out on Saturday after 4pm.

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, but only a little. Dusky-dim memories rise up mourning-black all around. Onyx and jet, grim and sedate. You see his hand upon the gleaming silver head of the cane. Respectable, yes, oh yes, and admired.

Outside the grand old house, the garden grows lush and wild and fertile. The velvet petals are soft, crimson-dark and beautiful above the treacherous razor thorns. They have fed well, these blustery blossoms, their sustenance poured like sweet wine down upon the ground that they

may suckle and grow strong. It nurtures and nourishes, but the scent rises thickly toxic up, sweet like rot and ruin, of clotted choking death. Be careful. Keep your hands clean.

Inside the house, all is tranquil hushed. On the table, a crocheted doily, and upon the lace a bottle. The amontillado within glows warm amber, all mellow-gold. She has earned this, yes. The decanter open, the spirit breathes. It pours out tawny in the glass, caramel and lovely. But...

Wafting up invisible, the putrid stink. Death oh death, it hangs undetected in the afternoon air. The deed is done the cork replaced the spirit breathes no more and then the deceitful ebony mists rise up once again and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision suggests the toxic rose fertilizer in the bottle of sherry and possibly also ties this to Edwin Davies.

On Sunday morning as the party is finishing breakfast, EUGENIE BRIGHT approaches the party. She asks them to walk outside with her briefly. She tells them she understands they were looking into the charge against her. This is very kind of them, she says, and she appreciates it. It was so good of them to try to help her, and so good of Edwin to ask them to, but she accepts that she must pay for what she has done, being so careless with matters that are beyond her scope.

It's possible (and maybe probable) that the party will by now know what's going on, so they may well interrupt Eugenie to tell her some or all of the truth. (There are, of course, layers of truth here. Ideally the party has realized by now both that Edwin disguised himself as the demon and that Edwin poisoned Dora, but it's possible they know the former and not the latter.)

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

If the party tells her about everything including the murder, Eugenie is confused and shocked and initially doesn't believe what she's hearing.

If they tell her the demon is actually Edwin, she will have lots of questions: How do they know? How did he do that? And, more importantly, why? Why interrupt the séance? And why desecrate the wayshrines? Hopefully these questions will get the party to the point where they tell her or at least theorize that perhaps Edwin murdered Dora and concocted the demon ruse to hide this fact.

Assuming the party does eventually tell her all or most of the truth about Edwin, Eugenie takes a while before accepting this idea. By this point in the encounter, they will theoretically be near Dora Davies' wayshrine. Eugenie needs to keep the party talking about Dora until they (hopefully!) mention the poisoned sherry. When they do, Eugenie tells the party that she simply can't believe this idea. She reaches into Dora's shrine and removes the bottle of sherry. **PROP** (The shrines are warded, but presumably whatever is protecting them knows Eugenie doesn't mean any disrespect to Dora's shrine.) When Eugenie has the bottle, she uncorks it. It smells very strongly of roses. Eugenie is deeply startled by this. She knows about the fertilizer her sister used on her roses, about how strongly rose-scented it is and how toxic it is to people. And, of course, she also knows her sister had no sense of smell.

Faced with this, Eugenie must eventually conclude that the party is right about Edwin. Of course, how quickly this happens and how smoothly this goes will depend on how well the party explains themselves and how well they support Eugenie. They know Edwin is a bad guy, but Eugenie still thinks of him as her young nephew. Hopefully the party will present this information kindly!

If the party *doesn't* tell Eugenie anything, she continues to talk. Eugenie tells the party that Edwin had stopped by, last Saturday, as she was assembling his mother's wayshrine. While talking, she walks with the party in that direction. She tells them that Edwin hadn't realized that Eugenie had saved the bottle of Dora's favorite sherry. Eugenie says that Edwin is not usually a sentimental person, but even he was overcome with emotion when he saw that. His hands shook and his voice did as well. Eugenie tells the party that she'd suggested she and Edwin both have a bit of the sherry then, as a toast to Dora, but he'd told her he thought that was disrespectful. Eugenie confesses to the party that he was probably right. They hadn't even brought any glasses, and it would hardly do to be swigging from a bottle when they were supposed to be getting the shrine set up. Sometimes, she says, she embarrasses herself with how gauche she can be. Hopefully this information will be enough to get the party to speak up, but if they still don't, Eugenie can thank them again for their help and then come let the Basement know. We'll think of something else then!

EDWIN DAVIES is not out on Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, KOVI WOUNDTENDER approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Eugenie Bright. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Woundtender encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- There is no demon, but there is Edwin Davies in a demon costume.

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- Edwin poisoned his mother to hasten his inheritance, and - fearful a séance would allow her to accuse him from beyond the grave - dressed up as a demon to disrupt it.
- When the wayshrines were erected, Edwin learned his aunt still had the poisoned bottle of his mother's sherry and donned his costume again in an attempt to destroy the evidence.

Above and beyond the challenges all parties face in presenting their information, Woundtender points out an unfortunate fact to the party: there isn't any actual proof against Edwin. The bag with the demon 'costume' proves *someone* impersonated a demon, but not that it was Edwin. The poisoned sherry proves someone killed Dora Davies, but again, not that it was her son. If the party wants to see Edwin punished for his crimes - and hopefully they do! - they need not just to show that he had motive and means to do this, but to actually prove it.

Probably the easiest way to do this - and clearly, we want the party to come up with an idea, not for Woundtender to suggest one! - is for the party to suggest to Edwin, during the trial, that they all drink a toast to Dora from her sherry bottle, since there isn't a reason for him to refuse this unless he knows the bottle is poisoned. (Let us ignore all the other valid reasons someone might not want sherry at 12:25pm) The party may well be able to think of another method. Regardless, what matters is that they will hopefully enter the trial with a plan to actually (more or less) prove Edwin's guilt.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Woundtender can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Woundtender can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

[Author's note: I think Edwin Davies might possibly be the most despicable character I have written, which is saying something. I felt he deserved more justice than the Lyrian justice system could mete out, so here it is.]

After the party has gotten the satisfaction of saving Eugenie and seeing Edwin exposed, Eugenie has one thing more to say, and it is this:

"Edwin. There's something your mother didn't tell you. She didn't want to worry you. But... she was dying. She had maybe another month or so to live. Probably less. She loved you, Edwin, even though you didn't deserve it. All her money was coming to you anyway, and soon. You didn't have to love her back. All you had to do is be an even remotely decent human. If you'd done that, you'd have it all now. Her house, her money... it would all have been yours. Instead you will spend the rest of your days in a cell, and you will have nothing. You'll have plenty of time now to think about that."

Dorito, charged with Murder

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 24 of the Lyrian Code of Law, Dorito is hereby charged with murder: On the day of September the 29th, in this year 994 of the common calendar, per the defendant's own freely-given testimony, the murder of Professor Daniel Merriweather.

Common Knowledge:

Daniel Merriweather is - or, rather, was - a professor at Twickenham University, an expert in symbology. He was supposed to give a lecture on the subject last Sunday afternoon, but he never showed up. Most people didn't think much of this, an academic lecture not being high on most people's lists of fun ways to spend an afternoon, but Lenora Graves was concerned something had befallen the professor, and on Monday, she brought her Ouija board to the tavern to "contact his spirit." As this was starting, Dorito yelled that she'd killed the professor, saying she'd stabbed him. Dorito has been unpredictable for as long as anyone in World's Edge has known her, but this was still very shocking. Diesel has promised to ensure Dorito doesn't leave town before the trial, but everyone is edgy thinking of a murderer just walking around amongst them.

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, DIESEL approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that's been leveled again Dorito. Diesel acknowledges that there's probably not much the party can do, what with Dorito having gone and confessed and all. Dorito's always been a wild card, Diesel says, but mostly that just meant you can't ever tell minute by minute if she's gonna be joking around or freaking out or both at the same time. But murder? Diesel did not see that coming. This is the kind of thing that gives doomsday cultists a bad name, you know? Diesel knows there's plenty of people who want to badmouth them, but he's always tried to run... well, if not a *tight ship*, then at least a ship where no one's gonna get murdered. He tells the party that when that professor - Professor Merriweather, that was his name - didn't show up in town last Sunday, Diesel didn't think a thing of it. And then on Monday, when people started saying the professor was dead, again, it meant nothing to him. Someone said they should use a Ouija board to contact the professor's spirit, which sounded crazy to Diesel, but whatever. And then suddenly Dorito was saying she'd stabbed the guy! It was looking like the Baron wasn't going to have any choice but to lock Dorito up between then and the trial, and maybe Diesel should've just kept his mouth shut on the subject. But, he tells the party, he was thinking about what if they'd had the date wrong, about the Great Tumult? What if that happened and Dorito was locked in a cell somewhere? That seemed an awful shame, so Diesel'd asked the Baron if maybe he - Diesel, that is - could vouch for Dorito, could promise she'd be around to stand trial, and the Baron's family had decided that was okay. Diesel tells the party that he's tried to get Dorito to tell him a little about why she did this, but she's refused to say much of anything on the subject. Maybe the party could ask around a little bit? Diesel tells the party he's hoping maybe there's some kind of extenuating circumstances or whatever. Self-defense or whatever. Because Dorito's crazy, but she's got a good heart, Diesel thinks. It'd be a shame to see her get locked up. Diesel would really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against her.

What Dorito Says:

Yeah, I killed that professor guy. He pissed me off, so I stabbed him.

The SECRET Truth:

Dorito didn't kill Professor Merriweather, but she thinks Bane did. She saw Bane accessing a box of items - including a tweed jacket, glasses and a copy of the professor's book - in the woods and worried maybe he'd taken those items from Merriweather. When Lenora Graves' Ouija board began spelling "d - a - n", the start of Daniel Merriweather's name, dyslexic Dorito thought the Professor's ghost was accusing Bane (since it looked like "b - a - n" to her) and she confessed to protect Bane, whom she's in love with. She's unaware that Bane is actually an undercover anthropologist named Lewis Bainbridge, which is why he has a hidden tweed jacket, glasses, and a copy of his colleague's book. For his part, Daniel Merriweather is alive and well, although he's confused about the date of his lecture.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from KEER (light blue):

On Friday night, DIESEL should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Diesel needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Diesel doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!)

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Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! [This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]

The party's traveler has lore about the post-apocalyptic war band - trigger: the written words "apocalyptic mindset" [which appear on a poster **PROP**, hanging inside or outside the tavern, for Professor Merriweather's lecture] - which appears on page 210.

JPEG is the party's 1st Saturday encounter, so he approaches the party in the tavern and then walks to the camp with them. During this time, he tells them a little bit about the group and their story: As the party no doubt knows, more than a year ago, signs started appearing that the endtimes would soon be upon them: the Great Tumult, a time when most people would be wiped out. All the portents pointed to the date September 4th of this year: 9/4/994. Jpeg tells the party that lots of people panicked, but Diesel instead started preparing for these endtimes. He'd gathered other like-minded survivalists, assembling a ragtag group and telling them of his idea: that if they started living as though the Tumult had already occurred, they would be well-equipped to withstand the privations of post-apocalyptic life. Just over 4 months ago, they'd established their compound in Greystone Clearing, and then they'd waited. Of course, Jpeg tells the party, September 4th came and went with no Great Tumult. After that, some of the Diesel's cultists had slunk away. But the committed are still there, he tells the party. And now, Jpeg says, no one can remember what happened on Thursday night! Probably this is the start of the Tumult! The cultists are so ready! **DORITO** and **BANE** are out at this time and will be in the camp when Jpeg gets there with the party so the party will have a chance to meet these characters without Dorito and Bane appearing to seek them out. [This reminds the party of the cultists' history and timeline, which will be useful for them to know, as well as introducing them to Dorito and Bane.]

During the party's 1st Saturday encounter with Jpeg, DORITO also interacts with the party. At some point during this interaction, Jpeg asks for the party's list of items they need, then casually hands it to Dorito and asks her a question about it. ("What's the other kind of ring they need, again?" or somesuch.) Dorito can read, but it's challenging and slow for her, and although she doesn't need to overplay this, the party will hopefully notice. After a few seconds of trying to sound out a word or two, Dorito gets angry and shoves "this stupid thing" back at Jpeg. Other than the episode with the letter, Dorito is upbeat. She mentions Bane a bunch, in the way a person does when they have a crush on someone; she should continue to do this if she encounters the party again at other times. If and ONLY if the party asks her about why/how she killed the Professor (which they're less likely to do early on Saturday, but may well do later), Dorito gives short answers: "He pissed me off." "I knifed him." "I buried his body. I was drunk and I don't remember where." And, if the questioning continues: "He asked me a lot of stupid questions like these." It should be clear that she doesn't want to talk about this. Of course, if the party uses truth magic on her, Dorito should answer truthfully (as far as she knows) and within the scope of the spell and then should tell the Basement. [The party will hopefully learn early on that Dorito cares about Bane and that reading is hard for her. Other than that, it mostly matters that they like Dorito enough that saving her is emotionally satisfying.]

During the party's 1st Saturday encounter with Jpeg, BANE also interacts with the party. When they first enter the camp, Bane is confrontational, getting close to them and demanding to know who they are; he can include Jpeg in this general air of gruffness. Once they're in the camp, though, he is relatively pleasant. He mentions Dorito a bunch, in the way a person does when they have a crush on someone; he should continue to do this if he encounters the party again at other times. At any point he can manage when Dorito won't overhear, he tells the party that Dorito is real good at reading people. It's like magic with her, almost, the way she can tell what someone's thinking or feeling. Bane wishes he could do that. Lastly, it's not impossible the party will use truth magic of some sort on Bane, so he should be ready for that just in case. [The party might not think anything of it, but if they do realize later on that Bane's "who are you?!" routine is a function of his inability to see without his glasses, that will be cute. The more important takeaways from the interaction(s) are that Bane cares for Dorito, and most especially that he sees and values the special kind of intelligence she possesses.]

BONNIE STILLWATER tells the party that she just feels terrible for that man Bane. Someone needs to purchase him some eyeglasses. Bonnie explains that she can't count how many times she's seen Bane walk into chairs or tables because he can't see them. Just a few days ago, he nearly picked a fight with a hat-rack because he couldn't see it wasn't a person. [Although the party might not notice this, the fact that Bane needs - but does not wear - glasses might help them connect Lewis Bainbridge/the box contents to Bane. If they don't, though, that's fine, too.]

When/if the party visits Crabtree & Evelyn's shop, BUZZKILL asks them if they're able to read the pricing sign or if they need help with it. He tells the party that his friend Dorito is real smart but that reading is hard for her. Buzzkill says that he tried to teach her, but Dorito says that the letters look funny to her. If the party's like that, he's happy to read the pricing sign to them. [Although Buzzkill doesn't use the word "dyslexic" to describe Dorito, that's indeed what she is, a fact that will be relevant later. His assessment of Dorito as smart despite this difficulty is something Dorito hasn't yet picked up on, but hopefully the party will.]

KEMMA RUNEREADER tells the party about an interaction she just had with Dorito. Runereader tells the party that she's a bit concerned about Kira, hoping she's truly opening herself to the message of Walking the Path. She's a bit concerned and, if she's truly honest, she's frustrated a little about it. She'd thought she was doing a good job of hiding the frustration, letting the rest of the Makai see her concern but hiding the more negative part of it. Runereader tells the party that Dorito had stopped up to see the Makai just briefly but after she'd been around for just a few minutes, she'd said something about Runereader being pissed off. Runereader had contradicted her, which had only made Dorito laugh. Dorito told her "You're pissed off, at least a little, at that kid. And you're pissed off at yourself about it. And now you're pissed off at me for noticing." Runereader tells the party that she had to laugh, because that was about the truest assessment she'd ever heard, and it had taken this odd little woman dressed in black leather to say it. [Hopefully

the party can use stories like this one to convince Dorito her own sort of intelligence is valid and appreciated even if “book-smarts” elude her.]

ESMERELDA tells the party about an interaction she had several weeks ago with Dorito. It was in the tavern late one evening and she'd been sitting with Valentina. Esmerelda tells the party that she loves Valentina, but occasionally she's... a little much. Valentina was trying to convince Esmerelda to stay out later, but Esmerelda was ready to head back to the camp, so she'd just told Valentina her head hurt. Esmerelda tells the party she'd left the same time as Dorito had, so they'd walked back partway together. After a few minutes, Dorito'd asked why she'd fibbed to Valentina. Esmerelda was surprised by that; instead of answering, she'd asked Dorito how she'd known, and Dorito told Esmerelda that she touches her mouth if she's saying something that's not entirely true. It's funny, Esmerelda says. Valentina has known her nearly their whole lives and Valentina's never once noticed that. It's funny, what some people see. *[Hopefully the party can use stories like this one to convince Dorito her own sort of intelligence is valid and appreciated even if “book-smarts” elude her.]*

CELESTE WILDE tells the party about an interaction she had recently with Dorito. She has no business, she admits, talking about someone who will soon stand trial for murder, but in Celeste's defense, she says, she didn't know who Dorito was when the interaction happened. She explains that she and the rest of her husband's entourage arrived in town early on Friday morning and they'd all been busy getting their pavilion and workspaces set up, just as they do in every new town. She and Fenwick and Nina had been bustling around when an oddly-dressed young woman had shown up unannounced. She'd watched them work for a few minutes and then, without saying anything, she'd pitched in, helping Fenwick with the tent-poles and carrying trunks around when Nina directed. Celeste tells the party that a basket of paperwork had been upended just as Orion - that's her husband, Justice Orion Wilde - got back to the pavilion. Everyone was frantically grabbing up papers before the wind could blow them away, which was of course the priority. Except... Celeste confesses to the party that obviously her focus should've been on the documents, many of which are very important. But the other thing in the basket was a stone Celeste uses as a paperweight, and for a few frantic seconds, she couldn't find it. But that young woman, whom Celeste now understands is Dorito, she'd turned to Celeste and said "Here's the thing you're looking for." And sure enough, it was her stone paperweight. Celeste had gratefully slid it into her pocket, and that's when Dorito asked "When did he give it to you?" Celeste tells the party that she'd answered before even thinking about it, saying, "Back when we first met, and neither of us had a royal to spare." It was more than twenty years ago that Orion had found a beautiful smooth stone on the shore of a lake and given it to her. A minute or two passed before Celeste thought to ask this odd woman, "Wait, how did you know my husband gave me the stone?" And Dorito'd answered, "When you couldn't find it, you looked from the ground to him to the ground to him again." Celeste tells the party that they'd gotten the pavilion all to rights and then that young woman had walked straight up to Orion and said "I guess you're the Justice. My name's Dorito and I stabbed a guy this week." Celeste shouldn't be talking about someone who'll soon be convicted of murder. But Dorito was a huge help setting up the pavilion. And she found Celeste's paperweight, and realized how much it means to Celeste. That doesn't excuse murder, obviously. But it's maybe worth remembering. *[Hopefully the party can use stories like this one to convince Dorito her own sort of intelligence is valid and appreciated even if “book-smarts” elude her.]*

IRENA MONTALVO tells the party about an interaction she had recently with Dorito. Irena tells the party that it has been more than a little challenging, sharing this space with Al Bishop and his intensely loud energy. At one point, she had pointed out to the man that it would be a more tranquil environment if he stopped strewing his belongings all about, but he maintained he liked it just fine the way it was. And since his things were only on his side of the room, there was little she could do about it. Irena confesses to the party that she thought perhaps if Al's side of the room were perhaps made even messier, he might be motivated to tidy up a bit, and so she - she is genuinely not proud of this, she needs the party to understand - might have perhaps *made Al's side even messier*, when he was out. Al, she tells the party, had not noticed. Irena explains then that the person who *had* noticed, oddly, is Dorito. Dorito had stopped by to ask Al a question, and she'd taken one look at the mess and asked why it was like that. Irena started to answer her that Al had very chaotic *chi*, but Dorito had waved her off. "Why'd you make it even messier?" is what Dorito had asked. Irena was so startled by this that she hadn't bothered lying, had instead merely asked how Dorito knew. Dorito explained several things to her, things like the fact that Al flung clothing out from his bed, but that some of the clothing had been flung in the wrong direction. Al was extremely messy with most of his belongings but always lined up his shoes neatly, maybe from his time in the military. And there were corn chips mixed in with the mess, despite them being Al's favorite and not a thing he'd ever leave lying around. Irena tells the party that this was rather discomfiting. She has roomed with Al now for more days than she'd like, but she hadn't noticed any of the things Dorito had seen. Irena tells the party that she likes to think of herself as an observant person, as a student of human nature. Perhaps she is, she says ruefully, but she is clearly not as adept a student as Dorito is. *[Hopefully the party can use stories like this one to convince Dorito her own sort of intelligence is valid and appreciated even if “book-smarts” elude her.]*

BRACKEN tells the party about an interaction he had recently with Dorito. He is very aware Mr. and Mrs. Sprink do not care for him, he says. This is regrettable but not a situation he can do anything about. Dorito was in front of the tavern at one point when Mrs. Geneva Sprink was detailing certain objections she took with aspects of his clothing and behavior and history and face and manners and demographic. This is simply something that happens sometimes. It's not a problem. Bracken tells the party that, at one point, Dorito came over to him. He admits that he was scarcely listening to Mrs. Sprink. He was doing calisthenics and was largely focused on those. Dorito had asked him if he was all right, and he told her he was, that he did pushups like these routinely. Dorito had clarified then that she wasn't referring to the pushups, but rather to the fact that he seemed troubled by one of the comments Mrs. Sprink had made: that he had been largely ignoring her, but that when she'd said something about how his grandfather would have been embarrassed to see Bracken dressed the way he was, the pace of his pushups had faltered. Bracken says that he hadn't realized he was even listening to Mrs. Sprink. He hadn't realized *Dorito* was listening, and he *certainly* hadn't realized she was paying attention to

what he was doing or what it might mean. Bracken is not accustomed to anyone worrying about him. He tells the party he was surprised to hear that Dorito had killed that man, Professor Merriweather. Bracken doesn't know anything about the professor, and he doesn't like to speak ill of the dead. But if Dorito killed him, maybe he deserved it. Because as near as Bracken can tell, Dorito isn't the type of person who'd hurt someone unless it was warranted. *[Hopefully the party can use stories like this one to convince Dorito her own sort of intelligence is valid and appreciated even if "book-smarts" elude her.]*

LINCROFT SPENCE tells the party about an interaction he had recently with Dorito. He'd needed to purchase some salve the Smirches sell. It's terribly expensive, but it's the only thing that cures the muscle cramps he gets in his writing hand. He wouldn't normally mind the expense because it really does work, but he's running quite low on funds at the moment. Lincroft tells the party that he'd been at the shop at the same time Dorito was there, and he'd been crushed to learn from Phineas Smirch that the shop was almost out of the salve. Phineas explained he'd had to raise the price further because the salve was in such short supply, so Lincroft decided to do without it, even though his hand was aching. Lincroft tells the party that Dorito watched this interaction without saying a word, but that when he'd turned to leave the shop, she'd said, "Oh, he's lying about being nearly out of that stuff." Lincroft was startled to hear this, he tells the party. Dorito explained that every time Phineas talked about the salve, he'd glanced just a little at the third shelf to his right. "I'll bet if you look there, you've got some more after all." Dorito told Phineas, and although Phineas hadn't looked at all happy about it, it turned out there were multiple bottles of salve on the third shelf, and Phineas had ultimately sold him two at the normal price. Lincroft tells the party that people are saying Dorito killed a man, which is obviously awful. Lincroft is sad to hear that, he says. The young woman he met in the shop was kind as well as perceptive, even if Phineas Smirch wasn't a fan. *[Hopefully the party can use stories like this one to convince Dorito her own sort of intelligence is valid and appreciated even if "book-smarts" elude her.]*

LEXIA tells the party that she was terribly disappointed last Sunday when Professor Daniel Merriweather's lecture was cancelled. She tells the party she's read the professor's book, *Signs & Wonders*, and thought he made a number of very interesting points, especially about good and bad omens as both effect and cause of what he calls "nihilistic worldview." She has a number of questions she was looking forward to posing to him, but then he'd never arrived and the talk was obviously cancelled. Ultimately it was somewhat of a blessing in disguise because she had a great deal of daydreaming she needed to do - this is a critical part of her process - and with Dr. Merriweather's talk scheduled for 3pm, it was going to completely bisect the afternoon. Still, it was a real shame about him not showing up. *[This serves to remind the party of the date, time and subject of the professor's planned talk.]*

KATHERINE CARMICHAEL tells the party that she'd shown up a little bit early last Sunday afternoon for the lecture Professor Merriweather was supposed to give. The talk was supposed to be at 3pm and she got to the tavern around 2:15 or so. She confesses she wasn't especially interested in his subject matter per se, but she's an author herself, and she did some readings back in the early days that were very poorly attended. It's a terrible feeling, speaking to an empty room. She wouldn't wish that on anyone, so she makes a point to show up when other authors speak, regardless of genre. As it turned out, there was no lecture after all, since the professor never actually arrived. Katherine tells the party that Lenora Graves was there and was very anxious about Dr. Merriweather's failure to show. Katherine wonders if maybe *she* should've skipped some of her early book-talks. Would anyone have been anxious about her absence? She doubts it. *[This serves to remind the party of the date, time and other details of the professor's planned talk.]*

NIX VALERIUS tells the party that she has heard way, way too much about Professor Daniel Merriweather over the past couple weeks. The Professor - whom she had very happily gone her whole life knowing not a damn thing about - was supposed to give a talk last Sunday at 3pm. Nix tells the party that she knows this because their houseguest Lenora Graves had been obsessing about the talk for weeks before it happened. The talk sounded like a total snoozefest to Nix, and then it didn't matter because the Professor was a no-show. Nix tells the party that of course, Lenora was crushed. Well, first she was crushed, and then she started worrying, saying that something terrible must've *befallen* the Professor. Nix tells the party that she hadn't paid much attention to this, because Lenora thinks doom and disaster lurk around every corner. *[This serves to remind the party of the date, time and other details of the professor's planned talk.]*

STEVIE PEACOCK tells the party that there was supposed to be a talk last week - last Sunday at 3pm, to be exact - by a professor from Twickenham University. He was going to lecture on his book, *Signs & Wonders*, which was all about how omens and symbols shape the way we see the world, especially at times when we think the world is all going to shit. Stevie tells the party that people maybe don't expect her to be the book-reading type, but that this Merriweather guy had some pretty cool ideas in the middle of what was, sadly, a kind of long-winded book. Still, Stevie says, she was looking forward to hearing him speak. It was a drag he never showed up for the talk. *[This serves to remind the party of the date, time and other details of the professor's planned talk.]*

LENORA GRAVES tells the party that she's been an avid student and devotee of Dr. Daniel Merriweather's work ever since reading his seminal work, *The Prognostician*. Lenora tells the party that when she learned the doctor had published another book, *Signs & Wonders*, she wrote to him immediately to see she might arrange to sponsor one stop on his lecture circuit. Imagine her shock to learn that Dr. Merriweather was not intending to *do* a lecture circuit! The dear man wrote to her that he imagined his work would have "limited interest outside dusty academic circles"! Nothing could be further from the truth, Lenora had assured him. Regardless of the other demands on the esteemed Dr. Merriweather's time, he graciously agreed to visit World's Edge to give a lecture. And yet here, Lenora confesses to the party, her tale grows dark. On the very day she received Dr. Merriweather's letter informing her that he would come to World's Edge, she saw three crows perched in a yew tree. Although three is a number associated with excellent fortune, crows are of course harbingers of disaster and death. And a yew tree! Could the message be any clearer?!? Lenora tells the party she should have written to Dr. Merriweather immediately and cancelled the lecture then and there, but alas, she had *so* wanted to hear him speak that she had allowed herself to think the benevolent signifier of the triad would counteract the birds *and* the tree. Oh, her cursé!

arrogance! The fated day - last Sunday, although it feels so much longer ago now! - arrived at last, and Lenora had come to the tavern early. Just exactly at the moment she lay her hand upon the door, Lenora heard a dog howling, and then - too late! - she knew without a doubt that something terrible had befallen the poor professor. A small crowd gathered to hear the lecture - although an embarrassingly sparse group, had Dr. Merriweather actually given his lecture, Lenora says - but they were to wait in vain, for of course the professor would never arrive. Lenora explains that she told everyone present that something awful had happened to the Professor, that he was surely injured and probably dead, but many there were unable to see the obvious signs Lenora had seen. One day later, Lenora tells the party, she could no longer bear not knowing, and she had brought her Ouija board to the tavern. Although she nurtured a fond and foolish hope that Dr. Merriweather was yet among the living, she was being driven mad not knowing, and she had asked the spirits to aid her. Lenora shows the party the very Ouija board **PROP** she used. She tells them that no sooner had she laid a fingertip to the planchette that it began to careen around the board, frantically spelling out "Daniel", Dr. Merriweather's given name. Halfway through this, that dreadful cultist Dorito had leapt to her feet. Lenora was just about to shush Dorito lest she disturb the spirits, but then the awful woman yelled that *she had murdered dear Dr. Merriweather!* Lenora tells the party that she cannot say for certain what happened after that time because she herself had fainted dead away. It is all so utterly senseless and tragic. *[There's a lot here, and Lenora's talk of omens mostly serves to let the party know about her own character, but there are several pieces of important info. The fact that the Ouija board was spelling Daniel Merriweather's name is something the party will hear repeatedly, so Lenora doesn't need to clarify beyond the fact that it spelled out "half his given name." The most critical piece is showing the party her Ouija board. Lenora doesn't call their attention to this fact, but her board is different from most boards in that it displays lowercase rather than capital letters. This means that when the planchette indicates the letters d - a - n, the first half of "Daniel", Dorito's dyslexia means it looks to her like b - a - n... and she assumes it's about to spell out "Bane." Of course, Lenora doesn't know or say this; she merely shows them the board, letting them get a good look at it without otherwise commenting on it.]*

GENEVA SPRINK tells the party that she was there in the tavern on Monday when Lenora Graves used that magic board of hers to contact the spirit of the dead professor. Normally, Geneva assures the party, she does not approve of this sort of magical shenanigans, but Lenora is a very classy caliber of person and so that makes this all right. She explains that Lenora had just begun the magical process and everyone was rudely shoving forward to watch, which made it difficult for Geneva to get into an optimal position to see. Suddenly that horrible little crackpot Dorito started shouting about how the professor was dead and that she - Dorito, obviously, not Geneva! - had killed him! It should be against the law to be a crank like that Dorito, Geneva tells the party. Allowing strange little persons of that ilk is just asking for trouble! *[This comment serves to remind the party of the basic happenings of Monday.]*

DONNA PEACOCK tells the party that she was in the tavern on Monday when Lenora Graves announced she needed to contact some possibly-dead professor. The whole thing was *very* over-the-top, Donna says. Lenora was going on and on about how deeply sensitive she is and how she'd seen three dogs having sex or something, which is apparently some sort of terrible omen. Honestly, Donna tells the party, she'd just been trying to tune the whole thing out. This proved to be impossible, because Lenora has a *very* high-pitched voice and Donna *cannot* tolerate voices like that, and then Lenora pulled out her Ouija board *in the middle of the tavern* and Donna was getting the idea that she was absolutely *not* going to be allowed to eat her lunch in peace. No sooner had Lenora begun her bizarre mystical process than that odd cultist woman, Dorito, started screeching that *she'd murdered the Professor!* Donna tells the party that if there is one thing she simply *cannot* stand, it is excessive drama, and this past Monday was simply *rife* with it. Ugh. *[This comment serves to remind the party of the basic happenings of Monday.]*

KAZMIRA tells the party that she was there in the tavern on Monday when Lenora Graves used a Ouija board to contact the spirit of poor dead Professor Merriweather. Kazmira tells the party that Lenora had just started using the board when suddenly Dorito started shouting that she'd killed the professor! Dorito said she'd stabbed the professor and to prove it, she'd pulled out a huge knife, still dripping with the professor's blood! Kazmira herself had wrestled the knife away from Dorito. Kazmira tells the party that she sustained multiple lacerations in the process, but thankfully she's a very fast healer. *[Minus the portion that exists solely in Kazmira's mind, this comment serves to remind the party of the basic happenings of Monday.]*

UMBERTO DUNN tells the party that he was there in the tavern on Monday when Lenora Graves claimed she could use a Ouija board to contact the spirit of Professor Merriweather. Shadow tells the party that he doesn't think it's within the power of someone like Lenora to contact the dead. On the other hand, the alternative was having another conversation with Cary about napkin colors, so he'd decided watching a Ouija board wasn't a terrible way to pass the time. He tells the party that the pointer thing started moving and spelled out D - A - N. Shadow guesses it was spelling Daniel, the professor's first name. It's unclear why a spirit would introduce itself that way, but hey, what does Shadow know? He tells the party that he thought the whole thing was going to be tiresome - were they going to have to sit there while the spirit spelled out Merriweather? Because if so, maybe the napkin conversation wasn't so bad after all - but then that woman Dorito started screaming about how she killed the professor, so it was unexpectedly exciting after all. That, concludes Shadow, was unsurprisingly the end of the Ouija session. *[Shadow gives the party a clearer picture than many do of what actually happened on Monday. He doesn't call undue attention to the details of this scene, but they'll be important later on.]*

EUGENIE BRIGHT tells the party that she was there in the tavern on Monday when Lenora Graves decided to use her Ouija board to contact the spirit of Professor Merriweather. She tells the party that the psychic energy of either the professor or Lenora herself must be very strong, because no sooner had Lenora touched the planchette than it started moving. It spelled out D - A - N, so Lenora had indeed contacted the professor, whose first name was Daniel! Eugenie tells the party that she was on the edge of her seat, but just then, that young woman Dorito screamed that she had killed the professor! It was all so shocking, poor Lenora had fainted dead away, and

Eugenie cannot blame her! [Eugenie gives the party a clearer picture than many do of what actually happened on Monday. She doesn't call undue attention to the details of this scene, but they'll be important later on.]

EQUINOXIOUS tells the party that she's feeling guilty, something that rarely happens. She's wondering if she should have noticed that something was off with Dorito last Sunday, the day she killed that man, Professor Whatever. Dorito was agitated, Equi says. More agitated than usual. Equi tells the party that Bane had gone off for a walk and left Dorito behind, which was also unusual. Dorito had had a million questions for Equi: Did Equi think it was weird that Bane was taking a walk when he'd taken another walk a few hours earlier? (This is no weirder than anything in their compound.) Did Equi think Bane was acting gruff? (Yes. Bane is always gruff.) Did Equi think Dorito should go looking for Bane? (Yes, please. Get out of the compound for a while and maybe Equi could have a godsdamned moment of peace and quiet for once.) So it was a lot, even for Dorito. Equi isn't used to second-guessing herself, she tells the party, but maybe she should have asked if Dorito was okay. Talking about feelings isn't something they do. But Equi doesn't know. Maybe she should have checked on Dorito. [Equi thinks she's telling the party about Dorito, and she is. But she's also telling them about Bane, that he was out of the compound a bunch on Sunday, that Dorito thought he was acting unusual. Dorito thinks this is when Bane killed the professor. It's actually when Bane was going to meet with the professor, who's secretly his colleague. This was the meeting the professor never showed up for, which explains Bane's unease. Of course, Equi doesn't know or say this. But she is a rare voice speaking sympathetically about Dorito, which is kind of nice.]

KARMIN SMIRCH tells the party that he sees those cultists Dorito and Bane together a lot. It's the same as water seeking its own level: a person will just naturally gravitate to others of their own caliber. Karmin explains that he himself is naturally drawn to those who share his intellectual stature and superior aptitudes, whereas... well, it's convenient that Dorito and Bane have found each other. Of course, Karmin tells the party, it's unfortunate the cultists' squalid little *affaire du coeur* wasn't enough for Bane to stop Dorito from killing that professor. The day it happened, Karmin says, he actually saw Bane out walking significantly far from the camp. Karmin tells the party he'd asked Bane what time it was and instead of simply answering the way a rational person would, Bane responded with an unwarranted outburst about how late it was and et cetera. Karmin tells the party that generalizations are one sign of a lazy intellect but in this case, it's true that all those cultists are deranged. Most aren't as deranged as Dorito, obviously. But still, deranged, every last one of them. [Bane was indeed away from the camp on Sunday and was agitated about the day's events. The party may think that this is because Bane was killing the professor at this time, but instead it was because he was supposed to meet the professor, who'd never shown up. Of course, Karmin doesn't know or say this.]

Saturday after 10pm, **BAILEY** approaches the party. He found something strange out in the woods, he tells them, and he's not sure what it means. Bailey shows the party what he found: it's a wooden box **PROP** containing the following items: a tweed jacket with a little blood on it, a pair of glasses, a pouch containing around 400 royals and a copy of *Signs & Wonders: The Role of Omens, Portents and Symbology in the Apocalyptic Mindset*, by Professor Daniel Merriweather. If the party looks, they will find the initials L.B. inside the front cover. There is a blurb about the author on the back cover but not an author photo. Bailey lets the party look through the items as much as they'd like - he will probably need to tell them on reality that the book is the book the dustjacket claims it is, since replicating an entire academic tome is a bad use of your time, Lance - but he won't let them keep any of the items. Bailey tells the party that the box smells like both Dorito and Bane. *If and ONLY if the party asks*, Bailey says there's no one else's scent on it. [This is the box where Bane - aka Lewis Bainbridge, anthropologist - has hidden his personal belongings while undercover. The jacket has blood on it because Lewis is clumsy and cut himself at one point. There's money in the box in case he needs it, as well as the book by his colleague, Professor Merriweather. Seeing Bane accessing this box is what make Dorito think Bane killed the professor and took his belongings. Of course, Bailey doesn't know or say any of this. Nor does he let them have the box, because we don't need them getting 400 royals.]

Neither **DORITO** nor **BANE** are out on Saturday after 10pm.

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, brightens, whitens, to the flat pristine perfection of a blank page. Stretched across its expanse are row upon row of characters you can almost but not quite read.

The man is there, solid and secure. He reaches his hands to the sky full of words and they are his and he is theirs. How he loves them, luxuriating in this world of written ideas! He is the king of this domain, but he is a king in exile. He pines for the words. At night when he sleeps upon the unfamiliar ground, his hand dreams of his pen. He has learned so much and o! to have a page such as this on which to scribe out all he has seen and experienced! To compose is to make reality, and he drifts draftless, currently unmoored. Soon he will be able to write. Soon but not now. The world flips and inverts.

The woman is there, afraid and uncertain. She lifts her hands to shield her head, but the words in the sky swell and storm and sleet down harsh upon her. They pile up slippery around her feet, and when she looks at them, they twist and tumble and refuse her pitiful deciphering. Her brain aches and struggles but no! no respite is there. She is languishing in this language, linguistically sickened. Never will she understand this feat that young children find trivial. She does not belong here. The world spins and changes once more.

The man and the woman stand before each other, together but apart. They could be made whole, but where are the words now? Will they find them before it is too late? You can read no answers and then the darkness swirls up black as ink and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows Bane with all the words he cannot (in his undercover guise) write and Dorito with all the words she cannot (because of her dyslexia) read.

Sunday morning at breakfast, LENORA GRAVES approaches the party again. She tells them that, last night, she couldn't sleep, so she got up and pulled out her Ouija board again. Lenora says that she sat down at the board and as soon as she'd barely touched her fingertips to planchette, it started moving. It spelled out a message for her, Lenora tells the party, and... she has no idea what to think. Because the message is spelled out was "Daniel Merriweather is not dead." [It's unclear what the party will make of this, but the message is a true one.]

On Sunday morning around 9:45am, the party will encounter the Knights of the Golden Circle in the Bower of Dreams. After their party path is complete, the party encounters a somewhat frazzled, academic-looking man they've never seen before. (Since they "just happen to" encounter him, he should probably be hiding along Big Bow Trail just waiting for them to exit the Bower.) This man doesn't introduce himself by name, but it's DANIEL MERRIWEATHER. He has no time to talk, he immediately tells the party. He has a noontime appointment to meet a colleague and then he'll need to prepare for the lecture he's scheduled to give at 3pm! Would the party be so kind as to tell him where he might find Lewis Bainbridge? [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!] Although the Professor claims to be in a hurry, he should stay with the party until he has revealed the following information in whatever order makes sense, and depending on what the party's doing/asking:

- He is indeed Professor Daniel Merriweather, and he is, obviously, alive. He doesn't need to say the former unless the party asks directly who he is, and he clearly doesn't say the latter. He's never heard of anyone named Dorito and he certainly hasn't heard that he's presumed dead.
- Professor Merriweather is arriving (he thinks) on the day of his scheduled lecture. Assuming the party tells him it was supposed to be last week, he is indignant. That can't be right, he tells them. The lecture is September 29th. That's today! (It is not.)
- The Professor was supposed to meet his colleague at noon on the previous Sunday. Once he learns today is 10/4, not 9/29, Merriweather realizes he is late for other appointments and needs to leave immediately. "Please extend my apologies to Lewis Bainbridge. Shame we can't meet up. One of the finest anthropologists I've ever worked with. Apologize to him for me. You'll do that, right?"
- Hopefully the party will hear Bainbridge's name and connect it with the similarly-named Bane. If they tell the Professor that they don't know Lewis Bainbridge - or if they ask him to describe Bainbridge - he tells them that Lewis is a large chap with a full black beard and glasses. (Bane himself doesn't wear glasses, but other than that, this matches his description.)

Having given this information, Professor Merriweather then hurries away. He's a week behind schedule and no amount of asking on the party's part will convince him to stay around for the trial. *[This is in part because we want the party to do the talking and solve the charge, not just produce the Professor as evidence.]*

On Sunday morning around 10:15am, after they've encountered the Professor, DORITO is out in a visible spot. Ideally, the party will have at least some ideas about this charge and hopefully they'll approach her to talk. If they haven't approached her by 10:45am, she should check in with the Basement and we'll make a plan. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!] Dorito takes them someplace private to talk, and should very reluctantly reveal the following information - this is, after all, a big secret! - in whatever order makes sense, and depending on what the party's doing/asking:

- Unless the party utterly misunderstood the interaction they just had, they should know she didn't kill Professor Merriweather, because, y'know, he's still alive.
- Hopefully they've also realized that Bane is Lewis Bainbridge, an anthropologist. If they've realized he's researching the cult, that's great, but not essential. (If they haven't realized the anthropologist part, we'll try to have someone else talk to them before they get to Dorito. We'll have to play this by ear.)
- IF the party says they met the Professor but doesn't mention anything about Lewis Bainbridge/an anthropologist/the Professor's colleague, then Dorito says, musingly, "So... does that mean Bane didn't hurt anyone?"
- IF the party says they met the Professor AND that he was supposed to meet his colleague/an anthropologist BUT DON'T mention anything about Bane, then Dorito says, "Oh, yeah. I didn't kill the Professor, I killed that other guy, the anthropologist."
- Essentially, Dorito needs to keep talking to them until they tell her that Bane is an anthropologist.

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- If the party doesn't already know, Dorito can then explain that she thought Bane killed the professor because 1) he was acting very strangely last Sunday, and 2) she saw him with the hidden box of things that seemed to belong to the professor and 3) Lenora's Ouija board seemed to contact the professor's spirit, which accused Bane of murdering him. (This final point will be more believable and more interesting if Dorito says "the Ouija board was spelling out Bane!" That is, she doesn't explain it as "I'm dyslexic and so I thought...")
- If the party doesn't already know, Dorito can also explain that she's in love with Bane and was prepared to take the fall for this crime in order to save him. She should probably word this as "I'm real into him" or whatever rather than talking too much about love. We want her two biggest emotional moments to be the following one, and then at the trial.
- *This is Dorito's big emotional scene with the party, and the one where they'll hopefully step up:* When Dorito learns that Bane is actually an anthropologist, she is shocked and then, very soon thereafter, upset. Dorito believes she's stupid. It's inconceivable that a genius - which, in her eyes, is what anyone with a title like "anthropologist" must be - would actually care about her. Bane has been *pretending* to like her while she's *actually* liked him for real. This is humiliating, she tells the party. She announces that she's just going to keep saying she killed Professor Merriweather. That's better than having Bane learn the humiliating truth. Hopefully the party will hearable-praise Dorito, telling her the stories they heard about her being perceptive. She might not be book-smart, but she's intelligent in a very real way. Ideally, this will mean the party is doubly responsible for the emotional payoff at the trial: they'll both make sure Dorito is declared innocent and make sure she finds love with Bane/Lewis Bainbridge.

If some part of this doesn't happen, Dorito should let the Basement know!

BANE is not out on Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, VALENTINA approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Dorito. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Valentina encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Dorito didn't kill Professor Daniel Merriweather - the party knows this because they met him this morning - but she thinks Bane did, so she confessed to protect Bane, with whom she's in love.
- Dorito thinks this because she saw Bane accessing a hidden box of academic items, and because Lenora Graves' Ouija board began spelling "d - a - n", which dyslexic Dorito thought was the Professor's ghost accusing Bane.
- Bane is actually an undercover anthropologist named Lewis Bainbridge, which is why he has a hidden tweed jacket, glasses, and a copy of his colleague's book, and he's smart enough to love Dorito back.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Valentina can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Valentina can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

Dorito has spent the whole weekend joking around with everyone she meets. If she drops that completely and is vulnerable during her scene with Bane, it will bring the house down.

Evelyn, charged with Industrial Sabotage

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 819 of the Lyrian Code of Law, Evelyn is hereby charged with industrial sabotage: During the period beginning on or around September the 1st, in this year 994 of the common calendar, and continuing through to the present time, the taking of actions for the specific and willful purpose of sabotaging the business interests of Smirch & Smirch, Purveyors of Goods Diverse and Marvelous, depriving said business of revenues estimated to be approximately one thousand royals.

Common Knowledge:

About a month ago, Evelyn and Ursula Smirch got into a loud argument in the tavern. Upset, Evelyn yelled something about seeing Ursula driven out of business. Everyone assumed this was empty talk, merely a justifiable emotional outburst from Evelyn, but recently there have been strange and off-putting things happening around the Smirches' shop, and some of those may have cost the Smirches some revenue, although probably not as much as Ursula is claiming. Regardless, it's hard to believe that Evelyn is responsible.

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, BUZZKILL approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Evelyn. Buzzkill tells the party that he's worked for Crabtree and Evelyn for more than a year now, total. There was, like, a break in the middle there, because he was under the impression the world was gonna end, which made holding down a 9-to-5 type job less of a, y'know, priority. He didn't ragequit or anything, which turned out to be a good thing because as the party probably noticed, the world didn't end after all. Buzzkill say that, right around the time he asked for his old job back, there was a yelling match in the tavern between Evelyn and Ursula Smirch. To be clear, Buzzkill says, it was mostly Ursula, and not gonna lie, it was pretty great seeing Evelyn get all up in Ursula's face like that. He didn't think much of it at the time. But after he was back working at Crabtree & Evelyn's, the Smirches started bitching and moaning that someone was vandalizing their store. That was a whole pile of don't-care to Buzzkill, but then Ursula decided that yeah, someone for sure was vandalizing the store and that that someone was for sure Evelyn. Ursula being Ursula, she decided it sounded even worse than regular old vandalism if she called it "industrial sabotage" and then she estimated that it was costing her a whole giant pile of money. Buzzkill tells the party that he can't imagine Evelyn vandalizing anything, because she's a nice lady and, no offense, pretty old. Also? Buzzkill really needs this job. Where's he gonna go if Evelyn gets put in jail? He'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge.

What Evelyn Says:

I should not have yelled at Ursula like that, even if she deserved it. But that's all I did, nothing more!

The SECRET Truth:

Evelyn hasn't done anything to the Smirches' shop. Everything that's happened - merchandise pushed off shelves, foul globs of hair on the floor, animal carcasses left by the door - is intended not to sabotage the shop's business, but because visiting influencer Ember has been hanging out with Karmin Smirch. And unbeknownst to World's Edge, Ember used to be - and still essentially is - a cat.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from ELSEWHICH (grey):

On Friday night, BUZZKILL should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Buzzkill needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Buzzkill doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! [This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]

EMBER is the 2nd Friday encounter on the party's path. She is sitting with **KARMIN SMIRCH** when the party approaches. [Prior to the party's arrival in the tavern, Ember should remind the party's Contact to bring them to her so that she doesn't need to approach them and can be her normal aloof self.] There's no charge-specific information Ember needs to convey; we just want the party to see her personality and to let them see that she's friends with Karmin. [This provides necessary context for this charge.]

TEKNOS is on the party's path. There's no specific info he needs to give them, but on Sunday he'll be excited to show them a prototype he received, and this will seem more natural if he can establish a connection with them on Saturday. *[This establishes a relationship so the revelation doesn't seem random.]*

OBSIDIAN tells the party about something that happened about a month ago. Apparently, Ursula Smirch read a news article about some sort of amazing new device - the GODBOX3000 or somesuch - that can restore keepers' prayers. News reports like this come out every few years, Obsidian says, and they're always a lot of hysteria about nothing. Obsidian tells the party that, of course, that's not how Ursula saw it. She did a lot of loud talking in the tavern about how she was going to acquire one of these GODBOX things and keepers could just visit the shop for prayer renewals instead of "wasting time going to Crabtree." Several people pointed out that the device wasn't going to work, but Evelyn was upset by the very idea. She was saying that the machine would take people's jobs, especially Crabtree's, and feathers got ruffled. Of course Ursula doubled down on this nonsense and ultimately, Evelyn was worked up enough that she yelled at Ursula, something about not resting until Ursula was driven out of business. Obsidian tells the party that honestly, it's a wonder more people don't yell at Ursula. Still, this was a very public argument, and from the sound of it, Ursula now claims Evelyn is actively working to sabotage the Smirches' business. That doesn't sound like Evelyn, Obsidian says. Some people might point out that sabotage is more the sort of thing Ursula might do, but the party didn't hear that from him. *[This reminds the party of the history behind this charge. If it also makes the party think the Smirches' claims might be fabricated, that's fine.]*

POPPY GOLDEN tells the party about something that happened about a month ago. Ursula Smirch read a news article claiming someone had invented a machine that could restore keepers' prayers. Poppy tells the party that a machine like that wouldn't actually work and that she'd pointed that out at the time. She tells the party that her comment didn't diminish Ursula's enthusiasm one bit. Ursula claimed - this is all in the tavern, during dinner - that she was going to acquire one of these machine and keepers could just visit the shop for prayer renewals instead of "wasting time going to see Crabtree." This upset Evelyn a lot, and after several back and forth exchanges, Evelyn yelled that she wouldn't rest until Ursula was driven out of business. Shortly after that, Poppy tells the party, some bad things started happening in and around the Smirches' shop. It's hard to picture Evelyn sneaking around, actively trying to sabotage the Smirches' business, but who can really say for sure? *[This reminds the party of the history behind this charge.]*

MOXIE tells the party about something that happened about a month ago. It was all very unsettling. Ursula Smirch read a news article talking about a new machine that would restore keepers' prayers. Moxie had never heard of such a thing and finds this idea to be deeply troubling. Apparently she's not the only one; when Ursula claimed she was going to acquire such a machine, Evelyn got very upset about it. Moxie tells the party that Ursula was talking in the tavern one night about how once she had such a device, keepers wouldn't need to visit Crabtree anymore, and that was the comment that most concerned Evelyn. After a great deal of yelling - which made Moxie very anxious - Evelyn yelled that she wouldn't rest until Ursula was driven out of business. Shortly after this episode, strange and worrisome things started to happen to the Smirches' shop. It's probably not Evelyn doing those things, although it's clearly someone, and who else would do so? Moxie tells the party that she personally would be terrified to do anything that might anger Ursula, but clearly someone out there feels differently. *[This reminds the party of the history behind this charge.]*

EVELYN tells the party that she and Ursula Smirch got into an altercation in the tavern, during dinnertime. Evelyn acknowledges that she shouldn't have yelled at Ursula; this was wrong of her. But also Ursula was very out of line and had no business saying all the unfounded and hurtful things she said! Evelyn tells the party that Ursula was repeating some unsubstantiated reports about some sort of machine called the GODBOX3000 which she claimed could restore keepers' prayers. This is highly unlikely for a great many reasons, Evelyn assures the party, but Ursula was uninterested in listening to facts on the subject. Instead, Ursula announced that she would likely be acquiring one of these GODBOX devices and that this would mean no one needed to "waste time going to see Crabtree"! Evelyn assures the party that Crabtree takes time to work with each and every keeper who needs her, that it is outrageous to think that a machine could ever do what Crabtree is able to do, but that of course Ursula doesn't remotely care that jobs - important jobs, of hardworking people in the community! - might be lost because of this terrible device! Evelyn tells the party that she should not have yelled at Ursula, but that someone needed to set Ursula straight about how damaging her actions would be to the town as a whole! Oh, Ursula makes her so angry! Yes, Evelyn says, she should not have told Ursula that she would drive Ursula out of business. Of course, she would never actually do anything to sabotage the Smirches' business. Evelyn is confident the Smirches' business will fail simply because Ursula is an unscrupulous and terrible person. *[This reminds the party of the history behind this charge.]*

KARMIN SMIRCH tells the party that the Smirches are being harassed by Evelyn, with the obvious goal of destroying their business. This will be unsuccessful, Karmin assures the party, but it is still costing his family a great deal of money... money Evelyn will soon be made to reimburse! One of Evelyn's actions has been to knock merchandise - the more fragile and costly the better! - from the Smirches outdoor shelving units. Many of these items have become dirty or have broken, and since the Smirches obviously only sell merchandise of the highest quality, all of these goods have needed to be discarded. Karmin tells the party that he himself found multiple items that had been knocked to the ground - clearly deliberately! - and had to have his father fetch a broom to clean up the mess. Karmin is a very busy person and doesn't have time for this nonsense! Evelyn is a monster and the sooner she is made to pay up, the better! *If and only if the party asks if there is any witness or proof that Evelyn did this, Karmin says that there is not, but that Evelyn has a vendetta against Ursula and that this is obviously Evelyn's work. [Someone is indeed deliberately pushing merchandise off shelves, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Karmin doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner.]*

NINA BLISS tells the party that, upon arrival in town, she visited the Smirches' shop to purchase a set of teacups to replace some that got broken on the journey to World's Edge. Frustratingly, the only cups the Smirches had for sale were also chipped and damaged. Nina tells the party that, according to the gentleman she spoke to at the shop, someone else in town is purposefully knocking merchandise from the display shelves with the intent of harming the shop's business. Nina admits that she probably should not be mentioning this to the party, now that it's apparent that this concerns the ongoing investigation of Evelyn, the townsperson in question. Obviously Nina has no idea whether or not the allegations against Evelyn are true, but she does believe strongly that destroying perfectly good teacups is very wrong. Drinking tea out of a chipped teacup is unsatisfying and makes her edgy in a way she cannot explain. *[Someone is indeed deliberately pushing merchandise off shelves, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Nina doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner.]*

PHINEAS SMIRCH tells the party that the Smirches are being harassed by Evelyn, with the obvious goal of destroying their business. Evelyn is threatened by Ursula's beauty and keen mind, Phineas tells the party, and her jealous rivalry with Ursula is costing his family a great deal of money... money Evelyn will soon be made to reimburse! One of Evelyn's actions has been to crush several shipping containers that have been delivered to the Smirches. Much of the merchandise inside has been crumpled and ruined, and since the Smirches obviously only sell merchandise of the highest quality, all of these goods have needed to be discarded. Phineas tells the party that the shipping company assured him that these containers were delivered in pristine condition - Phineas has never known a shipping company to be less than truthful in matters of this sort! - but that several boxes were so collapsed and buckled that Evelyn must have climbed atop them. This is a very disturbing image, Phineas says. Evelyn has a real problem and the sooner she is made to pay up, the better! *If and only if the party asks if there is any witness or proof that Evelyn did this, Phineas says that there is not, but that Evelyn has a vendetta against Ursula and that this is obviously Evelyn's work. [Someone is indeed sitting on the Smirches' shipping containers, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Phineas doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner.]*

DRAMINA tells the party that she recently ordered a collection of theatrical masks from the Smirches. These items needed to be shipped to the store, but when she went to pick them up, they were all quite bent and rumpled. Dramina tells the party that Phineas told her Evelyn climbed onto the boxes in question in order to ruin the masks. Dramina knows Evelyn and while this is an amusing image, it seems a highly unlikely thing for Evelyn - or really anyone, for that matter - to do. *[Someone is indeed sitting on the Smirches' shipping containers, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Dramina doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner.]*

URSULA SMIRCH tells the party that she is being harassed by Evelyn, with the obvious goal of destroying Ursula's business. This will be unsuccessful, Ursula assures the party, but it is still costing her a great deal of money... money Evelyn will soon be made to reimburse! So desperate is Evelyn to damage Ursula that Evelyn has resorted to *leaving bloody animal carcasses outside Ursula's door!* Ursula tells the party that there was some sort of revolting mess there a few days ago, some sort of possum or mole or whatever. Nauseating! And last week, Evelyn left some other dismembered creature - Ursula has no idea what it was; she made Phineas remove it immediately - directly in the pathway. This is truly appalling, Ursula says. Evelyn is a deeply disturbed individual, and in addition to compensating Ursula for all this lost revenue, she needs to be locked away for everyone's safety. Mostly Ursula's. *If and only if the party asks if there is any witness or proof that Evelyn did this, Ursula says that there is not, but that Evelyn has a vendetta against Ursula and that this is obviously Evelyn's work. [Someone is indeed leaving animal carcasses by the shop door, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Ursula doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner.]*

PASCAL VALERIUS tells the party that this nonsense of Ursula Smirch claiming Evelyn has some sort of vendetta against her has gone on far enough. Several weeks ago, Pascal tells the party, he needed to visit the Smirches' shop. There was some sort of dead animal outside the door. This happens, Pascal tells the party. Sometimes animals die. That is how nature works. Ursula, however, told him that Evelyn had left the animal there for the purpose of driving away business. Pascal tells the party that Evelyn is a good person. Even if she were not, he hopes she would not resort to depositing dead animals near anyone's door. For goodness' sake, Ursula needs to let this go. *[Someone is indeed leaving animal carcasses by the shop door, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Pascal doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner.]*

NATASHA tells the party that apparently, Evelyn has been leaving animal corpses outside Ursula Smirch's front door as some sort insane business rivalry. If this is true, Natasha says, the joke is on Evelyn. Natasha tells the party that she personally is much more likely to shop at the Smirches if there'll be any sort of dead bodies outside the door. Natasha intends to find out Evelyn's body-drop schedule so she can plan her shopping accordingly. *[Someone is indeed leaving animal carcasses by the shop door, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will*

notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Natasha doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner.]

KARLA SMIRCH tells the party that Evelyn is a very bad lady and not nice at all. Evelyn wants the Smirches' shop to be ruined and make no money at all, even though having money is important and nice! Evelyn is doing lots of very mean things to try to make this happen, and Karla thinks Evelyn should stop. Karla tells the party that the meanest thing so far is that Evelyn collected up all of the icky hair from her drain, all wet and smelly and awful, and left it in a nasty pile on the Smirches' floor. This was yucky and made Karla's stomach hurt because of so much grossness. Karla tells the party that she cried the whole time her father was cleaning it up. Evelyn is a bad person, which is illegal. *If and only if the party asks if there is any witness or proof that Evelyn did this, Karla says that there is not, but that Evelyn hates Ursula and also has a whole lot of hair. This is obviously Evelyn's work. [Someone is indeed leaving globs of wet hair on the Smirches' floor, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Karla doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner. To that end, it would be great if she could not use the word 'hairball' when relaying this info.]*

MILTON PEACOCK tells the party that in business as in life, first impressions are very important. For instance, he's sure that the Smirches have a perfectly fine establishment stocking all sorts of useful merchandise, but he is unhappy to report that his first experience at the shop was an... unappetizing one. Milton tells the party that he'd gone up to the shop several weeks ago and no sooner had he crossed the threshold that he stepped into an unfortunate puddle of slime and lint and goodness-knows-what. Housekeeping is a time-consuming task, but so important! *[Someone is indeed leaving globs of wet hair on the Smirches' floor, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Milton doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner. To that end, it would be great if he could not use the word 'hairball' when relaying this info.]*

KERRICK DEALBINDER tells the party that he is not one to pass along gossip, but apparently Ursula Smirch - whom Dealbinder has met on previous trading visits - is claiming some woman in town has a vendetta against her and is trying to ruin her business! The story - which sounds rather far-fetched, but who can say for sure? - is that this woman is sabotaging Ursula's business by damaging merchandise and making the Smirches' shop a generally unpleasant place. Dealbinder tells the party that he has already paid the shop a visit since arriving in town, and... Dealbinder is reluctant to mention such an unsavory detail, but... there was a pervasive odor of urine around the shop. Surely this local woman wouldn't actually resort to...? No. Dealbinder does not believe it! *[Someone is indeed peeing in and around the Smirches' shop, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Milton doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner.]*

FLORIA tells the party that she has a rather unusual etiquette conundrum. She explains that she visited the Smirches' shop a week or so ago, and she could not help noticing that there was a pervasive odor of urine around the front door. Floria tells the party that this is no concern of hers, but that if the Smirches are thinking of doing any planting in this area, they should be aware that perhaps a different location would be better suited. She is unsure if she should mention this to the Smirches or not. Floria does not want her comment to be perceived as a criticism. *[Someone is indeed peeing in and around the Smirches' shop, but it's not Evelyn. Ember is doing this, not to sabotage the Smirches but just because she's a cat. Hopefully after enough of these stories, the party will notice that this is cat-like behavior, but of course Floria doesn't know or say this. The party is getting enough different info of this type that none of them need to be presented in a heavy-handed manner.]*

TANYA PEACOCK tells the party that she hasn't known Ember long - Ember got to town about 6 weeks ago, shortly before the Peacock Family Singers did - but that Tanya ADORES Ember. Tanya hopes Ember adores her back. It's honestly a little... hard to tell with Ember? That's just part of what makes Ember SO COOL. So many people are fake, Tanya says, but Ember is always 100% REAL. If Ember doesn't want to talk to you, she doesn't waste anyone's time; she'll just say "I don't want to talk to you" and walk away, and Tanya finds that SUPER REFRESHING. Tanya tells the party that when she found out that she and Ember were both going to be Belle's bridesmaids she literally SCREAMED. Ember DOES adore her, Tanya just knows it. Just yesterday Ember came and sat down kind of near Tanya! #SquadGoals! *[This lets the party know a bit about Ember's personality and general influencer shtick.]*

DORITO tells the party that she's pretty into that girl Ember. Ember is hard to get to know, but that's kind of the appeal, right? Dorito tells the party that Ember is clearly real authentic, and also super relatable. Dorito digs those boots Ember wears. Does the party think Dorito could pull off that look? Dorito's pretty sure she's gonna get some boots like that. *[This lets the party know a bit about Ember's personality and general influencer shtick.]*

BARTLEBY SPRINK tells the party that he doesn't like to brag, but he and Ember are very close. Bartleby tells the party that most people in World's Edge wouldn't know hot couture if it bit them with a ten-foot pole, but he and Ember are cut from a cloth above. Ember's personal brand is very chick, very now. Bartleby is a fan. Big thumbs up. *[This lets the party know a bit about Ember's personality and general influencer shtick.]*

UMBERTO DUNN tells the party that he doesn't know much about that woman Ember. Apparently Ember is... famous for being famous? Shadow tells the party that he doesn't really understand what that means, but apparently it's a thing. It would be easy, given that, to find Ember ridiculous, but she's actually pretty cool. So many people like that are constantly seeking attention, Shadow says,

but Ember doesn't actually seem to care if you notice her or not. She just does her own thing and doesn't care what anybody else thinks. Shadow tells the party that he himself has also always just done his own thing and not cared what anyone thought... but that he's pretty sure he doesn't pull it off nearly as well as Ember does. Maybe if he started acting a little more like Ember, people would like him more? No, Shadow concludes. Probably not. *[This lets the party know a bit about Ember's personality and general influencer shtick.]*

ALEEYA WITCHBORN tells the party that she wishes she had been more like Ember when she was Ember's age. Actually, she kind of wants to be more like Ember right now. Ember practices aspirational self-care, Aleeya says. Ember has clearly defined boundaries and a really healthy sense of self. *[This lets the party know a bit about Ember's personality and general influencer shtick.]*

JONI PEACOCK tells the party that she probably shouldn't say this, but that the Smirches are kind of terrible. They're just really kind of awful people. Joni tells the party that it sort of caught her off-guard, when she found out Ember is friends with Karmin Smirch. Maybe Karmin isn't like the rest of his family? Joni tells the party that he doesn't seem like a great guy, but Ember is probably a pretty good judge of character, and if Ember likes Karmin then maybe he's a good guy after all? Joni confesses that she'd like to be friends with Ember. Maybe that could happen? If Ember was trying to grow her audience? Joni tells the party that she doubts it. Ember is too cool to be friends with her. *[This reminds the party of Ember's personality and her friendship with Karmin Smirch, which explains why she's hanging around the Smirch shop.]*

MISCELLANIA tells the party that she occasionally works with a client on business matters - she's pretty good at marketing - and that even though she knows what Ember is doing to increase engagement and capitalize on her fanbase, it still works on Miscellania. Yesterday Ember talked to Miscellania for just a minute and then abruptly walked away, which increased Miscellania's emotional investment in the encounter! Or take the fact that Ember hangs out with Karmin Smirch. Miscellania normally avoids the Smirches, because they're egregious people, but now she finds herself smiling at Karmin despite herself! Ember is very good at what she does, Miscellania tells the party. Her image is carefully curated, but it reads as effortless. Also, Miscellania is thinking about maybe starting to style her hair the way Ember does. *[This reminds the party of Ember's personality and her friendship with Karmen Smirch, which explains why she's hanging around the Smirch shop.]*

At any time before Sunday, and repeatedly if desired, **BAILEY** tells the party that Ember likes him. "She likes me. I know it", he says. If Ember happens to be around, she can and will deny this. This vaguely surprises Bailey but doesn't dismay him. "No," he corrects her. "You do. I know you do." And then he goes on his way. *[Ember doesn't like Bailey, but that's not why this matters. It matters because it's a set-up for Sunday morning, when Bailey realizes he is saying this wrong. It's not that Ember likes him. It's that Ember is like him. And in that, he is correct.]*

QUINOA tells the party that she hasn't worked in the tavern for long, but she can already tell that Ember is extremely high-maintenance. The other servers have mentioned that sometimes Ember arrives before the tavern is even open, and will sit there crying until they serve her. One time, Pansy told Quinoa, the servers were fed up and not in the mood to make up an early plate, and Ember yelled "food! Food! Food!" at them until they couldn't take it anymore. Quinoa tells the party that some people might find that sort of behavior whimsical or whatever, but she personally does not. *[Quinoa doesn't know or say this, of course, but Ember acts this way because she's essentially still a cat. She is also an entitled influencer. Hopefully the party will continue to think of this as "normal" entitled behavior for a while but will eventually make the cat connection. There's no need to hit them over the head with this, though. Underselling is fine here!]*

Saturday between 6-8pm, **ISAIAH COOKE** tells the party that Ember might be popular, but he finds her exceedingly rude. Multiple times, she's come to visit someone in the Valerius family. Isaiah reminds the party that he is *not* a butler; it is *not* his job to be opening the door for every random personage who takes it into their heads to visit. Still, he welcomed Ember into the Valerius home because that is the courteous thing to do. Isaiah tells the party that, no sooner had he done so, but Ember decided to leave again. Isaiah informs the party that he has important work to be doing, and that that work does not include getting up to answer the door. Ember wastes his time and takes him away from critical baronial business! Which is rude. There, he said it! Rude! *[Isaiah doesn't know or say this, of course, but Ember acts this way because she's essentially still a cat. She is also an entitled influencer. Hopefully the party will continue to think of this as "normal" entitled behavior for a while but will eventually make the cat connection. There's no need to hit them over the head with this, though. Underselling is fine here!]*

Saturday after 10pm, **ORION WILDE** tells the party that he does not appreciate childish antics, even if - or especially if! - the perpetrator is one of these "influencer"-type people. Orion explains that he had come into the tavern to have a drink, which he was doing at the bar. That woman Ember was at the bar as well, which is no concern of Orion's as he was not interested in engaging in conversation. Orion tells the party that this was seemingly not acceptable to Ember. It was clear she was looking for attention, which she attempted to get by "accidentally" nudging Orion's drink. Orion tells the party he said a polite hello to Ember but then returned to minding his own business. Instead of returning his greeting or - ideally! - leaving him alone altogether, Ember instead slid his drink slightly closer to the edge of the bar. Orion was not going to give her the attention she was clearly seeking, so he ignored her behavior. This proved to be the wrong tack to take, as Ember continued shoving his glass until it fell off the bar entirely, pouring his drink in his lap. And then, Orion says, Ember simply turned and left the bar, without any sort of apology whatsoever. Is this sort of juvenile behavior considered cute now? Because Orion very definitely does not find it so! *[Orion doesn't know or say this, of course, but Ember acts this way because she's essentially still a cat. She is also an entitled influencer. Hopefully the party will continue to think of this as "normal" entitled behavior for a while but will eventually make the cat connection. There's no need to hit them over the head*

with this, though. Underselling is fine here! It is left entirely up to Orion's discretion whether he wants to pour liquid in his own lap before doing this scene.]

EMBER is not out after 6pm on Saturday.

Revelations:

EMBER is not out on Sunday before 10:15am.

*Sunday morning at breakfast, **BAILEY** approaches the party. He tells them he said the wrong words when he talked to them yesterday! It's not that Ember likes him! It's that Ember *is* like him! [Bailey doesn't know specifically what he means by this - figuring that out is the party's challenge, after all - but it, like everything, is important to him. Although Bailey doesn't know or say it, Ember is indeed like him, in that she also hasn't always been human. Ember started as a cat, and like Bailey, her essential nature is largely unchanged from that time.]*

*Sunday morning at 9:45, **TEKNOS** is the penultimate step on the party's path. He tells the party that he has something he'd like to show them later - he doesn't need to say more than this now, because we want their first focus to be on their path ending - and will take them to the hidden Elsewhichian wine, waiting quietly out of the way while the party talks Kira through the ritual. After this is done, Kira has a scene with her grandmother, Kovi Woundtender, who is waiting near the front of the tavern. Again, Teknos goes with them but doesn't distract from or intrude on the scene.*

Sunday around 10:15am, after their party path is complete, Teknos brings the party back to the tavern. He's very excited to show them an item he just received from one of his inventors. It's a new sort of wand with a fascinating new targeting system on it. This wand is just a prototype; it doesn't actually have an effect. It has just been shipped to World's Edge, and is packed (along with a lot of packing material) inside a large crate. **PROP** Teknos removes the lid of the crate, placing it on the floor, and then lifts out the wand. **PROP** Through all of this, Teknos is telling them about the inventor who built the prototype, the creative process, etc. None of this matters; it just needs to sound like something Teknos actually cares about so the party is surprised by the part of the scene that really matters.

Hopefully, there won't be other parties in the tavern at this time. **EMBER** is there, paying no attention to anything Teknos or the party are doing. (If there *are* other parties, Ember should try to shoo them outside if possible.) In a perfect world, there will be a couple other staffers around, just so Ember doesn't seem like a focus of the scene. Note that this scene *can* be moved outside if needed, but that the crate may be unwieldy and that the scene may be hard if there's bright sunlight. This will have to be played by ear.

After Teknos has unpacked the wand, he shows it off to the party. It looks higher tech than the other wands the party has seen. Teknos points out a few of its features and then tells the party that, as he says, this wand is just a prototype. It won't actually affect anyone, but still, he won't point it at a person, just for safety reasons. The wand's newly designed tracking system is really quite extraordinary, he says. And then he flips the switch on it, which activates the "tracking system"... which is a laser pointer.

Ember is suddenly *very* interested in this interaction. Or, rather, in the magical red dot that's moving across the floor.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

[Also note: this laser pointer should, of course, not be pointed directly at anyone's face.]

If the party figured out Ember's deal before this scene, she can go all out confirming their suspicions. If they have no idea, she can move more slowly, expressing keen interest but not yet full-out chasing the dot. She can also, when the time is right, climb into the lid of the crate.

Ember can make her cat behavior more and more apparent until the party asks her questions, at which point she can answer truthfully (and dismissively.)

- Yes, she used to be a cat. Duh. (If the party believes she's still a cat or whatever, she doesn't need to get bogged down in this. Ember = cat is the part that matters.)
- Yes, she left presents at the Smirch shop for her friend Karmin. Duh.
- Yes, she sometimes plays there, knocking merchandise off shelves and sleeping on boxes. Duh.
- To most any other questions/comments, especially things like "But Evelyn was about to be prosecuted for this!" or "These things cost the Smirches business!", Ember answers "I don't think I care about that." And, if the party persists, "No, I'm sure I do not care." And then she turns her attention elsewhere. Ember isn't evil, but she really, really doesn't care.

If the party gets that Ember is a cat but has not made the connection that the “sabotage” is all normal cat behavior, Ember asks, “Where is Karmin? I like him more than you.” Hopefully this will move the party in the right direction; if it still doesn’t, let the Basement know!

(Note: **KARMIN SMIRCH** is out at this time, selling items either in or near the tavern. It might be easier if he is not in the tavern when this scene is taking place, although he also could be, with Ember hanging around with him. Karmin and Ember can determine how this will work best.)

EVELYN is out on Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, **BUZZKILL** approaches the party. He tells the party he appreciates them looking into the charge that was leveled against Evelyn. He reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Buzzkill encourages them to present the info they've learned to him as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Evelyn hasn't done anything to the Smirches' shop.
- Everything that's happened - merchandise pushed off shelves, foul globs of hair on the floor, animal carcasses left by the door - is intended not to sabotage the shop's business, but because visiting influencer Ember has been hanging out with Karmin Smirch.
- And unbeknownst to World's Edge, Ember used to be - and still essentially is - a cat.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Buzzkill can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Buzzkill can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) He can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

Probably/hopefully, the party will want to demonstrate with the laser pointer wand during the trial. Either Teknos can use the wand as the party directs, or, if he decides they're mature enough humans to not be dumb with it, he can let them hold it. In this latter case, Teknos should please remind them on reality not to point it at faces.

Aesthetika, charged with Larceny

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 91-Section A of the Lyrian Code of Law, Aesthetika is hereby charged with larceny: From the period beginning on or around July the 26th, in this year 994 of the common calendar and continuing through till the present day, the theft of monies varying between 50 to 150 royals from persons including but not limited to Crabtree and Evelyn, Angelica Sprink, Ursula Smirch, Irena Montalvo and Elliott Peacock, these thefts totaling at least 700 royals in all.

Common Knowledge:

For the past couple months, an odd thing has been happening around town: moderate amounts of money - mostly 75-100 royals - has been stolen from different people. That in itself isn't too strange, except that whoever's stealing the money is also leaving behind smallish paintings, each of which depicts the person who was stolen from. The paintings are watercolors, of the type that Aesthetika is known to create. She claims to have nothing to do with these thefts.

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, **FLORIA** approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled against her dear friend and fellow muse Aesthetika. Floria explains that there have been some strange thefts happening in town for the past several months, with the really surprising part being that whoever is stealing money is leaving behind a small painting. Aesthetika is a painter, Floria says, and it's true that there are some similarities between the paintings Aesthetika does and the ones people have been finding around. It's also true that Aesthetika has been trying to raise money to set up an art school for local children. Regardless of all this, Floria says, Aesthetika has explained that she hasn't painted these pictures. Floria tells the party that even if Aesthetika *had* painted these pictures - which she obviously didn't, because she *says* she didn't - she is of course not a thief. Nevertheless, she has now been officially accused of these crimes, which is deeply troubling. Floria tells the party that Aesthetika does not seem worried about this matter, but that she herself is very upset by it. She implores the party to please look into this charge which has been leveled against Aesthetika.

What Aesthetika Says:

I haven't stolen anything and those aren't my paintings. They're quite good, though.

The SECRET Truth:

Aesthetika isn't responsible for either the paintings or the thefts. Several months ago, Lady Carmina Bordeaux came to Inspirations Unlimited demanding to be made into a successful painter. After Nemaia turned her away, Aesthetika agreed to mentor Lady Bordeaux privately. Lady Bordeaux expected Aesthetika to magically make her a famous artist, and when Aesthetika was unable to do so, Lady Bordeaux decided to punish Aesthetika by framing her. She's manipulating Frost, the Valerius family's young servant, into creating paintings that mimic Aesthetika's and then secretly exchanging them for money. Lady Bordeaux feels justified in "selling" "her" artwork this way, reasoning that she should rightfully be an artist by now.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from GLENDEEP (pale green):

On Friday night, **FLORIA** should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Floria needs to convey, but she'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Floria doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, she'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if she's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! [This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]

The party's traveler has lore about Aesthetika and the school she hopes to open - trigger: a large golden book, or a golden piece of paper - which appears on page 207.

Any time they encounter this party and this charge is NOT being discussed, **HONORÉ VALERIUS, SYLVIE VALERIUS, PASCAL VALERIUS, NIX VALERIUS** and **LENORA GRAVES** mention Frost, the young boy who works as a servant at the Valerius house. In each of these instances, Frost was around just a few minutes ago, but has gone to run an errand or whatever. This shouldn't seem like a big deal, maybe just "Please come in! Frost can bring you some tea. Oh, that's right. He's just gone out. Here, I'll get it for you

myself." Or whatever. [Frost is only actually around on Sunday morning, but we're hoping that the party will think of him when they get their Sunday vision, something will only happen if they've heard his name multiple times.]

At some point when Carmina Bordeaux is not nearby and when this charge is NOT being discussed, ISAIAH COOKE tells the party that he very much hopes Lady Carmina Bordeaux won't be staying in World's Edge much longer. She's been visiting at the Valerius house for the past four months, he says, and yet it feels like it's been even longer. Isaiah tells the party that just a day or two ago, Lady Bordeaux returned from a walk and then left her muddy boots on his desk. His desk! He tells the party that Lady Bordeaux summarily announced that she needed the boots cleaned immediately and that he oughtn't use a stiff-bristled brush when cleaning them, lest he damage the leather. Isaiah reminds the party that he is a scribe, not a shoeshine boy! He says that he ultimately ended up cleaning Lady Bordeaux's boots as instructed because it was easier than correcting her. Still, the gall! [This serves to remind the party of Lady Bordeaux's timeline and personality.]

At some point when Carmina Bordeaux is not nearby and when this charge is NOT being discussed, KIRA tells the party that most of the people she's met since coming to World's Edge have been so nice! She confesses that he wasn't sure it would be this way, because the very first person the Makai encountered when they came down to the tavern was Carmina Bordeaux. Kira tells the party that she and her grandmother were just outside the tavern. Her grandmother was checking to make certain the tavern was open - Kira admits that this meant they were standing blocking the door, although it was only for a minute - when Carmina Bordeaux arrived. Her grandmother turned to say hello, but Carmina took one look at them and said "Move!" Kira tells the party that she was very surprised by this, because among the Makai no one would say this without saying "please" or "excuse me" unless it was a true emergency. It did not appear to be an emergency with Carmina Bordeaux. Kira tells the party that she and Woundtender jumped out of the way, but that she was left worrying that all Lyrians spoke like this. That does not appear to be the case, Kira says. No doubt Carmina Bordeaux is a very important person, but she still thinks that perhaps she could say "please" instead of simply giving orders. [This serves to remind the party of Lady Bordeaux's personality.]

At some point when Carmina Bordeaux is not nearby and when this charge is NOT being discussed, DUSTY PEACOCK tells the party that she does not actually work at the tavern, but that Lady Carmina Bordeaux, who is a guest at the Valerius House, seems to think she does. Several times now in the tavern, Lady Bordeaux has snapped her fingers for Dusty, saying "You, there! I need more water!" or "My soup is too hot!" or "This room is too cold!" Dusty tells the party that she attempted to explain to Lady Bordeaux that she does not indeed work at the tavern, but that it did not appear that the lady in question heard her. She brought Lady Bordeaux more water as requested and fanned her soup to cool it down. Warming up the room was more challenging, but Dusty assures the party she did what she could. Dusty tells the party that she didn't mind helping out in this way; she is certain Lady Bordeaux would have done the same for her. No doubt the Lady would be embarrassed if she knew about her mistake! [Dusty is of course mistaken about these last points, but regardless, this serves to remind the party of Lady Bordeaux's personality.]

At some point when Carmina Bordeaux is not nearby and when this charge is NOT being discussed, DANNY DONOVAN tells the party that, in the four months since she came to World's Edge, he hasn't been around Lady Carmina Bordeaux much - they don't travel in the same social circles, go figure - but he's seen more of her in the past day or so. Danny says that he himself knows a thing or two about manipulating people. It comes with the territory, being an addict. You learn what you've got to do to get what you need. Danny tells the party that he is certainly not saying that Lady Bordeaux is an addict. But he's not sure he's ever seen anyone who's better than she is at getting what she wants. As near as he can tell, her preferred method is just to make demands. She does this with Isaiah, the Valerius family's scribe, and with the servants, especially that kid Frost. She does it with Pascal Valerius, because even though he's a genius, he doesn't know enough to tell Lady Bordeaux off. Danny says that if she wants something from someone she can't just make demands of, she'll find some other way. He tells the party that he saw Lady Bordeaux admiring some earrings Sylvie Valerius had. She'd gotten all quiet, touching her hand to her own earlobes and getting this wistful look like she might cry, and sure enough, about an hour later, he saw Lady Bordeaux wearing the earrings herself. Danny tells the party that he can't say that he likes the woman much, but some part of him has got to respect her abilities just a little. [This serves to remind the party of Lady Bordeaux's timeline and personality.]

CARMINA BORDEAUX should be sure to meet the party at least once. There's no specific information she needs to convey, but she should be sure to demonstrate her personality. Although she's probably not going to order them around (unless she's very sure she can get away with it!) she should feel free to make demands of servers, etc., in front of them, and/or to cajole or otherwise manipulate those of higher social standing. [Given that this charge is primarily satisfying because the party will be bringing her to justice, it will of course be more satisfying if they know and dislike her.]

NEMAIA tells the party that Aesthetika is a very generous and compassionate person. The world is not always kind to people like that, which is a shame. She tells the party about an incident that happened several months ago: Nemaia explains that when a creator wishes to contract with one of the muses, she conducts an interview with that person. Assuming they are judged to be a good fit, they pay a nominal fee and are matched with a muse. After that point, there are any number of different services the muse in question might provide. Some creatives need assistance brainstorming ideas. Others benefit from a structured work plan. Some need encouragement and praise, while others are better served with a tough love approach. Nearly all of them can use practical support: childcare, food preparation and the like. Of course, not everyone who comes to Inspirations Unlimited is actually looking for the sort of service they provide. Some people are under the impression that they use magic to produce results, which is not the case. The muses can help a great deal, but it is still a tremendous amount of work on the part of the creator in question, and not everyone is prepared for that. This, Nemaia says, is at the heart of the incident she mentioned. A potential client approached Inspirations Unlimited, but was not, to

Nemaia's thinking, a good fit, and was thus turned away. Nemaia tells the party that this caused great distress to the would-be client, and seeing this distress, compassionate Aesthetika offered to work with them privately. There is no rule against this, of course. Sadly, it didn't appear that the working relationship was a fruitful one. Aesthetika attempted many things to assist her client in becoming a more skilled painter, but ultimately, the client wasn't willing to put in the copious work that this requires. Nemaia tells the party that this still weighs on Aesthetika. *If the party asks who the client was, Nemaia says that she doesn't discuss anything clients - even would-be clients - say to her. If the party asks if it was Carmina Bordeaux, Nemaia can confirm that it was. [This reminds the party about how Inspirations Unlimited works and establishes some of the backstory for this charge (although of course Nemaia doesn't know that this incident is relevant to the charge. She thinks she's just telling a story about Aesthetika.)]*

MISCELLANIA tells the party that Aesthetika is so gracious about seeing what is beautiful in people, and that sometimes this makes her unable to see when someone is actively disagreeable. She tells the party about an incident that happened several months ago: Lady Carmina Bordeaux came to Inspirations Unlimited, saying she wanted to become a painter. Nemaia interviewed her, just as she does with all prospective clients, and determined that she wasn't a good fit. Miscellania explains that this happens sometimes, but that in this case, Lady Bordeaux became very upset and burst into tears. Aesthetika is so kind hearted that she offered right then to take Lady Bordeaux on as a private client, at which point the sobbing immediately stopped in a way that made Miscellania suspect that it had been rather performative. Still, she tells the party, there is no rule preventing any of the muses from working privately with anyone of their choosing... although in her experience, if Nemaia has ruled someone out as a client, there's usually a good reason for it. Miscellania tells the party that, sure enough, there was indeed a good reason for this: Lady Carmina Bordeaux was under the impression that Aesthetika was just going to magically make her a painter - and not just a skilled painter, but a *famous* painter, one who made lots of money selling her paintings. Miscellania reminds the party that many skilled painters work their whole lives without ever achieving fame or commercial success, and that this happens even after years of practice and toil. Lady Bordeaux was uninterested in doing any sort of practicing and certainly no toil; she just wanted an instant infusion of skill. When it became clear that Lady Bordeaux was unwilling to do any sort of work at all, Aesthetika refunded the money she'd been paid, but Miscellania tells the party that Aesthetika still feels badly about the incident. *[This reminds the party about how Inspirations Unlimited works and establishes some of the backstory for this charge (although of course Miscellania doesn't know that this incident is relevant to the charge. She thinks she's just telling a story about Aesthetika.)]*

OBSIDIAN tells the party that he's worried about Aesthetika. She's a tender-hearted person, and sometimes people like that get hurt. She's trying to open an art school for the children of World's Edge, which is an ambitious goal given what such a school would cost. He tells the party that, even with this need to raise money, Aesthetika continues to be a scrupulously ethical person. Several months ago, he says, she took on Carmina Bordeaux as a private client, and when she learned her client wasn't satisfied with her services, Aesthetika refunded every royal of the woman's money, despite having spent several weeks trying to assist her. Obsidian tells the party that he personally would've chalked this up to Lady Bordeaux being impossible to please, but that's just him. Still, Obsidian tells the party, it just goes to show that Nemaia knows her business. If she refuses someone as a client - just as she did Carmina Bourdeaux, which apparently led to a whole lot of loud crying on Lady B's part - there's a reason why. It's lovely that Aesthetika wanted to help, but with some people, no good deed goes unpunished, and he suspects Carmina Bordeaux is one of those people. *[This reminds the party about how Inspirations Unlimited works and establishes some of the backstory for this charge (although of course Obsidian doesn't know that this incident is relevant to the charge. He thinks he's just telling a story about Aesthetika.)]*

ESMERELDA tells the party that she will never understand rich people. She explains that, several months ago, Lady Carmina Bordeaux asked Esmerelda to read her fortune. Esmerelda tells the party that Lady Bordeaux told her she'd convinced Aesthetika to take her as a client, that Aesthetika was going to make her a famous artist. Esmerelda had innocently inquired about Inspirations Unlimited, but Lady Bordeaux had gotten angry and explained that Inspirations Unlimited was a scam, that Nemaia was unscrupulous and unfair. Lady Bordeaux went on to say that working with Aesthetika privately was a much better thing to do anyway. Esmerelda hadn't had any opinion about that; she'd just wanted to get on with the reading. She tells the party that she'd held Lady Bordeaux's hand and concentrated on her becoming an artist, but that she'd Seen... nothing. Esmerelda assures the party that she is usually honest with people about whatever she Sees for them, but that experience has taught her that people like Lady Bordeaux don't usually value too much truth. Esmerelda tells the party that first she'd started telling Lady Bordeaux that she'd Seen her with paint-stained hands, but it was clear from the way she'd wrinkled her nose that Lady Bordeaux didn't care for that image. Esmerelda then told her about Seeing her congratulated by lots of powerful and important people about her wonderful paintings, and that seemed to please Lady Bordeaux much more. The last Esmerelda heard, Lady Bordeaux wasn't actually working with Aesthetika anymore and wasn't painting, so perhaps the nothingness she'd Seen had been accurate all along. *[This reminds the party about how Inspirations Unlimited works and establishes some of the backstory for this charge (although of course Esmerelda doesn't know that this incident is relevant to the charge. She thinks she's just telling a story about Carmina Bordeaux.)]*

SANTIAGO VALERIUS tells the party he thinks everyone in the Valerius household will breathe a little easier when Lady Carmina Bordeaux's visit comes to an end. He acknowledges that this is not a terribly hospitable thing for him to say or think, but after four months of the woman's presence, he has grown weary of the way she treats people. Santiago tells the party about an incident that happened several months ago: One evening at dinner, Lady Bordeaux announced that there would soon be a famous artist in the house. Santiago tells the party that it was rather obvious that she was speaking of herself and that she wanted those assembled to faun over her and ask excited questions. Instead, he says, Pascal - who is brilliant, but who sometimes misses social cues such as these - assumed that Lady Bordeaux was speaking about Frost, the young servant boy who works for the family. It is true, Santiago says, that Frost is quite talented and can often be seen sitting with his sketchbook when his work is completed. Still, he tells the party, Lady

Bordeaux did *not* appreciate Pascal's misunderstanding, and she snapped at him in a way that was, Santiago feels, entirely uncalled for. Santiago tells the party that in the end, it's probably unlikely that Lady Bordeaux will become an artist, either famous or obscure. She had apparently been working with Aesthetika, but once she learned that Aesthetika wasn't going to magically infuse her with talent, she grew disillusioned with the whole idea. Santiago confesses that he'd hoped this would sour Lady Bordeaux on World's Edge as a whole, but sadly, that did not happen. *[This comment does a lot: it reminds the party about Carmina Bordeaux's timeline and personality, it raises the idea of her being a client of Aesthetika's, and it informs the party that Frost is also an artist. Santiago doesn't connect any of this with the charge against Aesthetika, but it will all be important later.]*

ADINA VALERIUS tells the party that she is concerned about Frost, the boy who works as a servant in the Baron's household. He's a hard worker, Adina says, and smart as a whip. Just recently, however, he asked her if she might loan him some money. Adina tells the party that Frost's family lives on a farm outside of town. She knows there's little he himself needs so she assumes the money was for his family. She tells the party that she's asked Sylvie to check in with the family and make certain they're getting enough to eat and that they're able to pay the mortgage on the farm. Those are heavy concerns for a boy Frost's age, Adina says. She'd asked him if everything was all right, but he's very proud and he didn't want to tell her any details. *[Although Adina doesn't know or say it, the money Frost borrowed is money he's secretly gifting to Aesthetika because he realizes she's getting blamed for actions Frost himself is responsible for. Leaving her this money is making her look more guilty, but that hasn't occurred to Frost. The party is unlikely to guess any of this, but hopefully on Sunday it will help make Frost even more sympathetic... and make Lady Bordeaux even more unpleasant in comparison.]*

KOREOS tells the party that some people around town are claiming that Aesthetika has stolen money from them, leaving a piece of her artwork behind as a sort of calling card. This is ridiculous, Koreos says. Aesthetika is a very ethical person and would never do such a thing. The only thing that's a little bit odd, Koreos says, is that... about a month ago, Ursula Smirch was telling everyone who'd listen that Aesthetika had stolen 150 royals from the cashbox in the shop. Koreos hasn't listened to that because it was obviously untrue. But the next day, he'd needed some ink to mark his name in a new pair of shoes. He'd gone rummaging through Aesthetika's desk and there inside the top drawer was a pile of money... and Koreos couldn't help noticing that it was 150 royals. Koreos tells the party that it was almost certainly some money Aesthetika had raised for the art school she's hoping to open. But it was a tiny bit odd. *[The money Koreos saw was left by Frost; it's money he's secretly gifting to Aesthetika because he realizes she's getting blamed for actions Frost himself is responsible for. Leaving her this money is making her look more guilty, but that hasn't occurred to Frost. The party is unlikely to guess any of this, but hopefully on Sunday it will help make Frost even more sympathetic... and make Lady Bordeaux even more unpleasant in comparison.]*

MELADOS tells the party that some people around town are claiming that Aesthetika has stolen money from them, leaving a piece of her artwork behind as a sort of calling card. This is ridiculous, Melados says. Aesthetika is a very ethical person and would never do such a thing. The only thing that's a little bit odd, Melados says, is that... a week ago, he was talking to Elliott Peacock, who showed him a portrait of himself he'd found left among his belongings. Elliot later noticed that 55 royals were missing from his travel trunk. Melados hadn't thought terribly much about it at the time, even though the painting did look at least a little bit like some other paintings Aesthetika does. Melados was sure this was just an odd coincidence, but later that day, he'd needed some large paper to use for sheet music. He'd gone rummaging through Aesthetika's desk and there inside the top drawer was a pile of money... and Melados couldn't help noticing that it was 55 royals. Melados tells the party that it was almost certainly some money Aesthetika had raised for the art school she's hoping to open. But it was a tiny bit odd. *[The money Melados saw was left by Frost; it's money he's secretly gifting to Aesthetika because he realizes she's getting blamed for actions Frost himself is responsible for. Leaving her this money is making her look more guilty, but that hasn't occurred to Frost. The party is unlikely to guess any of this, but hopefully on Sunday it will help make Frost even more sympathetic... and make Lady Bordeaux even more unpleasant in comparison.]*

CAL COLEMAN tells the party that it's laughably obvious that Aesthetika is stealing money from people all over town. It she didn't want to get found out, he tells the party, she shouldn't have been so stupid to leave her artwork behind as a calling card! Typical crazy artist, Cal says. Not only is she leaving clear evidence behind, she's also utterly failing to cover her tracks. He explains that he's been in Inspirations Unlimited and has seen stacks of money on Aesthetika's desk, often the amounts she's stolen around town. It's like she's asking to get caught! *[It is a very obvious crime... which will maybe make the party think that it's very unlikely Aesthetika is actually doing it. The money Cal saw was left by Frost; it's money he's secretly gifting to Aesthetika because he realizes she's getting blamed for actions Frost himself is responsible for. Leaving her this money is making her look more guilty, but that hasn't occurred to Frost. The party is unlikely to guess any of this, but hopefully on Sunday it will help make Frost even more sympathetic... and make Lady Bordeaux even more unpleasant in comparison.]*

CRABTREE tells the party about a strange thing that happened back in July. She'd come back to the shop - the door had been left unlocked, which she has *asked* Evelyn one *thousand* times not to do - and there was a small painting **PROP** left on the counter. It depicts her and Evelyn - her dear Evelyn looks *especially* lovely in it - and they still have it pinned to the wall of the shop. It's painted in Aesthetika's distinctive style, so even though it wasn't signed, Crabtree assumed that Aesthetika had made it as a gift for them. That wasn't strange; Aesthetika is a lovely person and this is the kind of thing she might well do. Crabtree tells the party that the strange part is that she later noticed that 75 royals were missing from the cashbox. She confesses that her first thought was that Aesthetika was fundraising for the art school she's trying to start and that she'd taken the money in exchange for the picture. Crabtree assures the party that she's happy to donate to the school but that she did wish Aesthetika had asked first. Of course, she later spoke to Aesthetika and learned that the picture wasn't painted by her at all, and of course that it wasn't her who'd taken the money. If Aesthetika says this,

then it's obviously true, but the whole incident is just odd. *[Both the painting and the taking of money were done by Frost, both at Lady Carmina Bordeaux's instruction, but of course Crabtree doesn't know or say this.]*

IRENA MONTALVO tells the party about a somewhat peculiar thing that happened 5 days ago. She'd gone out for a walk because Al Bishop was in their shared rental space and he was exuding chaotic energy, possibly as a result of the bean soup he'd eaten the night before. She tells the party that when she returned, Al was sound asleep, and sitting atop her bag was a small painting **PROP** of... her! She had no idea where it had come from, but it was quite lovely, simple but full of light and movement. It was only later that she realized that some money - maybe 60 royals or more - was missing from her bag. Irena tells the party that of course she'd asked Al if he knew anything about either the painting or the money, but he'd been sound asleep and had no idea anyone had been inside. Irena tells the party that she isn't much troubled by the loss of the money, that it seems the universe had a plan for the money, just as it wanted her to have this lovely picture. *[Both the painting and the taking of money were done by Frost, both at Lady Carmina Bordeaux's instruction, but of course Irena doesn't know or say this.]*

URSULA SMIRCH tells the party about an outrageous crime that was perpetrated against her one month ago. She'd left Phineas in the shop, but at some point the nincompoop had gone to use the bathroom without bothering to stow the cashbox safely away. According to him, when he returned, 150 royals had been stolen! In the cashbox, there was a painting **PROP** of Ursula herself. Ursula tells the party that as soon as she saw that painting, she knew that the theft was Aesthetika's doing. The picture was clearly her way of thumbing her nose at Ursula, showing off that she could take whatever she wanted from the shop with impunity. The cheek! The sheer brazen nerve of that woman! The painting itself is attractive enough - Ursula acknowledges that she is a fine-looking woman - but art is no substitute for money, especially not money that is rightfully Ursula's. Ursula tells the party that she intends to see Aesthetika prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law! *[Both the painting and the taking of money were done by Frost, both at Lady Carmina Bordeaux's instruction, but of course Ursula doesn't know or say this.]*

ELLIOTT PEACOCK tells the party about something odd that happened about a week ago. He explains that he and Tanya had gone out for a walk, and when they returned home, there was a little painting **PROP** set atop his belongings. Pretty cool, huh? A day or two later, Elly says, he'd noticed that 55 royals were missing from his trunk. He's not sure if the money went missing before or after the painting was left, or possibly at the same time. Elly tells the party that Tanya has taken a walk every day since because she's hoping there'll be another painting left when she gets back, but so far, nothing. Maybe tomorrow's the lucky day! *[Both the painting and the taking of money were done by Frost, both at Lady Carmina Bordeaux's instruction, but of course Elly doesn't know or say this.]*

EMBER tells the party about something that happened a couple weeks ago. She'd left her bag on the bar, and when she returned to get it, someone had left her a gift. This happens often to Ember. People like giving her gifts. This particular gift was a painting **PROP** of her. Ember tells the party that the painting looks good. This is to be expected, as the painting is realistic and she herself looks good. If the party asks if any money was taken from her bag, Ember tells the party that she doesn't know. She doesn't use money much. People don't usually charge her for things. *[Both the painting and the taking of money - 100 royals, although Ember doesn't know that - were done by Frost, both at Lady Carmina Bordeaux's instruction, but of course Ember doesn't know or say this.]*

ANGELICA SPRINK tells the party about two startling things that happened a week or two ago. Her papa had given her some spending money for the day, perhaps 300 royals or so. Angelica tells the party that she'd left the money in a pile on the table of the tavern. She has recently been told that perhaps she should carry this money with her rather than leaving it in a pile in a public place, but at the time she hadn't known that was a rule. Anyway, Angelica says, when she came back for lunch, about a hundred of the royals were gone. Angelica isn't sure what someone intended to do with the royals. Maybe they wanted to buy a muffin or an apple? Is it possible to buy a muffin for 100 royals? Angelica isn't sure. Anyway, she tells the party, the 100 royals were gone, but in their place was a painting **PROP** of Angelica! It's a wonderful painting, Angelica says. Someone told her that Aesthetika painted it, but when Angelica went to thank her, Aesthetika told her she hadn't painted the picture. It's a large coincidence, Angelica tells the party, having 100 royals less but one painting more, and both on the same day! Very surprising indeed! *[Both the painting and the taking of money were done by Frost, both at Lady Carmina Bordeaux's instruction, but of course Angelica doesn't know or say this.]*

TINKER BILL tells the party about an unprecedented incident that happened 63 days ago. He explains that he was eating dinner in the tavern and that when he returned to his tent, he could tell immediately that someone - that is, someone besides him - had been in there. The tent flap was left completely differently than he himself had left it. Tinker Bill tells the party that he soon learned that whoever had entered his tent had taken two actions while there: Action 1 was to remove 50 royals from his pouch. Action 2 was depositing a painting **PROP** showing either Tinker Bill himself or else someone who looks and dresses very much like him. Tinker Bill tells the party that he is not actually sure which of these actions transpired first as he was not in the tent at the time. Tinker Bill explains that the painting is similar in style to many that Aesthetika makes, but since the painting is not signed, it is impossible to say for certain who it is that created it. *[Both the painting and the taking of money were done by Frost, both at Lady Carmina Bordeaux's instruction, but of course Tinker Bill doesn't know or say this.]*

JPEG tells the party that he's seen some of the paintings that have been left around town. They certainly could be done by Aesthetika. He tells the party that Aesthetika mentioned to him several months ago that she was working on making some paint with finely-ground mica added to it, giving it a soft shimmer on the page. At that time, she'd managed to make one or two different colors. These paintings feature a similar iridescent look, although there are far more colors used. Paints such as this are available commercially, JPEG tells the party, but they're very expensive. The paintings he's seen are very good. He tells the party that he himself is good enough to

have done them... but he didn't. [The paintings were done by Frost at Lady Carmina Bordeaux's instruction. Lady Bordeaux purchased the set of paints for Frost, money not really being an issue for her. Jpeg doesn't know or say anything of this, but the gift of the expensive paints is part of what Carmina Bordeaux is using to manipulate Frost into doing what she wants.]

If and ONLY if the party asks, **AESTHETIKA** answers any of their questions truthfully. She didn't create any of the paintings that have been left around town, nor does she know who did. She didn't take any money from anyone. Recently, some money has been turning up in her desk or with her other belongings, but she has no idea where it's coming from or how it got there. She made a couple colors of shimmering paint, but hasn't had time to make any more.

If and only if the party uses truth magic on **AESTHETIKA** and/or **CARMINA BORDEAUX**, they should listen carefully to the question asked. For instance, Carmina Bordeaux's answer to "Did you paint pictures in Aesthetika's style?" or "Did you steal money from people?" is no, whereas "Did you cause pictures to be painted in Aesthetika's style?" or "Did you cause money to be stolen?" is yes. Please talk to the EMs if you'd like help preparing for this!

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens just a bit to the icy azure sky of pre-dawn. The air crackles with cold, and the silent hills slumber under their cerulean blanket of snow. The last stars sparkle crystalline January above.

Only the boy is awake. Soon he will light the fires and begin his early chores, but for now he is the master of the realm. The chill sits easy on his skin, for he is winterborn. He flexes his fingers and takes up his pen. Upon the snowy expanse of his page, a world is made. Characters and creatures spring to life in ink.

The first yellow rays glimmer across the heavens. The sun bursts forth, shining gold in the royal morning. The boy tips his head in the sudden brightness, surveying his work. It is good, he knows, and yet too he is coming to realize the wrongness of it. Ill-done but too late to stop. His sigh is a frigid whisper. He stretches a slender arm up up up until he can dip his brush into the honeyed light and then paint it shimmering across his art. In the bright beautiful reflection off the page, you see the boy's eyes. They are deep icy blue as a frozen river and they cloud with guilt and fear. He looks at you imploring and then the darkness rises up again and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows Frost painting and suggests the guilt he feels at what he's being made to do.

*On Sunday around 9:45am, the party will complete their party path in the Shrine of AllSeasons. After they have fully finished this scene, **SAINT LORELEI** leaves the Shrine. **PANSY GOLDEN** is still with the party and will stay with them throughout this scene to assist as needed. Once Lorelei has gone, **FROST** tentatively enters the Shrine. He doesn't tell the party his name (until/unless they ask) and he is hesitant and deferential with them. He apologizes for interrupting them, but he's wondering if anyone has seen Aesthetika?*

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

Since Aesthetika will not be out Sunday until the trial, the party will theoretically tell Frost that they haven't seen her. When he hears this, he is clearly unsure what to do next. He's looked for her at Inspirations Unlimited and the tavern, but he can't find her anywhere. He really needs to speak to her, he says. He sits down on a pew, clearly upset.

Hopefully Frost's mention of Aesthetika and/or their vision and/or his distress will be enough for the party to question him. If it's not, however, then Pansy needs to step in and help move this scene forward, questioning Frost herself and/or prompting the party (e.g. "He seems really upset...")

Once asked, Frost tells the party that he can't tell them the story, but that he's done something very bad, and that he really needs to speak to Aesthetika.

Only after the party has made Frost feel safe will he gradually reveal the following information:

- Back in July, Lady Carmina Bordeaux instructed him to paint a picture of Crabtree and Evelyn, in a style like Aesthetika's own work. She gave him a very nice set of paints to use.
- After the painting was done, she told him to deliver it to Crabtree and Evelyn's shop and take the money they'd paid for the picture from their cashbox. He did this.
- Lady Bordeaux sold multiple additional pictures to people in town: Angelica Sprink, Ursula Smirch, Elliott Peacock and others. In each case, she instructed Frost to paint the picture, deliver it and collect the money from a cashbox or purse, always without letting the purchaser see him.

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- Frost knows these are unusual instructions, but it's not his place to question the orders that are given to him. Lady Bordeaux made it clear these "sales" were to remain their little secret. She reminded him that he accepted the gift of the fancy paints from her, which was unethical unless he was prepared to uphold his end of the bargain.
- At some point, Frost realized these secret painting sales were making Aesthetika look bad. In an attempt to make things right, he started using his own money to "pay back" Aesthetika, secretly leaving her the same amount he'd collected. [This is of course making Aesthetika look more guilty, but that hasn't occurred to Frost and is absolutely not his intent.] Paying back this money has taken all his savings and required a loan from Baroness Adina.

Throughout this scene, Frost is focused on himself and his own guilt. The fact that Carmina Bordeaux is manipulating him has not fully occurred to him. He is a child and a servant and he was given orders. Note that although he realizes this is making Aesthetika look bad, he does NOT know that Carmina Bordeaux is doing this specifically *in order to* make Aesthetika look bad.

After the party knows all of the above, they'll again need to reassure Frost before he'll agree to testify at the trial. This is a very scary prospect for him. He should make it clear to the party that *they* need to tell most of the story and that then he'll confirm it.

Once the above has happened, Frost promises to meet the party at the trial. He and Pansy can then return to the Basement.

Neither **AESTHETIKA** nor **CARMINA BORDEAUX** is not out on Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, **FLORIA** approaches the party. She tells the party she appreciates them looking into the charge that was leveled against Aesthetika. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Floria encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Aesthetika didn't create the paintings or steal the money; Frost did.
- All of this was done under the direction/manipulation of Carmina Bordeaux, who's seeking to frame Aesthetika as revenge for failing to make Carmina a successful artist.
- The money that's mysteriously shown up amongst Aesthetika's belongings was left there by Frost, who's trying to right the wrong he's doing.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Floria can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Floria can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

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Danny Donovan, charged with Arson

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 512 of the Lyrian Code of Law, Daniel Donovan is hereby charged with arson: On the night of October the 1st and/or the early morning of October the 2nd, in this year 994 of the common calendar, the willful and malicious ignition of a fire in the Montgomery Morgan Theater, resulting in damages estimated at 10,000 royals.

Common Knowledge:

Aria Morgan has been working for more than a year now to restore her family's theater in the center of town. Aria's great-grandfather Montgomery was a well-known actor who built the theater at the height of his career, but 25 years ago "the Morg" fell into disrepair and was abandoned. The restoration is a lot of work for one person, and back in the spring, Honoré Valerius convinced Aria to hire his old friend Danny Donovan as a handyman. In the past, Danny was addicted to the illicit drug White Noise, but he'd been clean for several months, and Aria reluctantly agreed to hire him. This arrangement worked well enough until an altercation between Aria and Danny resulted in her firing him Thursday morning. Friday morning, when World's Edge woke with no memory of the previous 12 hours, the Morg was just a smoking pile of burned timbers. Danny was asleep in his cot in a back room of the tavern, his arms and face dirty with soot and his clothes singed. No one knows for sure what happened during those missing hours, but it's obvious Danny was involved. Everyone is left wondering: did Danny's pipe accidentally start the fire, or was this deliberate revenge against Aria?

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, HONORÉ VALERIUS approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Danny Donovan. He tells the party that he's known Danny his whole life, and although Danny's struggled with drug addiction and hasn't always made great choices, he has a good heart. Danny would give you the shirt off his back, Honoré says, even if it meant he froze as a result. He tells the party that he's not sure when it was that Danny started using White Noise. It's an illegal drug, a white waxy gum that gets smoked in a pipe. It's depressingly easy to acquire in World's Edge, because most of the White Noise sold in Moreth and Arden gets made in the Wild Lands. Honoré tells the party that White Noise is highly addictive; he's been working for years to get rid of it, but it's very profitable, so there's no way the Wolven are going to stop manufacturing it. He was really hopeful, back last winter when he learned that Danny had stopped using. The problem, Honoré says, is that nobody wanted to hire Danny, and he was afraid that without a job, his friend was likely to relapse. Honoré tells the party that he'd talked to Aria Morgan about giving Danny a chance, and although she had concerns, she'd finally agreed. Honoré really thought everything was working out there. Danny's a hard worker when he's sober, and good with his hands. But on Thursday morning, Aria fired Danny. Honoré tells the party that he'd gone to the theater and given Aria a letter listing Danny's good points and asking her to reconsider, but he doesn't know if she read it. Even if she had, it doesn't much matter now. They all woke up on Friday morning with no memory of the night before, and by that time, the theater had largely burned down. Honoré explains that Solomon Stillwater lets Danny use a cot in a back room of the tavern, and when Danny came out of the room Friday morning, he was covered in soot. Honoré wants to believe the best of Danny, but it's hard to imagine that he wasn't involved in the fire. Honoré tells the party that he firmly believes that setting the fire was an accident, but that Aria disagrees. She's understandably heartbroken by the loss of the theater and she wants to see Danny punished for deliberate arson. Honoré hopes his faith in Danny isn't misplaced. He tells the party that he'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against his old friend.

What Danny Says:

I wish I could tell you, man. I just don't know.

The SECRET Truth:

Danny didn't set this fire, not accidentally or purposefully. Aria knocked over a candle and that's how the blaze started. She's still alive because Danny heard her screams and ran inside to save her. Of course, "every living soul" in World's Edge has forgotten what happened on Thursday night, but the ghosts who haunt The Morg saw everything, and they remember.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from CLAIRIA (white):

On Friday night, HONORÉ VALERIUS should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Honoré needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Honoré doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! [This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]

The party's traveler has lore about the Morgan family and theater - trigger: a sign inscribed with the name "Montgomery Morgan" - which appears on page 209.

ARIA MORGAN tells the party that her schedule is the same every day... or, at least, it was until Danny Donovan destroyed the theater her family worked so hard to build. She tells the party that she used to spend every morning and early afternoon at the theater working on the restoration. Then, she says, she would go to the tavern for lunch and would sit there writing letters to wealthy art patrons, trying to find someone to finance the remainder of the work. Aria confesses that she hated asking for money this way, but it was necessary. Every day at 5:30 she'd finish her letters and return to the theater to make sure everything was as it should be, and then she'd walk home. Aria tells the party that Thursday was a mostly normal day for her, except that on Thursday morning, Danny - whom she never wanted to hire in the first place, because she just knew something awful would happen - threw out some very important paperwork he had no business touching. This was the final straw, Aria says, and she was forced to fire him. She tells the party that early in the afternoon, Baron Honoré - the person who talked her into hiring Danny in the first place - came to see her. He'd asked her to reconsider and even gave her a letter he'd written listing all of Danny's good points. Aria tells the party that she respects the Baron but that she'd made the right decision getting rid of Danny. As far as she was concerned, this was the end of the matter. If only that had turned out to be true! She'd gone home Thursday night and like everyone else in town, she woke up with no memory of the previous evening. Then she came into town and found that her family's beautiful theater - the building she'd worked so, so hard to restore - was destroyed. Aria tells the party that some people are claiming Danny didn't mean to burn the building down. They say that he's an addict, that he couldn't resist the allure of the White Noise, and so he'd snuck back into the theater and, with his pipe, accidentally started the fire. This is nonsense, says Aria. He may well have been high when he did this, but he set the fire on purpose, to get back at her for firing him. She will hear no disagreement on this subject. *[This comment is long but there's a lot here that's important. It reminds the party of the general timing of what happened on Thursday. Note that Aria isn't being completely transparent here. She doesn't actually remember walking home on Thursday, but she woke up in her own bed on Friday morning, so she just assumes she walked home normally. Probably the most important thing here is the story about Honoré and the letter he gave her on Thursday. Only Honoré and Aria are saying this, but if the party can remember it, this letter will ultimately provide the proof the party needs to exonerate Danny. There's one other part which is less critical, but in case anyone cares, it also references the reason for Danny's firing, which is that he threw out what Aria calls "important paperwork" and Danny calls "crumpled old papers": the paper crown little Aria wore when performing in the theater so long ago.]*

DANNY DONOVAN tells the party that he knows how lucky he was, back in the spring when Aria Morgan agreed to take him on as a handyman. She only did it because Baron Honoré asked her to, but still, it was a good job and he was real grateful. Danny tells the party that he liked working in the theater, and he'd thought that most of the time, Aria was pretty happy with the work he was doing. He explains that he must've overstepped on Thursday. He'd found some crumpled old papers stashed on a shelf and thrown them out before mice could nest in 'em. He understands now that he should've checked first, but they sure did look like garbage, them being probably twenty years old or more. Aria was furious with him and fired him on the spot, which was fair, given they were real important. Danny feels bad about that. And, of course, he feels far more awful about everything that happened later. Like everyone in town, he doesn't remember Thursday night. Solomon Stillwater lets him set up a cot in a back room of the tavern, so that's where Danny woke up on Friday morning. He tells the party that he smelled smoke even before opening his eyes, and when he did actually look, he saw that his cloak - which he'd slept in - was burned in spots as well as reeking of smoke. Danny's arms and face were dark with soot, and he'd stumbled out of the room wondering what had happened to him. Danny tells the party that he still wants to know what happened. He feels just awful, he says. It'd been 276 days since he'd last used. He still thinks about the Noise a lot, but he doesn't give in to the wanting. But on Thursday, Danny tells the party, he must've given in after all. He can still get his hands on some Noise if he needs to, and he must've gone into the theater and been careless and started the fire. He hates thinking he did that, but looking at his clothes, it's too big a coincidence to believe otherwise. The only other explanation is that he lit that fire on purpose, and that would make him worse than a fuck-up loser. That would make him a monster, someone who got angry and struck out at - yeah - the woman who fired him, but also at the woman who'd given him a job when no one else would. Danny tells the party that he really hopes that's not who he is, a monster. Maybe, he says, he doesn't want to know what happened after all. *[This comment reminds the party of lots of common knowledge. More importantly, it lets the party see Danny as a sympathetic and contrite figure and hopefully will make exonerating him deeply satisfying. There's one other part which is less critical, but in case anyone cares, it also references the reason for Danny's firing, which is that he threw out what Aria calls "important paperwork" and Danny calls "crumpled old papers": the paper crown little Aria wore when performing in the theater so long ago.]*

If and only if the party uses truth magic on either of them, ARIA MORGAN and DANNY DONOVAN should remember that truth magic only makes you disclose the truths you remember. A spell like Interrogate will get three "I don't know"s in response. It's remotely possible the party might try something like Mighty Adjective o' Power with an awkward adjective of "remembering". If this happens, tell them the magic of their spell isn't strong enough to overcome the magic that took away the memories and that this doesn't use up their spell. [Oy, truth magic!]

EUGENIE BRIGHT tells the party that it just breaks her heart to walk past the burned theater. Her sister Dora danced at the Morg - that's what everyone in town called the Morgan Theater - multiple times. Eugenie tells the party that Aria did so much work trying to restore the theater. It was a labor of love for Aria, of course, because her family built the theater in the first place. Eugenie tells the party that the great actor Montgomery Morgan himself performed there. She herself was only around 8 or 10 years old then, Eugenie says, but she remembers seeing him in a show. He was just wonderful, and so handsome! He was very, very tall, with a chiseled profile, she says. Eugenie tells the party that she also saw Aria sing and dance in the theater when Aria was just a tiny little thing, just shortly before the theater closed. Aria sang a song called Spun Sugar; it was the most precious thing. Eugenie tells the party that Aria was probably only about 6 at the time. She wore a beautiful white dress and a little white paper crown, and at the end of the song, she spun herself around in a circle, giggling. It was the sweetest thing, Eugenie says. It's so sad to think of the Morg being gone. *[This reminds the party about the theater's history. Also, the story of young Aria's dance is important because it will hopefully help them understand their revelation. If they connect the paper crown the little girl wore to other info, it might give them some interesting context, but this isn't at all critical.]*

NED CROCHETT tells the party that Solomon has been letting Danny Donovan sleep in a back room of the tavern for the past 8 or 9 months or so. It's a space Solomon and Bonnie weren't using for anything, and it helped Danny out. He tells the party that, on Friday morning, he came into work to get breakfast going. He couldn't remember what had happened Thursday night, but to be honest, he'd just assumed that he'd had a really good time at the party the night before. He felt fine, though. He was starting the water for oatmeal when Danny'd come out of the room where he sleeps. He smelled like a bonfire and his face was all soot-smudged. Ned tells the party he'd come in through the back door and hadn't seen the poor smoldering Morg yet, so he had no idea how Danny had gotten all smoky. Neither, it seemed, did Danny. Ned explains that of course then later he learned that nobody remembered anything, but still, it was just the oddest thing, Danny coming out of his room and saying "What happened to me?" with no idea at all. *[This reminds the party of some of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

ALEEYA WITCHBORN tells the party that she was scheduled to serve breakfast in the tavern on Friday morning. She'd gotten there a little bit early and it was still dark enough out that she didn't see how the theater had burned. She smelled all the smoke, she tells the party, but she assumed that maybe there was a bonfire or something at Cary's bachelor party the night before. Aleeya explains that she couldn't remember what had happened Thursday night, but to be honest, she'd just assumed that she'd had a really good time at the party the night before. She came inside and was starting to wipe down the bar when Danny Donovan had come into the main room. Aleeya tells the party that Danny sleeps in a back room of the tavern and has for months now. She turned to say hello to him, but he was all wide-eyed. He was wearing a cloak with burn marks all over it and his arms were all sooty. Danny kept saying "What happened to me?" over and over. She tells the party she felt bad for him, he looked so confused and afraid. *[This reminds the party of some of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

ELLIOTT PEACOCK tells the party that he'd woken up early on Friday morning. His brain wasn't even functioning yet and it hadn't even occurred to him that he couldn't remember a single thing about the night before. Elly tells the party that he went in search of coffee, but when he walked down to the tavern, he was in for a shock. The theater in the center of town, which people had been restoring, it was just... gone. It had burned till only the skeleton of the building remained. He was standing staring at it when Danny Donovan came out of the tavern. It was clear Danny was as shocked to see the burned building as Elly himself was. Of course, Danny was a shocking sight himself. His face and hands and clothes were covered with soot and he smelled almost as much of smoke as the theater did. Elly tells the party that now people are saying that Danny set the fire. He can't imagine doing something like that and then just forgetting about it, but he was there when Danny saw the theater... or, rather, the remains of it. And Elly can attest: until that moment, Danny had absolutely no idea what he'd done. *[This reminds the party of some of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

ELECTRA asks the party if they'd like to know what pisses her off. Too bad; she's going to tell them anyway! It's the absolutely pathetic state of addiction treatment in Lyria. And they call themselves a civilized kingdom! Electra tells the party that she is concerned about everyone with substance abuse issues but that right now she is worried first and foremost about her friend Danny Donovan. Electra isn't sure exactly *when* Danny started using White Noise, but she can take a guess *why*. This, she reassures the party, is not a breach of confidence. She hasn't discussed it with Danny, but she knows enough to have seen commonalities among those who grow addicted to the drug: they're usually poor but not impoverished, because Noise is on the lower end of drugs, price-wise, but far from free. There's often emotional trauma or physical pain in an addict's history, because what White Noise does is blur the edges and mute pain, at least temporarily. And they're often easy-going, because depressingly, Noise is sadly easy to acquire. Electra tells the party that Danny was that rare success story who went from using Noise to giving it up and staying clean for at least six months. After that, she says, it should have gotten easier. He shouldn't have started again. Electra tells the party that Aria Morgan gave Danny a job back in the early spring after Honoré Valerius encouraged her to. Electra can't blame Aria for being trepidatious about hiring Danny, because he hadn't been clean for terribly long, and it was a risk. She tells the party that Aria was perhaps just waiting for Danny to screw up again, and yet the fire was a bigger screw-up than any of them were expecting. The whole thing is heartbreaking, Electra says. *[This reminds the party of some of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

STEVIE PEACOCK tells the party that she has known multiple people who started using White Noise and then couldn't stop. She says that she talked with Danny Donovan about the subject a week ago. Danny's okay, Stevie says. She wouldn't go loaning him money or anything, but he's easy enough to talk to. Stevie says that, at least at that time, it seemed like Danny was doing decently well. He told her that he'd stopped using Noise in the winter and that Aria Morgan had taken a chance by hiring him and that he didn't want to let her down. Stevie tells the party that this was a week ago and that she'd really believed that Danny had no intention of using

again. Of course, that was before the theater burned down. Maybe Danny hadn't known he'd go back to the drug, or maybe he's a good liar. Stevie says that the alternative is that Danny wasn't using Noise on Thursday night but just torched the theater out of spite. But it's probably not that. Right? *[This reminds the party of some of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

KOVI WOUNDTENDER tells the party that illicit drugs are harder to come by among the Makai but still not unheard of. She tells them that she was talking to Danny Donovan about the subject. Danny is very open, Woundtender says, about his past drug use. White Noise is awful, she tells them. It looks so innocuous, like globs of white gum. It's highly addictive, though. Woundtender tells the party that she's not sure Danny has given himself enough credit. Using it consistently and then giving it up is very, very hard to do, and he did that. He has made some bad choices in the past and no doubt will again, just like everyone. But Danny has accomplished something very difficult. Woundtender hopes he realizes that. *[This reminds the party of some of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

PHYLLIS FIERI tells the party that it's such a shame, the Morg burning down. People are saying it was Danny Donovan's fault, and although she hates to say it, Phyllis wasn't surprised to hear it. She tells the party that Danny's a charming guy, but even when he's not using, he's not exactly reliable. Phyllis explains that she's hired him in the past to do handyman-type jobs. When he shows up, he does a good job, but sometimes he won't show up. He's not a bad guy, Phyllis says. But he can be careless... and that's when there's no drugs involved. *[This is true information and serves mostly to balance out the overly good and overly bad things the party hears about Danny.]*

HUXLEY tells the party that he's heard that big fire that happened was Danny Donovan's fault. Huxley reminds the party that he himself has only just arrived in town and that Danny seems like a nice-enough guy. Some of the other servers in the tavern have warned Huxley, though, that if he needs someone to cover one of his shifts, Danny isn't a great person to ask, because he might show up and he might not. Huxley tells the party that it seems like Danny's a pretty hard worker when he does show up, but even if he's not using, apparently there's not always a guarantee Danny will show. *[This is true information and serves mostly to balance out the overly good and overly bad things the party hears about Danny.]*

DRAMINA tells the party that it's heartbreaking to see the wreckage of the Morg. That's what everyone has always called the theater in town. Its official name is the Montgomery Morgan Theater, named after Aria's great-grandfather, who built it. Montgomery was one of the premier actors of his generation. He was very charismatic, very influential. He married another very talented actor, a woman named Delia. Dramina tells the party that the Morg hosted some of the biggest names in theater history during its heyday. She explains that its popularity started to wind down probably about 30 years or so ago, and then 24 years ago it closed down. The building sat vacant for more than two decades, but perhaps a year and a half ago, Aria decided she wanted to see it restored to its former glory. Raising funds for a project like that is always difficult, but Aria has been tireless, Dramina says. Aria has done a lot of the work herself, and then in the spring she took Danny Donovan on as an employee. The work was really coming along, Dramina says. This fire is such a terrible shame. *[This reminds the party of the history of the Morg.]*

DIESEL tells the party that he's occasionally done a bit of work for Aria Morgan on that theater of hers. He wasn't there on Thursday, Diesel says. He tells the party that the theater had sat unused for almost 25 years before the restoration started, so it was a real mess inside. Diesel isn't bothered by mess, but he hadn't been happy when people started talking about ghosts. People told him that all theaters are haunted and claimed that the Morg was hauntered than most. Terrific, Diesel says. He hates that kind of shit. He tells the party that he never actually saw any ghosts when he was there, but that sometimes it sorta felt like he was being watched, when he was in there. Creepy, right? Still, Diesel says, a job's a job. His wife Equi was saying that ghosts fade over time, so maybe that's why he never actually saw any. The Morg was apparently built by Aria's great-grandfather, so that was a real long time ago. You'd think any ghosts would jump ship after two decades of the building sitting empty. *[This reminds the party of the history of the Morg, and tells them a little about ghosts, which will be useful on Sunday morning.]*

CELESTE WILDE tells the party that although she likes to think of herself as a mostly sensible person, there are certain things that she simply cannot resist: 1) the theater, 2) the occult, 3) glamour and 4) romance. So: an old theater haunted with the ghosts of past lovers? Sign her up! Celeste explains that everything she'd heard about the Morgan Theater was enticing. The building was the height of glamour back when Montgomery and Delia Morgan had built it, and all the most popular acts of the day had played there. Montgomery and Delia themselves were fascinating: both of them gorgeous and talented and the two of them so deeply in love. Of course they'd come back to haunt their beloved theater! Celeste tells the party that all theaters are haunted, but even so, the Morgan was said to be more haunted than most. Of course, she says, that was a long time ago. Even the most ardently devoted ghosts fade away over time. Still, Celeste was so excited to be coming to World's Edge, the home of the Morgan! She knew it had sat empty for two decades, but people said that the Morgans' great-granddaughter was restoring the building to its former glory. Celeste tells the party that she was crushed to arrive in town on Friday morning and learn that the theater had burned *the night before*. Obviously, the most important thing is that no one was hurt. But still. She was *crushed*. *[This reminds the party of the history of the Morg, and tells them a little about ghosts, which will be useful on Sunday morning.]*

PASCAL VALERIUS tells the party that he was just outside the tavern Thursday mid-morning when Aria Morgan fired Danny Donovan from his job at the Morg. He assures the party that he wasn't eavesdropping on a private conversation; Aria was very unhappy and expressed that at a commensurate volume level, by which he means: very very loud. From the sounds of it, Pascal says, Danny threw away some papers that were really important and was fired as a result. Pascal tells the party that he doesn't know Danny as well as his brother does, but that he likes Danny well enough. He likes Aria as well, although she's certainly not easy-going like

Danny is. Pascal acknowledges that perhaps this is why Aria had a partially-restored theater while Danny just had a drug habit. Pascal tells the party that Danny seemed resigned to his fate, after Aria sent him packing. If someone had given Pascal a public dressing-down like Danny got, he'd have been angry. If Danny was angry, Pascal says, it didn't show. *[This reminds the party about Danny's firing and raises the question of just how angry Danny might or might not have been.]*

CARY MONTALVO tells the party that he was outside the theater on Thursday mid-morning when Aria Morgan fired Danny Donovan from his job there. Cary tells the party that he was mostly paying attention to prevailing wind conditions, because Belle decided she wanted have guests throw rice after their wedding, but only if it wasn't going to end up in any areas where birds were nesting. Still, distracted as he was, Cary couldn't help overhearing the bulk of Aria and Danny's interchange, especially since Aria's portion was quite loud. As he understands it, Cary says, Danny threw away some very important papers and was subsequently fired. Cary tells the party that, in his experience, a moment like this can be a sort of crucible. Something very bad happens to a person and that person either rises to the challenge - maybe even grows in the process - or else the person breaks. Cary's seen it happen to soldiers in his command. Cary tells the party that it's a good thing he's not a betting man, because if he were, having seen the look on Danny Donovan's face at that moment, Cary really would have said that he was about to rise to the challenge. Cary's not even sure what makes him say that; he doesn't know Danny well at all. But, he tells the party, that's what he would have predicted. It's sad that instead it appears that the experience broke Danny instead. *[This reminds the party about Danny's firing and raises the question of how Danny responded to it.]*

SAMUELSON tells the party that he is sad to be the bearer of unpleasant news, but that it was very apparent to him that Mr. Daniel Donovan was going to wreak havoc upon the Morgan Theater. Samuelson is sorry to have been correct on this front, but the signs were all there: Mr. Donovan is a drug user, chronically under-employed and under-motivated. This present situation where the Morgan Theater has burned down due to Mr. Donovan's careless disregard for the property of others and/or his thuggish inability to manage his temper? Depressingly predictable, says Samuelson. *[No doubt other people share this opinion of Danny. Samuelson is just enough of a prig to say so aloud.]*

VERNON GILL tells the party that in every town, there are givers and there are takers. That Danny Donovan chap, obviously, is a taker. Vernon reminds the party that Danny is a drug addict and a loose cannon. Danny needs a place to sleep and so he sleeps in the tavern. He needs a place to do drugs and so he sneaks into the theater. And then, when he gets fired for being incompetent and disobeying orders, he burns the place down. Society is full of people like that, Vernon says. There are only a few givers and a whole lot of takers. *[Plenty of people think badly of Danny, but Vernon is saying it aloud. This comment ignores all sorts of facts and lacks internal consistency, but Vernon is not remotely bothered by that.]*

CRABTREE tells the party that a couple weeks ago, she and Evelyn had received a shipment of spell and prayer components. They'd arrived at a time when Evelyn was away, and the boxes were all absurdly heavy. Crabtree opened up the boxes, figuring she'd carry things piecemeal into the shop, but because anything that can go wrong *will* go wrong, that was the moment it started raining. Danny Donovan was walking by at the moment. Crabtree tells the party that she doesn't normally mention anyone's physical ailments, but she knows Danny's back bothers him. He hurt it on a job a while ago, and it seems like it was never really right after that. Sometimes the pain was bad enough that... well, Crabtree shouldn't say too much, but she wonders if some of Danny's struggles with White Noise were in response to that pain. Crabtree says that because of this, she was absolutely not asking or expecting Danny to help her with the boxes. But still, he ran right over and grabbed up a box - one of the heaviest ones! - and hustled it across the clearing and into her shop. He didn't stop until all the supplies were inside, and then he wouldn't let her pay him for his help. Crabtree says that Danny isn't without his share of issues. Even sober, he can be plenty unreliable. But his heart is in the right place. *[Honoré Valerius says Danny would give someone the shirt off his back, even if he froze doing so. Danny isn't perfect, but Honoré's assessment is right, and hopefully Crabtree's comment helps the party see that.]*

BRACKEN tells the party that he knows people are upset with Danny Donovan about the theater burning, and he understands that. There's a story about Danny he wants them to know, though: About a week ago, it was dinnertime and Bracken didn't have enough money for a meal. Sometimes that happens, he says. It's not the end of the world. He tells the party that Danny offered to buy him dinner, which was great because although it's not the end of the world to miss a meal, Bracken was pretty hungry. Danny reached into his pocket and pulled out only a coin or two: enough to buy a meal, but not two. Bracken tells the party that Danny'd pulled out chairs for both of them and ordered some food, and when it came Danny insisted they split it. Danny said "we'll each have half", but then he cut the potato and the piece of chicken, and the portions he put in front of Bracken... well, they were way more than half. Bracken admits that he'd eaten the pieces Danny gave him; he really was hungry. It's awful about the theater burning, Bracken tells the party. If Danny needed drugs that badly, he should've found somewhere safer to smoke them. But the idea that Danny set fire to the tavern on purpose? No, Bracken says. Maybe Danny doesn't know what happened on Thursday night, but burning a building on purpose? Bracken can promise, it wasn't that. *[Honoré Valerius says Danny would give someone the shirt off his back, even if he froze doing so. Danny isn't perfect, but Honoré's assessment is right, and hopefully Bracken's comment helps the party see that.]*

MICK PEACOCK tells the party that White Noise is bad news. He... had a friend who used it a few times. His friend stopped before it got to be a real problem, though. Which was good, for Mick...'s friend. The thing about Noise, though, is that after using it, you're in terrible shape the next day. Bloodshot eyes, awful headache. At least, that's how it used to affect Mick's friend. Mick tells the party that he saw Danny Donovan on Friday morning, and although Danny's cloak was all singed and he was shaken up, he looked physically just fine. No bloodshot eyes, no headache. Now Mick is wondering, is... his friend just a real lightweight? *[Neither Mick*

nor his imaginary friend are lightweights. Danny looked fine on Friday because he hadn't used Noise or any drug on Thursday. This might make him look more innocent; it might make him look more guilty. Either is fine.]

Any time after lunch on Saturday, BRIMSTONE tells the party that he now understands he did a bad thing by taking away people's memories of Thursday night. He doesn't get filled with chaos magic often, but when he does, it's powerful stuff, Brimstone says. He tells the party that the magic worked on everyone including himself. He remembers getting ready to cast the spell, Brimstone says, and then nothing until Friday morning. Theoretically the spell worked on all living creatures, he tells the party, but he's not actually sure if animals are included. Bailey was, Brimstone says, but he's not sure about real animal-type animals. Maybe the turtles and beavers and butterflies in town can remember, but since Brimstone can't ask them, it's impossible to say for sure. [First off, Brimstone's comment lets the party know he doesn't remember Thursday night, so he's not a source of info about it. Even more importantly, although Brimstone delivers his "all living creatures" line lightly and makes it about animals, it's relevant. The spell does work on all living creatures... but not on ghosts, which will be important on Sunday. Of course, Brimstone doesn't know or say this. If the party does pick up on this at the time, that's okay, but if they don't, that's probably even better.]

Saturday at 10pm, MALACHI approaches the party. He needs to talk to them about something private, he says. Can they go someplace quiet? Once they have, Malachi admits that he needs to tell them something that's... pretty solidly illegal. He heard they were looking into the charge against Danny Donovan. Danny is a friend of his, Malachi says. And the party seems like good people, and Malachi doesn't know what else to do, so... here he is. Malachi says that, back last winter, Danny told him that he didn't want to keep using White Noise. It was going to kill him and Danny knew that, and so he'd worked really hard to give it up. Malachi says that Danny told him that he thought he needed what he'd called an "escape hatch." What Danny meant by that, Malachi says, is that he wanted to know that if he got too desperate, that he could get some more Noise. Not a lot. Just a little, just in case. Malachi tells the party that Danny'd asked Malachi to hold onto the drugs for him, and that he'd agreed he would. Malachi himself has no interest in using. It's bad news, he says. And obviously he didn't want any kids finding the drugs, nor did he want to get in trouble for having them, so he'd hidden them out in the woods, in a hollow tree, reasoning that if Danny came to him, desperate, he could take Danny to the tree in question. Malachi tells the party that he hadn't had time to check the tree until just now. At first he was overjoyed, because when he got there, the White Noise - there were three lumps of it, just like Danny'd given to him - was all there. Malachi was so happy that his friend hadn't taken any of the drugs! But then, he tells the party, he realized that this isn't good news at all. If Danny hadn't gotten high on Thursday night, that means the fire didn't start with sparks from a pipe. That means it was set on purpose. Malachi tells the party that he doesn't know what to do. It's possible that Danny got more Noise somewhere else. Maybe he has another secret escape hatch somewhere. Malachi can't believe that he's actually hoping his friend found drugs someplace else. But if Danny really got angry enough that he burned that building down... that's not good. That's not good at all. [*The Noise in the tree is still there because Danny didn't use it, nor did he start the fire purposely, or at all. Of course, poor Malachi doesn't know that.*]

DANNY DONOVAN is not out after 10pm on Saturday.

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, lightens, till it is bright blinding white as snow on a hillside, dead spectral white as Noise in a pipe.

They stand ghostly pale before you, their skin like old porcelain. They shimmer opalescent, not long for this world. Faded, nearly faded away. They speak soundless and you almost pass by unheeded, but o, do not. Stay, children of the frozen white land, for they have a message if only you are able to hear it.

The ivory smoke rises up, blooming around you like flowers of bone and frost, and then clears again. The letter sits unheeded in a pocket, cloud-crumpled and forgotten. Washed, nearly washed away. Its writing is drowned but this is its true tale to tell, if only you are able to read it. She is there with you then, the young woman, and her eyes burn angry as fire. She has lost the crown which sat paper-perfect upon her brow, has lost so much. The truth could heal her, could rest dove-peaceful against her breast if only you are able to tell it. You open your mouth to speak and then the pearly smoke rises once again and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows both the ghosts of the Morg and Honoré's letter to Aria, both of which are faded but also have important messages for the party.

ARIA MORGAN is not out on Sunday until 10:30am.

Sunday morning at breakfast, MILA "happens to walk by" the party, stops and then does a double-take. She tells the party that they are the people in the vision she had just this past night! Mila doesn't know exactly what the dream meant, but it was something about a message. Someone was trying to get a message to the party, she thinks. It was outside somewhere, but Mila isn't certain yet where. She plans to go now to ponder the dream more deeply. The party may in turn decide to share their keeper's dream; this is fine but not necessary. Either way, Mila shouldn't let the party get too invested in this idea - most of all, the party shouldn't go looking for the person the message is from - because this isn't resolvable yet. [This serves only to set the stage for later, when Mila will again approach the party.]

On Sunday around 10:15am, immediately after the party has fully resolved their party path ending, the party again encounters **MILA**. She is coming up Gilded Way, away from the tavern. Mila says she realized more about the vision she had and now knows the location where it was set. She asks the party to come with her right then. She leads the party up Gilded Way, turning right on Knight's Walk until they end at the small horse ring at the end of Knight's Walk.

On Sunday morning after Mila leads them to the Knight's Walk horse ring, the party encounters the **GHOSTS OF MONTGOMERY MORGAN, DELIA MORGAN, HORATIO MORGAN & VEENA MORGAN**. The ghosts are at the far side of the horse ring - if the party remembers the lore they read yesterday, this is the spot where the Morgans first staged their outdoor performances when they came to World's Edge - and they are engaged in a performance right now. Horatio and Veena look at the party and nod vigorously and then turn their attention back to the other ghosts.

Mila tells the party that yes, this is somehow what the dream was trying to show her. [Mila is going to give the party several pieces of info during this scene. She shouldn't get bogged down with *how* she knows these things; she just does. It's a mystical holy kind of knowing.] Mila tells the party that the ghosts must have a message for them. At this, Horatio and Veena again nod. Mila says that these ghosts are faded. They won't be in the living world for much longer. Mila tells the party that these ghosts aren't going to be able to speak to them, at least not in words. If the party asks, she clarifies that this is true even if the party has any ghosts among them or some magical means of speaking with ghosts. [This is important because we don't want the party wasting magic or killing anyone *a la* Dance of the Dead to try to talk to these ghosts! If this is unclear, Mila should talk to an EM before doing this scene.]

The way this interaction proceeds is as follows: Montgomery and Delia are serving as the principal actors, and they will act out the same scene repeatedly, on a sort of continuous loop. They don't interact with the party, because they're very faded. Horatio and Veena will provide a few "special effects" for the scene Montgomery and Delia are pantomiming, and they also serve as the audience for the other ghosts' show, reacting silently to the show's action. Horatio and Veena can also nod 'yes' or shake their heads 'no' in response to partymembers' questions. Other than that, they cannot answer. (They will not charade answers to non-yes/no questions.)

For this scene, the ghosts have a few **PROP** items with them: a white paper crown, a candle in a candlestick, a bucket with blue ribbons attached inside it, and a red/orange scarf or fabric rectangle.

At the start of the scene, Delia steps to the center of the "stage", with Horatio and Veena serving as the audience, sitting at her feet. Delia carefully places the candle near her feet and then dramatically places the crown on her head. Horatio and Veena clap silently but excitedly. Delia pantomimes singing, doing a few dainty dance steps. After a short bit of this, her "song" reaches its climax. She holds her hands out dramatically and then begins to spin in a circle. Horatio and Veena clap even more enthusiastically. But then Delia kicks over the candlestick. Horatio and Veena each hold one end of the red scarf, undulating it between the two of them so that it hopefully suggests fire at Delia's feet. Delia sees the fire and silently screams, stamping in the direction of it, but to no avail. Horatio and Veena raise the scarf a little higher, showing the fire growing stronger. Delia silently screams for help.

Just then, Montgomery enters the show. He sees Delia and the fire and silently calls to her. Delia pantomimes coughing. She tries to call back to Montgomery, but she is getting weaker. She puts a hand to her forehead, swooning in the smoke and heat. Montgomery reaches behind him, grabbing up the bucket, and then runs toward Delia. Once he is within range of her, he pantomimes throwing water on her. (Hopefully the blue ribbons unfurl onto her, looking at least vaguely watery.) Horatio and Veena lower the scarf a little as the fire is temporarily driven back. Delia, though, is very weak. She collapses into Montgomery's arms. He scoops her up, carrying her away to safety, at which point Horatio and Veena drop the scarf and applaud. And then the show starts all over again.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

If they ask yes/no questions, Horatio and Veena can answer them with nods or head-shakes as follows:

- Do you ghosts remember what happened on Thursday? YES
- Are you acting out the theater fire that happened on Thursday? YES
- Is Delia portraying Aria / is Montgomery portraying Danny? YES
- Did Danny start the fire? NO
- Did Aria dance in the theater on Thursday? YES
- Does Aria often dance in the theater? *and/or* Does Aria recreate the Spun Sugar dance from her youth? YES
- Did Aria accidentally start the fire? YES
- Did Danny carry Aria to safety? YES
- Can you come to the trial and say this? NO

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Horatio and Veena answer any other yes/no answers as appropriate. If the party asks non-yes/no questions, Horatio and Veena simply look at them sadly. This is also their reaction if the party asks yes/no questions about anything other than what the ghosts saw in the theater on Thursday.

If the party watches the scene unfold all the way through at least one and a half times and doesn't ask any yes/no questions, Mila asks, "Is this part of the message you needed to share?" at which case Horatio and Veena answer YES. If the party doesn't ask a question after that, Mila asks "Are we able to ask you any questions?" which is, again, YES.

After that, Mila tells the party that they'll have to think what to ask. Hopefully they'll do all or most of this scene on their own. At the same time, the party needs to get most of the above information before they leave the horse-ring, because there's no good way to fill them in later on, so Mila should not end this interaction end until the party has gotten the info they need!

Once the party does have all the above info, if they're acting like they're going to stick around making the ghosts replay the scene forever, Mila asks "Is there anything more you need to tell us?" To which the answer, mercifully, is NO.

After the scene with the ghosts, Mila walks with the party back toward the tavern. During this, she asks the party's keeper about the vision they had. Hopefully, refreshing the party's memory about the keeper's vision (especially the part about the forgotten letter) will help the interaction that will happen later with Aria Morgan make sense.

On Sunday around 10:30am, after the party has interacted with the ghosts, ARIA MORGAN is out in a visible spot near the tavern. Ideally, the party will have most of the answers about this charge and hopefully they'll approach her to talk. If they haven't approached her by 11:15am, she will approach them, in which case this encounter will change slightly (see below) but will overall be the same.

Assuming the party approaches her and tells her about their interaction with the ghosts, Aria is utterly disbelieving of all of it... until they tell her about her dancing the Spun Sugar dance on the stage. This is a silly indulgence of hers, remembering her time in the spotlight when she was a little girl. As an adult, she has never done the song and dance when anyone was in the theater, ever. If the party knows about this, then she is forced to admit that their story about ghosts is real.

And if the ghosts know about her dance and described that accurately, then Aria is forced to admit that they could possibly be telling the truth about Danny. She admits to the party that she remembers getting to the theater but not walking home from it. Still, she's not quite ready to believe this drastically-revised tale of events. And, as she tells the party, there's no way to know for sure.

Hopefully the party will have understood their vision and will mention something about the letter Honoré gave her on Thursday. Aria can touch her pocket a couple times in hopes that this reminds them. If it's getting too late, Aria can say "I'm not sure why you want so much to believe good things about that man! You're as bad as the Baron!" and then if there's still not a response, she can refer to the letter herself.

Once the letter gets brought up - and again, let's hope it's the party that does this - Aria pulls it **PROP** from her pocket. The paper is dry but crumpled, and when Aria opens it, the ink inside is washed almost completely away. Almost as though someone threw a bucket of water at her while it was in her pocket...

Only then does Aria actually believe. She is now deeply regretful, as passionately convinced of Danny's innocence as she once was of his guilt. It's not lost on Aria that not only did he not set the fire, but he risked his own life to save her from the burning theater. Her intense gratitude is a lot of what will make this emotionally satisfying to the party, so she doesn't need to hold back here!

Note: Again, we really hope the party will approach Aria rather than the other way around. If instead she needs to go to them, she can do this by saying "I understand you people are looking into the charge against Danny Donovan. I hope you're not going to claim him setting that fire was an accident!" and that should get them talking.

DANNY DONOVAN is not out on Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, MOXIE approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Danny Donovan. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Moxie encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Danny didn't accidentally or purposefully set this fire; Aria's accidental knocking over a candle did.
- Aria's still alive because Danny heard her screams and ran inside to save her.
- "Every living soul" in World's Edge has forgotten what happened on Thursday night, but the ghosts who haunt The Morg saw everything, and they remember.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Moxie can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Moxie can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

Aria goes into the trial knowing the whole truth, but she will be too emotional to say much for most of the scene, so the party will just need to do the talking.

Huxley & Quinoa, charged with Identity Theft

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 919 of the Lyrian Code of Law, the individual who has identified himself as "Huxley" and the individual who has identified herself as "Quinoa" are hereby charged with identity theft: From the period beginning on October the 4th, in this year 994 of the common calendar and continuing through to the present day, identity theft with intent to dispossess or defraud.

Common Knowledge:

Baron Albert Huxley is a rich and powerful man, so when his son arrived in town just this Friday morning, some people have attempted to curry favor by fulfilling the expensive requests the younger Huxley and his girlfriend Quinoa make. Lord Huxley is an odd but surprisingly down-to-earth man; he and Quinoa have even taken jobs working in the tavern. Throughout Saturday, evidence will arise that suggests the pair isn't who they claim to be. This, of course, will anger those who've been tricked into giving gifts and other assistance to the couple under false pretenses.

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, **SOLOMON STILLWATER** approaches the party and asks them to please investigate the charge that has been leveled against Huxley and Quinoa. Solomon tells the party that the pair has only arrived in town yesterday - that is, Friday - so Solomon really hasn't known them for very long. He himself had just returned home after a trip, and there was a lot to be done in the tavern, even before he learned that so many parties of visiting adventurers would be coming. Solomon explains that Huxley and Quinoa asked him for jobs and when he hired them, they both rolled up their sleeves and went right to work. Now apparently some people are saying the pair aren't who they claim to be. Solomon doesn't really care *who* they are so long as they show up for their tavern shifts and work hard. They have been, which doesn't seem like the kind of thing thieves would do. Solomon tells the party that he'd be very appreciative if they could please look into the charge that has been leveled again Huxley and Quinoa.

What Huxley and Quinoa Say:

Of course we're Huxley and Quinoa. Questioning our authenticity is SO not okay.

The SECRET Truth:

Huxley and Quinoa aren't going by their real names. And it's true that they're making a lot of expensive and time-consuming requests. They're not, however, trying to defraud anyone. They're doing all this suspicious stuff because they're participants. In an Adventure Weekend.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from SYTHWAN (gold):

On Friday night, **SOLOMON STILLWATER** should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Solomon needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Solomon doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! *[This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]*

Immediately after the party's 1st Saturday encounter (which will be with Elliott Peacock in the Peacock Family Singers camp), **BARTLEBY SPRINK** "just happens" to encounter the party. Bartleby tells the party that, a week ago, he got a letter from Baron Albert Huxley, Baron of Hillsmoor, Elsewhich. Bartleby says that he's never actually met the Baron personally but that they have a mutual friend. Bartleby is pleased to have heard from the Baron, especially given how powerful and influenza the man is! Bartleby still has the letter, which he shows the party. **PROP**. It says: "My youngest son, Lord Percy Huxley, will likely arrive there quite soon. He wants to see a bit of the world and no doubt sow his fair share of wild oats along the way. I shouldn't be surprised if he had a paramour or two along for the ride; we Huxleys have always been popular with the ladies! Anyway, I should take it as a great personal favor if you'd look after the boy whilst he's there. Let Percy get up to whatever shenanigans he fancies, but do see that he's in one piece upon his return, would you? Your assistance in this shan't go unnoticed. Thanks awfully, good sir." Bartleby tells the party that he was delighted to hear about Lord Percy's visit. It's not impossible the man is visiting because he's looking to find a legible young woman for his bride! Bartleby can think of no one more legible than his own beautiful daughter Angelica! Sure enough, Lord Percy

arrived just yesterday morning. Bartleby says that the man is a down-to-earth fellow who assured Bartleby that he was comfortable just being called ‘Huxley.’ Bartleby tells the party that he was delighted to introduce Huxley and the young woman with him to a few important people in town, as well as to give him some very expansive gifts as a welcome. *[It's important Bartleby speak with the party early enough, because this is a charge that develops over the course of Saturday, so we want the party to hear Bartleby's backstory explanation before anyone starts suspecting Huxley and Quinoa of a crime. For this reason, Bartleby should be hanging out to catch the party after the 1st Saturday finishes.]*

SAMUELSON tells the party that the old maxim – that a title is no guarantee of class – continues to be true. Take, just for example, the case of Lord Percy Huxley. A less impressive specimen Samuelson has rarely encountered. Approximately one week ago, the Master received a letter from Baron Albert Huxley, of Hillsmoor, Elsewhich. The Master was understandably pleased to receive this missive, as the Huxleys are an old and respected family. The Sprink household was thrown into a tumult as preparations commenced for Lord Percy’s arrival. Miss Angelica was given a whole new wardrobe and groomed to look as enticingly marriageable as possible, and Samuelson himself was tasked with unearthing a banner with the Huxley coat of arms upon it and with hanging said banner in the tavern so that their guest would instantly be made welcome. Samuelson tells the party that Lord Percy himself arrived yesterday, and upon being shown into the tavern, blithered out something approximating: “Uh, yeah, hi. I’m... uh... er... Huxley.” Inarticulate boob. Apparently the man - who can be called “young Huxley” only in the sense that he is younger than Baron Albert himself - wishes simply to be called “Huxley.” Samuelson tells the party that, while “Percy” is perhaps a less-than-inspired name choice, this is still a level of informality that he personally abhors. *[Samuelson's comment is important for several reasons. First, it informs the party about the Huxley banner in the tavern, which ultimately matters because this is what “Huxley” drew his name from. In addition, Samuelson's impersonation of Huxley's inarticulate introduction is actually relevant, because Huxley hadn't made up his participant name until that very moment. The party is unlikely to realize this at the time (or later; necessarily) but that's fine.]*

NIX VALERIUS tells the party that this Huxley guy showed up yesterday. Bartleby Sprink has been talking up this visit for the past week, all “young Lord Huxley” this and “young Lord Huxley” that. Apparently this guy’s a baron’s son from Elsewhich, which is fine but he’s young only in the sense that he’s younger than a glacier. Nix tells the party that it’s pretty clear Bartleby wants to marry Angelica off to this guy, and if Angelica’s smart she’ll run in the other direction. Not only is he real old, but he’s got this sort of lost look about himself. *[The party probably won’t think much of this, but Huxley and Quinoa are indeed lost, having wandered away from their own Adventure Weekend. Also, this serves to remind them of the common knowledge of this charge.]*

PANSY GOLDEN tells the party that Quinoa and her boyfriend Huxley showed up in town Friday morning. Bartleby Sprink has been losing his mind all week preparing for Lord Huxley’s visit, even hanging that Huxley family banner **PROP** up in the tavern “so the Lord will feel at home as soon as he arrives!” Whatever. Pansy tells the party that Friday morning was crazy in the tavern. Solomon had just gotten back from his trip, and he started fussing as soon as he got in, because it sounded like a whole lot of people were scheduled to arrive in town and he was short-staffed. When Quinoa heard that, she said “I guess that’s our cue!” and she and Huxley went behind the bar and started working. Pansy says she’s not sure what she expected from a visiting lord, but it wasn’t that. Quinoa and Huxley are a little odd, but no odder than anyone else who works there. And it’s good to have some extra help. *[Quinoa's Adventure Weekend job is as her party's Server, while Huxley is as a Tender, so Solomon's comment sounded to them like an invitation to work at the bar. Obviously Pansy doesn't know or say this, and the comment won't mean much to the party now, although it might provide a little amusing context when they ultimately learn the truth.]*

*At any point when he can encounter them without Quinoa being present and not immediately before or after Quinoa's similar encounter, **HUXLEY** approaches the party. He’s sorry to bother them, he says, but do any of them know where he can find a limelight? At some point during the interaction, Huxley looks around curiously and says, mostly to himself, “Huh, I figured I’d have encountered my Companion by now.” [The party may not catch it, which is fine, but this is one of their largest nudges about what Huxley and Quinoa are actually doing all weekend. It's likely they'll interpret Huxley's “Companion” reference to mean that he's wondering how soon he'll (re-)encounter Quinoa; this is fine.]*

*At any point when she can encounter them without Huxley being present and not immediately before or after Huxley's similar encounter, **QUINOA** approaches the party. She’s sorry to bother them, she says, but do any of them know where she can find a favor from the Court of Mirrors? At some point during the interaction, Quinoa looks around curiously and says, mostly to herself, “Huh, I figured I’d have encountered my Companion by now.” [The party may not catch it, which is fine, but this is one of their largest nudges about what Huxley and Quinoa are actually doing all weekend. It's likely they'll interpret Quinoa's “Companion” reference to mean that she's wondering how soon she'll (re-)encounter Huxley; this is fine.]*

MILA tells the party that it’s been just lovely getting to meet Quinoa. Quinoa’s also a Roamer, but from the Stonefall Clan. Mila explains that she and Valentina were in the tavern yesterday morning when Quinoa and her boyfriend Huxley arrived in town. As soon as the couple walked in, she and Valentina saw Quinoa’s beautiful tattoos **PROP** and colorful clothing and knew she must be one of them. Mila admits she wanted to give the pair a few minutes to get settled, but that Valentina had marched right over. Hearing that the couple had come all the way from Elsewhich, Valentina said “Oh, are you from Stonefall Clan?” and sure enough, Quinoa is. Mila and Valentina insisted she and her boyfriend come back to the Wayfarer encampment with them. Mila tells the party that she wasn’t initially sure that a Baron’s son like Huxley would want to sleep in a tent, but he’s been very down-to-earth, albeit mostly quiet. *[Quinoa isn't actually a Roamer, but she does have a full sleeve of tattoos and bright clothing, so it's a reasonable mistake for Mila and Valentina to have made. When Bartleby Sprink announced that Huxley was visiting from Elsewhich, Valentina asked about one of the largest of Elsewhich's Roamer clans, and Quinoa simply assumed she should answer 'yes' to this question.]*

VALENTINA tells the party that she's so glad Quinoa and that handsome boyfriend of hers have come to World's Edge. Valentina explains that she and Mila were in the tavern yesterday morning when Quinoa and Huxley arrived in town. As soon as the couple walked in, she and Mila saw Quinoa's beautiful tattoos **PROP** and colorful clothing and knew she must be one of them. Valentina tells the party that when she heard that the couple had come all the way from Elsewhich, she'd asked Quinoa if she was from Stonefall Clan and sure enough, Quinoa is. Mila and Valentina insisted she and her boyfriend come back to the Wayfarer encampment with them. Valentina tells the party that the other Roamers weren't certain a nobleman like Huxley would be comfortable in the encampment, which she finds funny. She's brought *plenty* of noblemen back there and they've all been *very* comfortable. *[Quinoa isn't actually a Roamer, but she does have a full sleeve of tattoos and bright clothing, so it's a reasonable mistake for Mila and Valentina to have made. When Bartleby Sprink announced that Huxley was visiting from Elsewhich, Valentina asked about one of the largest of Elsewhich's Roamer clans, and Quinoa simply assumed she should answer 'yes' to this question.]*

KAZMIRA tells the party that she was in the tavern yesterday morning when Quinoa and her boyfriend Huxley arrived in town. Bartleby Sprink was going on about them coming all the way from Elsewhich, which Kazmira doesn't think is a very big deal at all. She herself walks back and forth to Elsewhich sometimes just to get a glass of wine! It was evident Quinoa was a Roamer right away, what with her tattoos **PROP** and her nice clothes, and when Valentina heard about Elsewhich, she'd asked if Quinoa was from Stonefall Clan. It turns out Quinoa is, and it's been really nice to have her staying with them at the Wayfarer encampment. Kazmira tells the party that she's less keen on this Huxley fellow. He's some important Baron's son but he looks lost. At one point Kazmira tried to make conversation with him and he said "I am from Center City!" Kazmira doesn't like to call anyone out, but that's obviously a fake place name. Kazmira tells the party that she knows an obvious lie when she hears one. *[Quinoa isn't actually a Roamer, but she does have a full sleeve of tattoos and bright clothing, so it's a reasonable mistake for the other Roamers to have made. When Bartleby Sprink announced that Huxley was visiting from Elsewhich, Valentina asked about one of the largest of Elsewhich's Roamer clans, and Quinoa simply assumed she should answer 'yes' to this question. Kazmira is the only person, though, to have heard Huxley's assertion that he's from Center City. He and Quinoa are indeed lost, having wandered away from their own Adventure Weekend, where they are, indeed, from Center City. This is unlikely to mean anything to the party now, but if they remember it later, hopefully it'll help the pieces fall into place. Of course, this may well just sound like another of Kazmira's untruths; that's fine.]*

Any time on Saturday, **LENORA GRAVES** tells the party that she's afraid she's caused all sorts of problems, but that she honestly didn't know what else to do. She just knew something bad was about to happen after she got an egg with a double yolk this morning! Lenora says she was delighted when she heard someone say that Lord Percy Huxley was in town, because she met him perhaps six or seven years ago and thought it would be pleasant to see him again. However... certainly some years have passed since their last meeting, and no one is spared the inexorable march of time. But... at least at that time, Lord Percy was 6'3" or 6'4". This man who's come to town, Lenora doesn't believe he's actually Percy Huxley. Lenora tells the party that it gives her palpitations to think of getting anyone in trouble, but that she was concerned enough to mention this matter to Justice Orion Wilde. If there is wrongdoing happening, Lenora is confident he will handle it. *[This provides the basis for the accusation against Huxley and Quinoa.]*

KOVI WOUNDTENDER tells the party that she was approached by that nice couple Huxley and Quinoa. Apparently the pair was in need of some herbs: turmeric and ginkgo biloba. Woundtender tells the party that she did in fact have the very herbs the pair were looking for, and that she was happy to share them. She tells the party that Quinoa told her they'd mix the herbs with bacteria to make something called kombucha, which they will then drink. That sounds rather awful to Woundtender, but she doesn't like to judge. *[Woundtender of course doesn't know or say anything about this, but the odd items H&Q are collecting - including these kombucha ingredients - are the items on their Party Path. Although the party probably won't realize this now, hopefully it will provide an amusing tidbit when they ultimately learn H&Q's secret.]*

EVELYN tells the party that that fellow Huxley came looking for her a little while earlier. Apparently Huxley was looking for a kind of enchanted band to wear on his wrist, something to count every single step he took. Surprisingly enough, Evelyn had something just like that. It was a magical bracelet she'd forged for Crabtree, to encourage Crabtree to get in shape. Evelyn tells the party that Crabtree responded poorly to this gift, so Evelyn was happy to give it to Huxley. *[Evelyn of course doesn't know or say anything about this, but the odd items H&Q are collecting - including this fitbit - are the items on their Party Path. Although the party probably won't realize this now, hopefully it will provide an amusing tidbit when they ultimately learn H&Q's secret.]*

KULINOS tells the party that he was approached by those visitors from Elsewhich, Huxley and Quinoa. They had a recipe they were hoping he could make for them. Normally Kulinos is a great fan of new recipes, but this one sounded very unpleasant, given that it called for glue, glitter, dye and salt. He tells the party he informed the pair that such a mixture would be unpleasantly slimy and was more than a little surprised when they claimed that slime was exactly what they were hoping for! Kulinos tells the party that he made the recipe as directed, but that he's now in no hurry to dine in Elsewhich. *[Kulinos of course doesn't know or say anything about this, but the odd items H&Q are collecting - including this Slime - are the items on their Party Path. Although the party probably won't realize this now, hopefully it will provide an amusing tidbit when they ultimately learn H&Q's secret.]*

TEKNOS tells the party that he was approached by that young woman, Quinoa. Quinoa was hoping he could construct a drinking cup for her. Teknos tells the party that he had a drinking cup he wasn't using that he'd offered to her, but seemingly she needed a very specific type of cup: it needed to keep the contents almost absurdly cold, and it needed to be comically large. Teknos tells the party that it took him several hours to construct a cup to these specifications but that he managed to do so. When Quinoa came to collect the cup, she asked him to write the name Stanley on the side of it. Teknos admits that he is confused by this, since Stanley is not the young woman's name. Is Stanley the name of the cup? Teknos is left with questions. *[Teknos of course doesn't know or say anything about*

this, but the odd items H&Q are collecting - including this Stanley cup - are the items on their Party Path. Although the party probably won't realize this now, hopefully it will provide an amusing tidbit when they ultimately learn H&Q's secret.]

BAILEY tells the party he has learned a great deal about humans since becoming one, but that sometimes they still confuse him. He explains that he was approached by those nice people, Huxley and Quinoa. They had some money with them, except that it didn't look exactly like real money. Which was probably good, because they wanted him to... bite down on the coins? Bailey tells the party that he likes helping people and that this seemed important to Huxley and Quinoa, but that it was a little strange, honestly. *[Bailey of course doesn't know or say anything about this, but the odd items H&Q are collecting - including this Bitcoin - are the items on their Party Path. Although the party probably won't realize this now, hopefully it will provide an amusing tidbit when they ultimately learn H&Q's secret. Bailey doesn't need to spell out the bitcoin joke to the party; they'll either get it or they won't, and either is fine.]*

DIESEL tells the party he was approached by that visiting couple, Huxley and Quinoa. They told him they needed to learn some sort of crazy dance. Diesel tells the party he can't remember what it was called. A dingdong dance? Something. Diesel says he has no idea what that might be, but in certain post-apocalyptic circles, he's known as a real smooth dancer. He tells the party he'd taught them his favorite dance move, which he absolutely insists on showing the party as well. ****PROP**** *[Diesel of course doesn't know or say anything about this, but the odd items H&Q are collecting - including this TikTok dance - are the items on their Party Path. Although the party probably won't realize this now, hopefully it will provide an amusing tidbit when they ultimately learn H&Q's secret. And even if it doesn't, every single person reading this is now excited to see Diesel's TikTok dance. Extra bonus points if he teaches it to the other doomsday cultists.]*

PHINEAS SMIRCH tells the party that that girl Quinoa, Lord Huxley's girlfriend, came looking for him a little while earlier. Apparently Quinoa was looking for something she called yo-gah pants. Phineas says that Smirch & Smirch doesn't normally stock any merchandise that sounds Tirothi, which yo-gah certainly does, but that in this case, the shop did actually carry the pants. Phineas points out that the pants were very luxurious and finely-woven, and thus obviously extremely costly. And yet, just thinking about how Baron Albert Huxley is such a powerful man, he was only too happy to give the yo-gah pants to an enterprising young person like Quinoa free of charge. *[Although Phineas doesn't say this completely explicitly, his interest here is exclusively in sucking up to Baron Huxley; he would be have zero interest in giving away anything to an enterprising young person who wasn't well-connected. Phineas of course doesn't know or say anything about this, but the odd items H&Q are collecting - including these yoga pants - are the items on their Party Path. Although the party probably won't realize this now, hopefully it will provide an amusing tidbit when they ultimately learn H&Q's secret.]*

CARMINA BORDEAUX tells the party that that lovely young woman Quinoa, Lord Huxley's friend, came to speak to her a little while earlier. Apparently Quinoa was looking for a very certain style of boots and had been told Lady Bordeaux had some. Carmina tells the party that she was in fact wearing the boots at that exact moment. Carmina points out that the boots are her absolute favorites and very fashionable, but that she has always heard what a delightful and influential man Baron Albert Huxley is, she was only too happy to give the boots to this young woman who is practically Baron Albert's daughter-in-law. No sooner had Carmina given Quinoa the boots than - amusingly! - Quinoa took one look at the boots and said "Ugh!" Carmina tells the party that she finds this young woman to be very droll! *[Although Carmina doesn't say this completely explicitly, her interest here is exclusively in sucking up to Baron Huxley; she would be have zero interest in giving away anything to a lovely young woman who wasn't well-connected. Carmina of course doesn't know or say anything about this, but the odd items H&Q are collecting - including these UGG boots - are the items on their Party Path. Although the party probably won't realize this now, hopefully it will provide an amusing tidbit when they ultimately learn H&Q's secret. Carmina doesn't need to spell out the UGG joke to the party; they'll either get it or they won't, and either is fine.]*

VERNON GILL tells the party that he was approached by that young gentleman, Huxley. Huxley came to him asking about some sort of small spinning device. Vernon tells the party that he actually had an odd little gadget that appeared to be exactly what they were looking for. The gadget was expensive and extremely hard to come by and is probably irreplaceable, but Vernon was only too happy to give it to the gentleman. The funny thing was that as soon as he handed the device to Huxley, he started fidgeting with it... which is also what Vernon always does with it! Great minds really do think alike! Vernon tells the party that he must have a great deal in common with the younger Huxley. Who knows, perhaps one day Vernon will be invited to the home of Baron Albert Huxley, a real mover and shaker! And, of course, it's a good feeling to help out a young man like that! *[Although Vernon doesn't say this completely explicitly, his interest here is exclusively in sucking up to Baron Huxley; he would be have zero interest in giving away anything to a young gentleman who wasn't well-connected. Vernon of course doesn't know or say anything about this, but the odd items H&Q are collecting - including this fidget spinner - are the items on their Party Path. Although the party probably won't realize this now, hopefully it will provide an amusing tidbit when they ultimately learn H&Q's secret.]*

If he's able to find the party again later on Saturday, PHINEAS SMIRCH tells the party that he recently heard that apparently the people passing themselves off as "Huxley" and "Quinoa" are actually thieves who steal the identities of reputable citizens! This is outrageous! He graciously provided them with assistance, only now to learn that they have misrepresented themselves to him. Scandalous! *[This confirms the accusations against H&Q.]*

If she's able to find the party again later on Saturday, CARMINA BORDEAUX tells the party that she recently heard that apparently the people passing themselves off as "Huxley" and "Quinoa" are actually thieves who steal the identities of reputable citizens! This is

outrageous! She graciously provided them with assistance, only now to learn that they have misrepresented themselves to her. Egregious! [This confirms the accusations against H&Q.]

If he's able to find the party again later on Saturday, **VERNON GILL** tells the party that he recently heard that apparently the people passing themselves off as "Huxley" and "Quinoa" are actually thieves who steal the identities of reputable citizens! This is outrageous! He graciously provided them with assistance, only now to learn that they have misrepresented themselves to him. Disappointing! [This confirms the accusations against H&Q.]

If and only if the party questions one or both of them, **HUXLEY** and/or **QUINOA** tells the party that "this whole thing is turning out to be way more elaborate than expected!" They don't comment further on that. If the party asks "Are you really Lord Huxley?" Huxley answers "Yes, I'm Huxley." If they say "Are you really Lord Percy Huxley, son of Baron Alfred Huxley?", Huxley says "I guess this is all part of it..." to Quinoa (or to himself, if she's not there) and then says "Yeah, sure. That's who I am." If and only if the party uses truth magic, Huxley says "For this weekend, I'm Huxley." The answers to any other questions will depend on the spell and the question, but Huxley and Quinoa should try to avoid being totally misleading while also avoiding giving away the whole thing if possible.

If and only if the party specifically asks 'Are you participants?', **HUXLEY** and/or **QUINOA** will look flustered and give some variant on "Dude, I don't think you're supposed to be asking that! I'm trying to stay in the story!"

Saturday after 10pm, **BRIMSTONE** tells the party that this is kind of upsetting. Huxley and Quinoa were supposed to be working – it's great that all these amazing visitors are in town, but the tavern is swamped – and neither of them have shown up for their shift. He hates to complain, but that's not very responsible of them. Where could they be? They seem to have disappeared. [Not that the party is likely to ever learn this, but in fact, Huxley and Quinoa aren't working because they're out hunting for their riddle item. This sure does make them look guilty, though.]

Saturday after 10pm, **BARTLEBY SPRINK** tells the party that he just now received a letter from Lord Percy Huxley. It said, among other things, "I shall be arriving in your hamlet around sundown on Sunday evening. I look forward to experiencing your generous hospitality." This is abdominal! This can only mean that that villain who claimed to be Huxley is a total fraud! Bartleby tells the party that he is streaming mad about the whole thing. He has been incredibly helpful to that scoundrel, giving him money and gifts! He hopes that fiend and his trumpet of a girlfriend get locked up for a good long time! [This further confirms that Huxley isn't Lord Percy Huxley.]

Neither **HUXLEY** or **QUINOA** are out Saturday after 10pm.

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

[NOTE: This is a vision unlike any other, because this vision will be completed at the camp, and it describes the party.]

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens just a bit, to the dusky confines of a small room. A cabin, the walls rough-hewn wood. All around, they come awake in stages, these Wild Riders from a land of honey and grain. On one bed, a *NOUN* with *COLOR* hair. A *NOUN* with *NOUN* like *NOUN*. [Describe the Sythwan 2024 partymembers.] They are weary still but they waken, knowing there is much still to be done. At home, their people grow sick and weak, waiting for the golden notes which will make them hale and whole once more.

And around one bed, the loving touch of *SEASON* hangs warm and close. *PRONOUN* is waking, the sacred dreamdark still swirling about *PRONOUN* brow. *ONE SENTENCE PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF KEEPER PLUS MAYBE REFERENCE TO SATURDAY'S EVENTS* *PRONOUN* is the dreamer and the dream.

The light is growing. The day will soon begin. But first there is this. It hangs shimmering on a wall, silver-perfect. A window, a looking-glass, a soul vision. They gather before it, these strangers who are now kin. They look curious into its cool glittering depths.

And then faces on the other side! A woman with hair like dark gold and man with a beard like pale silver. Their garish-bright clothing is... strange for not being strange? They peer back, through the glass. It is... a refraction? A reflection? None can say. But in a way that is hard but also easy to understand, you are they and they are you.

The dream begins to swirl up again, compelling and mysterious and sure. You have been called to this place. Adventure tugs your heart to action. You are needed here. And through the pane and through the pain, it is the same for them. Their hearts too were called. It is the same for them. And then the darkness grows and thickens and you can see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows the party from Sythwan looking through a mirror at Huxley and Quinoa and suggests that they are all adventurers of a certain kind.

On Sunday around 10:15am, the party will complete their party path ending in the graveyard. (Because this encounter will take a little while to resolve, the **GHOST OF JON GOLDEN** and friends should leave the graveyard before the participants do, via Great Swamp Way. Otherwise they'll get stuck in the graveyard for a while!) After the party path ends, as the party heads back along Great Swamp Way, they encounter an oddly-dressed group of people arguing amongst themselves, looking at a map **PROP** and clearly quite lost. The party doesn't know it yet, but these are Huxley & Quinoa's partymates. There's **THE BROKER** (wearing a suit and carrying

a briefcase), **THE TRAINER** (in yoga pants, and wearing a whistle), **THE GAMER** (with a hilarious t-shirt, cheap cape and pocket full of D20s) and **THE RANGER** (in National Park Service uniform... because some things change, but a party always needs a ranger.) Standing right near them is someone in a t-shirt, jeans and sneakers: she's **THE COMPANION**. And she is worried sick.

When they spot the party, there is a hurried conversation between them. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

The comments someone in this group can say, in order, are:

- 1) "Um, hello? We're sorry to bother you, but... have you seen two people who've lost their group?"
- 2) [Regardless of response to the above, because they're very unlikely to get anything from that] "It's been two days since we've seen them, and we can't find them anywhere. Could they have come here?"
- 3) "Wherever they are, I hope she's watching out for him. He seemed pretty clueless."
- 4) "Um, not to criticize, but... how come you guys [the party] aren't wearing costumes?"
- 5) [From the Gamer:] You guys, let's keep going! I haven't gotten to use my Pedantic Argument ability yet!"
- 6) [From the Broker:] "Ooh, maybe we have to bribe them! [Speaking overly loudly to the party:] If you help us, we'll give you 5... what are they called again?... 'doll – ars'." [Pulls out handful of dollar bills] **PROP**"

If the party is still clueless – or if they've grasped that these are some sort of weird participants but not that they have anything to do with Huxley and Quinoa, **SILLA** approaches this group's Companion. Silla says "Um, do I know you? Because... you seem kinda familiar." The Companion says "I don't think so, but you seem familiar, too. I don't know; I'm just so worried. Our Server and our Tender are missing, and I am going to be in so much trouble."

If that still doesn't spark any insight in the party, then this group can start describing Huxley and Quinoa physically. Note that they don't use the names "Huxley" or "Quinoa." Also note that if the party says "Wait, you're talking about Huxley and Quinoa!" this doesn't mean anything to this group, although they can say "I don't know who that is... unless those are their made-up names."

Hopefully some combination of this will enlighten the party, but if they possibly can, it would be great if the party understood what was going on before they all wander back to the tavern! Once the party has caught on, the Broker/Trainer/Gamer/Ranger can confirm that yes, they're participants at an Anotherworld Adventure Weekend. The party from Center City will stay with this party through the trial but should of course let the (real) party do all the talking.

Neither **HUXLEY** or **QUINOA** are out Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, **POPPY GOLDEN** approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Huxley and Quinoa. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Poppy encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Huxley and Quinoa weren't trying to steal anyone's identity.
- They're not crooks; they're participants at an Anotherworld Adventure Weekend.
- The rest of their partymates have finally found them, and their poor Companion has been worried sick.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Poppy can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Poppy can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

Solomon Stillwater, charged with Piracy

The Prosecutor's Indictment

Pursuant to Article 623 of the Lyrian Code of Law, Solomon Stillwater is hereby charged with piracy: From the period beginning on or around January the 1st, in the year 969 of the common calendar and continuing through till the present day, the commission of multiple acts of piracy under the name Jack Brigham also known as Scurvy Jack also known as the Pirate King, resulting in incalculable loss of life and property.

Common Knowledge:

Everyone has heard of Scurvy Jack Brigham, captain of the pirate galleon *Misery*. In a landlocked duchy like Moreth, he is nearly a folk hero, more legend than man, but in the coastal towns of Uri-Kesh and Keer, the stories of him are more fearful. Perhaps age is slowing Jack Brigham down - or perhaps he's even dead? - because it's been a couple years since there's been much report of the man they call the Pirate King. Still, the legends persist. Some folk have clamored for stories from the only two people in town with any seafaring experience: Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater. A former ship's captain, Solomon gave up the sea when he married Bonnie two years ago, at which time the couple came to World's Edge. The Stillwaters are well-liked, which is perhaps unsurprising given they bought the tavern from Scarlet Billows, the thoroughly-unpleasant woman who ran it previously. Oddly, there's been strange talk just the past couple weeks, with some people wondering if it's possible Solomon Stillwater could in fact be Jack Brigham. Most people consider this an absurd idea, although there is some evidence that suggests this could possibly... actually be true?

Charge Assignment:

Saturday just after lunch, JONI PEACOCK approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Solomon Stillwater. Joni tells the party that she and the other Peacocks haven't been in town for very long, but it's already apparent to her that Solomon is a good person. The Peacock Family Singers travel a lot, which means they're often strangers in a new town. Joni tells the party that not everyone is friendly to strangers, but Solomon is, and was right from the moment the group first arrived. Solomon is one of those people who can be in charge when he needs to be, Joni says, but you only need to look at his face to see that he's very kind. It was shocking to her to hear people accusing him of piracy. She tells the party that she's a little worried because Solomon himself doesn't seem to be taking this accusation at all seriously. Joni says that she wants to believe that Justice Wilde will find out the truth no matter what, but... what if he doesn't? He's just a person, and sometimes people make mistakes. The idea of Solomon going to prison for something he didn't do is terrible to her, and she'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against Solomon.

What Solomon Says:

Don't be ridiculous. Do I look like a pirate?! (Bonnie: "Honey, shhh.")

The SECRET Truth:

Solomon isn't Jack Brigham (or any other pirate) but amoral entrepreneur Cal Coleman is working hard to make it look like Solomon is. Unbeknownst to people in town, there's a huge cache of pirate gold buried under the tavern floor. The gold was hidden there by Jack Brigham himself while he and Scarlet were lovers, but unfortunately for Scarlet, she only learned about the gold after selling the tavern. Now Scarlet and her current boyfriend Cal are trying to buy the tavern back. Since buying the tavern will be easier and cheaper if Solomon is locked up, Cal is using lies and subterfuge to make it appear that Solomon is Jack.

Clue-Type Information, to be given only to the party from P'LOA (turquoise):

On Friday night, JONI PEACOCK should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Joni needs to convey, but she'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Joni doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, she'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if she's had a brief but positive interaction with the party! *[This establishes a relationship so the charge assignment doesn't seem random.]*

The party's traveler has lore about Jack Brigham - trigger: a mention of "Jack Brigham" or "Scurvy Jack" - which appears on page 211.

On Saturday at breakfast, GENEVA SPRINK tells the party that she just received terrible news. (This should feel like she's exclaiming about this in the party's general vicinity but ideally shouldn't do a lot to distract lots of other parties. Geneva should try to do this interaction before the party goes with Vernon Gill for their 1st Saturday encounter.) There has been a pirate attack in Keer and one of the Sprinks' homes has been completely destroyed! Once Geneva has recovered from her swoon, she reads the letter:

Monday, September 30, 994

Madame:

I write with terrible news. There has been a pirate attack, and your beautiful home here in Concordia has been completely destroyed. I alone managed to escape; the other servants have perished. All of your exquisite furnishings were stolen and then the house, the stables, even the gardens were put to the torch. This foul deed is the work of none other than Jack Brigham. His ship docked in Safe Harbor and his vile crew swarmed all through Concordia and Vigilton. Before I fled, I saw Jack himself grab up handfuls from your jewelry box. Those items he deemed not valuable enough, he crushed beneath his boots. This was the last I saw before I ran for my life. Now the marauders are gone and the valley is quiet. My heart breaks to see all that has been lost.

Yours faithfully,

<unreadable signature>

Geneva is inconsolable. This house was her 4th favorite! Several of her nicest summer-weight gowns were there! Also, how dare that dreadful man decide any of her jewelry isn't valuable enough! She tells the party that wants this Jack Brigham prosecuted and arrested and sentenced to death and whatever else the court can manage! Geneva then sweeps out, taking the letter with her. [This attack would be a terrible thing... if it had actually happened, which it didn't. Cal sent the letter to Geneva knowing she'd be outraged and knowing that after two years of inactivity from Jack Brigham, an attack at the time that Solomon is in Keer would be suspicious. Of course, it won't take terribly long for people to learn there wasn't actually an attack, but by that time, Cal hopes that he will own the tavern and the treasure hidden beneath it will be his. If the party happens to look at the Lyrian map, they might note that Concordia and Vigilton are nowhere near each other, a mistake Cal made that a Keerian almost certainly wouldn't. But Geneva doesn't notice this or say anything about it.]

Any time after Saturday breakfast, SHAUN PEACOCK tells the party that he feels so sorry for the poor Sprink family. He heard that their home in Keer - which is apparently only one of the homes they have, but still - was just recently burned by the pirate Jack Brigham. Shaun tells the party that this must mean the pirate attack occurred while Solomon Stillwater was also in Keer. Shaun tells the party that of course Keer is a very large place, but still, it's lucky neither Solomon nor his family were harmed in the attack! [The Sprinks' home in Keer is fine, because there wasn't actually a pirate attack recently, although Cal Coleman is trying to make it look like there was. But the fact that the alleged attack coincided with Solomon's time in Keer is exactly what Cal wants people to notice, although of course Shaun doesn't know or say this.]

Any time after Saturday breakfast, DIESEL tells the party that he heard the Sprinks' home in Keer - which is apparently only one of the homes they have, but still - was just recently burned by the pirate Jack Brigham. Diesel tells the party that he's not one to go starting rumors, but he can't help but notice that this pirate attack occurred while Solomon Stillwater was in Keer. Diesel tells the party that when some people started saying that Solomon was actually Jack Brigham, he told them they were crazy. Diesel reminds the party that crazy does not necessarily equal wrong. It's kind of a big coincidence, isn't it, that Jack Brigham is spotted in Keer at the time when Solomon is there? [This might be a big coincidence, if Jack Brigham had actually burned the Sprinks' home in Keer, but he didn't. The Sprinks' home is fine, because there wasn't actually a pirate attack recently, although Cal Coleman is trying to make it look like there was. But the fact that the alleged attack coincided with Solomon's time in Keer is exactly what Cal wants people to notice, although of course Diesel doesn't know or say this.]

Sometime before Saturday at 4pm, NED CROCHETT is on the party's path as their penultimate step. He promises to loan them the cedarwood box they need, but not until Sunday. He can't give it to them permanently, because it's the right size to hold paperwork behind the bar, but he's happy to let them use it for a while. Ned assures the party that the box isn't worth anything. It's just one of the many worthless pieces of junk Scarlet left behind when she sold the bar. She always used to say it was a present from her boyfriend. Ugh, Ned says. Scarlet always wanted to talk about her boyfriend. It was apparently some rich guy she was very secretive about but also she wanted everyone to ask her questions which she'd then refuse to answer. Ned tells the party how glad he is that Scarlet is gone. The fact that the box was a present from her mystery boyfriend but then she left it behind when she sold the bar? That tells you everything you need to know about how sentimental Scarlet was. Scarlet was always leaving others to clean up her messes, Ned says. [It will be relevant on Sunday that the box used to belong to Scarlet, and prior to that to her then-boyfriend, Jack Brigham, although Ned doesn't know or say this.]

Sometime before Saturday at 4pm, VALENTINA tells the party that before Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater came to World's Edge, the tavern was owned by a woman named Scarlet. Scarlet owned the bar for at least 4 years, Valentina thinks. Scarlet was a lot, Valentina says. Super hot, but also batshit crazy. One minute things would be fine and then the next, Scarlet would be losing her shit over nothing. Valentina tells the party that Scarlet was originally from Keer, from Windsor-by-the-Bay, she thinks. When Scarlet decided she wanted to sell the bar, she'd put out word in Keer and that was how Solomon heard of World's Edge in the first place. Valentina isn't entirely sure why Scarlet decided to leave. At the time, Scarlet said she wasn't happy in World's Edge anymore, which was only surprising because it was hard to imagine Scarlet being happy anywhere. Valentina tells the party that Scarlet used to yell at whoever was nearby when she got angry... and she was usually angry. Apparently, Scarlet had a change of heart after selling the tavern and

she'd written repeatedly asking to buy it back. Valentina tells the party that she'd been kinda worried when she heard that, because she works as a server in the tavern, and she did *not* want to go back to working for Scarlet. But then Bonnie told Valentina that she and Solomon had turned down all of Scarlet's offers, even though it sounded like Scarlet was offering a whole bunch of money for the tavern. Valentina tells the party that she was really glad to hear that. Scarlet was a piece of work. Hot as she was, it didn't make up for her personality. And Valentina does not say that lightly. *[This explains Scarlet's personality and reinforces the backstory of her selling the tavern. The fact that she wanted to buy it back will be relevant on Sunday.]*

Sometime before Saturday at 4pm, SYLVIE VALERIUS tells the party that before Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater came to World's Edge, the tavern was owned by a woman named Scarlet Billows. Scarlet owned the bar for 5 years, and when she wanted to sell it, she spread the word back in Keer, where she was originally from. Sylvie explains that that's how Solomon Stillwater heard about World's Edge in the first place. Sylvie tells the party that Solomon and Bonnie are a large improvement over Scarlet, who was a very volatile person. Perhaps it is unkind of Sylvie to say, but even on Scarlet's best days, she was not a terribly friendly person, and she was prone to outbursts of temper. Maybe this was because Scarlet missed her boyfriend. As Sylvie recalls, Scarlet spoke often about her boyfriend, a man she referred to as very rich and powerful. Scarlet refused to divulge his identity but seemed to want people to ask questions about him. Sylvie is embarrassed to confess that she sometimes wondered if this mysterious boyfriend actually existed at all, since no one ever met him, but that is probably unfair to say. Maybe Scarlet left World's Edge and settled down with this mystery man! Still, Sylvie acknowledges, there must have been things Scarlet enjoyed about running the tavern, because apparently she had a change of heart after selling the tavern and had written repeatedly asking to buy it back. Bonnie and Solomon turned down all of Scarlet's offers, and although Sylvie feels sorry for Scarlet, she confesses that she would prefer that Scarlet stay in Keer rather than returning to World's Edge. *[This explains Scarlet's personality and reinforces the backstory of her selling the tavern. The fact that she wanted to buy it back will be relevant on Sunday.]*

Sometime before Saturday at 4pm, KULINOS tells the party that everyone wants to believe unpleasant people can't make good food. It's a nice idea, he says, but it's not true. Case in point: back before Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater came to town, the tavern was owned by a woman named Scarlet. Kulinos tells the party that the food was quite good despite Scarlet herself being a thoroughly unpleasant person. Scarlet could be appealing when she wanted to be, he clarifies, but she often didn't want to be. He doesn't think anyone in town was sad when Scarlet sold the bar and went back to Keer. That's where she was from originally - Windsor-by-the-Bay, a little fishing village on the coast of Keer. Kulinos tells the party that Scarlet had spread the word in Keer when she wanted to sell the tavern, which is how Solomon heard about it. Soon after Scarlet sold the tavern, she regretted her decision, which is par for the course with someone as volatile as Scarlet. Kulinos heard that she'd written multiple angry letters - the only kind Scarlet knows how to write, he suspects - telling Solomon and Bonnie that they needed to sell her the Inn back and offering them large sums to do so. Thankfully, the Stillwaters are happy in World's Edge and have refused Scarlet's offers. Kulinos is glad of it. Good food is only part of a good meal, he says. Good company matters as well, and it's hard to enjoy that when the woman behind the bar is screaming at someone. *[This explains Scarlet's personality and reinforces the backstory of her selling the tavern. The fact that she wanted to buy it back will be relevant on Sunday.]*

SOLOMON STILLWATER tells the party that almost two weeks ago, he got a surprising letter in the mail. It was sent from Windsor-by-the-Bay, in Keer, from a man who said he owned the shop next to Solomon's father's house. The man said he was very sorry to be writing with bad news, but that Solomon's father was dying. The letter stressed how much Solomon's father wanted to see him one last time. Solomon tells the party that the letter came as a real surprise, mostly because he and his father don't get along well and hadn't spoken in several years. Solomon tells the party that he hadn't known what he should do, but that Bonnie ultimately convinced him to make the trip, telling him that he'd regret it if he didn't go. Solomon says that he felt bad leaving all the work of the tavern to Bonnie and their staff. That artist Jpeg was in the Inn that night, and Solomon got him to sketch a quick picture of Solomon to pin to the bar **PROP** (although this isn't critical if it's a pain) so everyone would see it and remember to behave themselves while he was away. Anyway, Solomon says, he made the long trip over land and sea to Keer and then back again to World's Edge. The good news is that his father is in fact not dying at all. The bad news is that his father is still a very difficult man who was not terribly pleased to see Solomon. And the very strange news is that no one Solomon talked to admitted to writing the letter. So it was a very long trip with not much purpose to it, except that it made Solomon appreciate being back in World's Edge when it was over. *[Solomon doesn't know it, but the letter was written by Cal Coleman. It served two purposes: getting Solomon out of the way for a while, it being easier to start rumors about someone who's not present, and also getting Solomon to Keer so that an alleged pirate attack at that time could be blamed on him. The party won't know any of this yet, but it will matter later.]*

CHARLIE PEACOCK tells the party that although the Peacock Family Singers haven't been in town long, Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater have made them feel like part of the community. Charlie says that Solomon was away recently and only returned on Friday. Solomon got a letter from his native Keer because his elderly father was dying and so he made the trip back there to say goodbye. Solomon even pinned a drawing of himself to the bar so that all the patrons would behave themselves while he was away. Charlie tells the party that he was in the tavern when Solomon got back, and the story Solomon told was a strange one. From the sound of it, when Solomon got to Keer, it turned out his father was actually fine and no one knew who'd sent the letter or why. As far as Charlie heard, Solomon has no idea what the whole thing was about. *[Charlie doesn't know it, but the letter was written by Cal Coleman. It served two purposes: getting Solomon out of the way for a while, it being easier to start rumors about someone who's not present, and also getting Solomon to Keer so that an alleged pirate attack at that time could be blamed on him. The party won't know any of this yet, but it will matter later.]*

AL BISHOP tells the party that even after his daughter's wedding is over, he might stay in town a while. He likes the people here in World's Edge, and Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater really rolled out the red carpet for him, just like they do for everybody. They're good people, the Stillwaters. Al tells the party that Solomon was away recently and only returned on Friday. Solomon got a letter from someone in Windsor-by-the-Bay, in Keer, where he's originally from, explaining that his elderly father was dying. Before Solomon made the trip back to say goodbye, he'd pinned a drawing of himself to the bar so everybody'd behave themselves while he was away. Al tells the party that Solomon only just got back, but from what Al's heard, when Solomon got to Keer, it turned out his dad was actually fine. No one knew who'd sent the letter or why. Crazy! *[Al doesn't know it, but the letter was written by Cal Coleman. It served two purposes: getting Solomon out of the way for a while, it being easier to start rumors about someone who's not present, and also getting Solomon to Keer so that an alleged pirate attack at that time could be blamed on him. The party won't know any of this yet, but it will matter later.]*

JPEG tells the party that Solomon Stillwater had to make a trip back home to Keer, where he's originally from. The evening Solomon found out about the trip, Jpeg was in the tavern. Solomon was feeling bad about leaving all the work of running everything to Bonnie, and he'd joked that he needed to hang a picture of himself in the bar so all the customers behaved while he was gone. Jpeg tells the party that they all thought that was pretty funny, so he'd drawn a quick sketch of Solomon looking appropriately fierce. Seemingly he'd made Solomon look much too menacing, because on two separate days when Solomon was away, strangers came in to the tavern and both times, when they saw the picture of Solomon, they'd thought it was a picture of Jack Brigham, that famous pirate. Jpeg thinks this is probably just because he made the eyes look too angry, but of course some people in town read too much into the strangers' comments and started whispering about how maybe Solomon actually was Jack Brigham. People like to have something to whisper about, Jpeg says. *[This reminds the party about the men who identified Solomon as Jack. These men were paid by Cal Coleman to do so, but of course Jpeg doesn't know or say this.]*

KATHERINE CARMICHAEL tells the party that Solomon Stillwater recently made a trip back to Keer, where he's originally from. Before Solomon left, he'd hung a picture of himself on the bar so that everyone behaved while he was away. Katherine can't say whether or not that was effective - a lot's happened in town in the past couple weeks! - but that the picture sparked its own bit of drama. She tells the party that about a week ago, she was in the tavern one night when a man she didn't recognize came in. He took a look at the sketch of Solomon and said, "Why have you got a picture of Scurvy Jack Brigham in here?" People explained that it wasn't the famous pirate, that the picture was of Solomon, but the man was insistent that no, it was Jack Brigham. Katherine tells the party that she'd ignored the man. It wasn't the first time she'd seen a drunk man insisting he was right and she's sure it won't be the last. She hadn't thought much more about it, but apparently a few days later, it happened again. That is, it was a different day and a different man - again, someone no one knew - but the man had insisted the picture was of Scurvy Jack. Katherine doesn't think you should read too much into the statements men make in bars, but of course some people have gotten worked up over the incidents, speculating that maybe Solomon actually was Jack Brigham. Solomon is back now, so hopefully that will set this silliness to rest. *[This reminds the party about the men who identified Solomon as Jack. These men were paid by Cal Coleman to do so, but of course Katherine doesn't know or say this.]*

BANE tells the party that Solomon Stillwater recently made a trip back to Keer, where he's originally from. Before Solomon left, he'd hung a picture of himself on the bar so that everyone behaved while he was away. Bane tells the party that, a few days after Solomon left, he was in the tavern when a guy he didn't recognize came in. This guy took a look at the sketch of Solomon and said, "That's Scurvy Jack Brigham! Why've you got his picture hung up?" Bane tells the party that *then*, a couple nights later, a different stranger came in and the exact same thing happened! Bane tells the party that he's not one to start rumors or anything, but the whole thing is a little suspicious. These guys can't prove Solomon is Jack Brigham, but then again, no one in town can really prove he's not, either. Bane clarifies that Solomon is a decent guy and he doesn't want to make trouble for him or anything. But it was kinda weird, those guys being so sure about who the picture was of. Could Solomon actually be the famous pirate? Probably not, right? But maybe? *[This reminds the party about the men who identified Solomon as Jack, and shows how the rumors are starting to work. These men were paid by Cal Coleman to falsely ID Solomon, but of course Bane doesn't know or say this.]*

TANYA PEACOCK tells the party that Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater have been SUPER welcoming to all the Peacock Family Singers. Solomon recently had to be away for a couple weeks, and before he left, he'd hung a picture of himself on the bar so that everyone behaved while he was away. Tanya tells the party that, a few days after Solomon left, she was in the tavern when a guy she didn't recognize came in. This guy took a look at the sketch of Solomon and said, "That's Scurvy Jack Brigham! I'm positive of it!" Tanya tells the party that *then*, a couple nights later, a different stranger came in and the EXACT SAME THING HAPPENED. Tanya tells the party that of course she doesn't want to make light of a serious crime like piracy but also that this is SUPER EXCITING. She's been coming to the tavern just about every day, and all along, it was the COMPLETELY FAMOUS pirate Scurvy Jack bringing her coffee! Of course, officially everyone will keep calling Jack by his alias. Jack - or, rather, quote-unquote *Solomon Stillwater* doesn't have to worry. His secret is 100% SAFE with Tanya! *[This reminds the party about the men who identified Solomon as Jack, and shows how the rumors are starting to work. These men were paid by Cal Coleman to falsely ID Solomon, but of course Tanya doesn't know or say this.]*

PANSY GOLDEN tells the party about a strange thing that happened early this week. It was busy in the tavern, Pansy says, because it was the tail end of lunchtime and Solomon wasn't there because he was still visiting his father in Keer, or maybe was already on his way back to World's Edge. It doesn't really matter which, of course; the point is that they were a little shorthanded. They were just about done bussing the tables when a customer - goodness only knows how - knocked over the big waterjug that sits on the bar. Pansy

ran behind the bar to grab a stack of towels from the drawer and when she did, she cut her hand on something sharp that was under the towels. Pansy tells the party that the something in question turned out to be a piece of jewelry, a large and honestly kind of gaudy one. After they'd gotten the water mopped up and she'd bandaged her hand, she'd gone back to the drawer and gotten the jewelry to bring it to Bonnie. It was really distinctive: a gold pendant with a big opal in the middle, and pink gems set all around it. It wasn't the kind of thing that would fall into a drawer without someone noticing it happening. Pansy says that the customers who were still in the tavern clustered around, and someone said "That looks like the Dawn Star!" and then more people agreed. The Dawn Star is apparently some famous pendant that belonged to Jack Brigham, the pirate. Pansy tells the party that her heart sank when she heard that, because there's been a stupid rumor lately connecting Solomon to Jack Brigham, and this similar-looking piece of jewelry turning up now is basically the last thing anyone needs. Pansy says that Bonnie didn't seem worried by this; she'd put the pendant on. Still, Pansy will be happy when this dumb rumor blows over. *If and ONLY if the party asks,* Pansy tells them that she thinks it was Cal Coleman who knocked over the water jug. She isn't certain, though, and she doesn't know which customer identified the pendant. *[The pendant is indeed the Dawn Star and it did used to belong to Jack Brigham. He gave it to Scarlet when they were lovers and she allowed Cal to bring it to World's Edge for the purpose of framing Solomon. Cal hid it in the drawer and then knocked over the water in hopes that it would help get the pendant found in a timely fashion. Of course, Pansy doesn't know or say this.]*

AESTHETIKA tells the party that she was in the tavern early this week when the Dawn Star was mysteriously found... in a drawer full of dishtowels! She explains that it was lunchtime in the tavern and everything was predictably hectic. Servers were clearing away the lunch dishes and somehow a big jug of water got knocked over. People ran to fetch towels to mop up the spill, and at the bottom of the drawer was the pendant. Aesthetika tells the party that it was so strange, seeing Pansy Golden reach into the drawer and pull out the Dawn Star. She explains that she had seen pictures of it before but never expected to see it in person. It's very recognizable: a gold pendant set with an opal the color of the sky at sunrise, and then pink tourmalines all around it. The stories say legendary Pirate King Jack Brigham took it from the severed neck of a sea gorgon. That sounds like an incredible story, but perhaps no more unbelievable than the idea of the pendant turning up under some dishtowels. The world is an astonishing place, says Aesthetika. *[The pendant is indeed the Dawn Star and it did used to belong to Jack Brigham. He gave it to Scarlet when they were lovers and she allowed Cal to bring it to World's Edge for the purpose of framing Solomon. Cal hid it in the drawer and then knocked over the water in hopes that it would help get the pendant found in a timely fashion. Of course, Aesthetika doesn't know or say this.]*

MICK PEACOCK tells the party that he was there in the tavern early this week when someone found that piece of jewelry belonging to Jack Brigham. He explains that it was the very end of lunch and someone knocked over a big waterjug. When servers ran to get towels to clean up, there in the drawer, hidden down underneath the towels, was the pendant. Mick tells the party that he wouldn't have recognized it except that he dated a woman a while back who was really into pirates. Like, *really* into pirates. And the pirate she was *most* into was Jack Brigham. Mick explains that this means he learned quite a bit about the man they call the Pirate King, which is how he knows that the jewelry they found in the tavern is called the Dawn Star. Mick tells the party that some people in town are now saying that Solomon Stillwater actually is Jack Brigham. Mick has no idea if that's true or not. He tells the party that the idea that Jack Brigham is secretly tending bar in World's Edge and has a priceless pendant hidden in a drawer just waiting to give some woman... well, it makes him feel like maybe he's fallen into dirty fan-fiction his ex wrote. The world is weird, Mick says. *[The pendant is indeed the Dawn Star and it did used to belong to Jack Brigham. He gave it to Scarlet when they were lovers and she allowed Cal to bring it to World's Edge for the purpose of framing Solomon. Cal hid it in the drawer and then knocked over the water in hopes that it would help get the pendant found in a timely fashion. Of course, Mick doesn't know or say this.]*

BONNIE STILLWATER tells the party that it's been a very dramatic couple weeks. First, Mr. Cal Coleman came to town - he's here looking into Inspirations Unlimited, as the party probably already knows, but it seems he's interested in business opportunities of all kinds - and offered to buy the Inn at World's Edge. She tells the party that this is very flattering, but as she and Solomon explained to Mr. Coleman, they are very happy in town and have no intention of selling. Then Solomon got the letter about his father being ill and traveled back to Windsor-by-the-Bay, where he grew up. Bonnie tells the party that while Solomon was away, they found a piece of jewelry wedged into the bottom of a drawer, and she's wearing it right now **PROP**. Some people thought it looked like a famous pendant belonging to Jack Brigham, but Bonnie doesn't see how that could possibly be. It seems more likely that some travelers didn't have enough money to pay for dinner and one of the servers took the jewelry in lieu of payment. Several days ago, Mr. Coleman came to speak with her again, offering her an even larger sum to sell the tavern. Since they weren't interested in selling the tavern two weeks ago, this seemed a bit foolish on Mr. Coleman's part, but clearly he has all sorts of business expertise that Bonnie does not, so probably this is some sort of standard practice. Nevertheless, she would never sell the tavern without Solomon being there even if she wanted to sell, which she does not. That's a lot happening in a small amount of time, Bonnie says, and doesn't even count all these visiting groups of adventurers who've recently arrived. *[This comment reminds the party about finding the pendant - which is, of course, the Dawn Star - and establishes the timeline of Cal coming to town and trying repeatedly to buy the tavern.]*

DANNY DONOVAN tells the party that Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater are the best. When Danny was short on cash, they found a little space in a back room for him to sleep rent-free. That's just the kind of thing they do for people. Danny tells the party that he hopes they stay in town a long time. He knows they've had offers to buy the tavern, most recently from Cal Coleman. Cal only got to town two weeks ago, Danny says, but he made an offer on the tavern almost immediately. That's probably not surprising, because the Stillwaters have really fixed the place up. It didn't used to be this nice, back when Scarlet owned it. Danny tells the party that Scarlet made offers to buy the tavern back, not too long after she'd sold it. And then just a few days ago, when Solomon was away, Cal had made yet another offer. Thankfully, the Stillwaters have turned all these offers down. With any luck, they're in World's Edge to stay.

[This comment establishes the timeline of Cal coming to town and trying repeatedly to buy the tavern, as well as reminding them about Scarlet's similar attempts.]

NINA BLISS tells the party that Cal Coleman seems to be a very proactive entrepreneur. Cal came to town two weeks ago, she says. As she understands it, Cal's primary purpose is looking into the business model of Inspirations Unlimited, but he also made an offer to purchase the Inn at World's Edge. Nina tells the party that she does well enough reconciling needed purchases for Justice Wilde but that it's hard to imagine making so many large and expensive business decisions at once. This doesn't seem to phase Cal Coleman, but no doubt that's why he's cut out for that sort of work and she is not. Seemingly he was undaunted when the Stillwaters rejected his purchase offer because just a few days ago, when Solomon Stillwater was out of town, Cal offered again to buy the tavern. Nina tells the party she wishes she were as fearless and decisive as Cal seems to be. *[This comment establishes the timeline of Cal coming to town and trying repeatedly to buy the tavern.]*

KABLE WORLDWATCHER tells the party that he has heard all sorts of confusing rumors about the man who owns the Inn at World's Edge. Worldwatcher says that he understood that this man's name was Solomon Stillwater, but that some people were claiming the man was actually a notorious pirate named Jack Brigham. Worldwatcher tells the party that he was in the tavern on Friday for lunch, just after the Makai arrived in town and seemingly after Solomon himself returned from a trip. Solomon handed him a bowl of soup and Worldwatcher couldn't help but notice the tattoo ****PROP**** on the tavernkeeper's forearm, a tattoo that clearly says "JB." Solomon noticed that Worldwatcher had seen the tattoo and had found the situation funny. Solomon told him that the JB tattoo was a reference to a former girlfriend, that these were her initials. Then, Worldwatcher tells the party, Solomon had laughed and said "Or maybe I really am Jack Brigham. Honestly, I'm starting to wonder myself." *[Solomon's tattoo is honestly a reference to his former girlfriend JuneBug. It's purely a coincidence, but in light of current rumors, it's a potentially problematic one.]*

TINKER BILL tells the party that he finds it confusing when people refuse to believe information that's been clearly explained to them. For instance, Solomon Stillwater has - and has had since before arriving in World's Edge - a tattoo on his forearm. The tattoo is of the letters "JB." Tinker Bill explains to the party that Solomon told him the initials are a reference to a woman Solomon dated before he met and married Bonnie. Tinker Bill is not aware of the woman's real name, but since it is irrelevant to this story, it doesn't matter. Solomon's nickname for this girlfriend was JuneBug, and these are thus the initials depicted in the tattoo. Tinker Bill tells the party that he isn't certain that "girlfriend" is the accurate term for the relationship between Solomon and JuneBug, since it doesn't appear that they knew each other very long, but it is the only term Tinker Bill can think to use. Regardless, just over the past 9 days, Tinker Bill has been hearing people saying the JB tattoo is actually a reference to Solomon being Jack Brigham, a man who also has the JB initials. Even after Tinker Bill has explained about JuneBug, some people have persisted believing the incorrect story. This is very frustrating to Tinker Bill. *[Solomon's tattoo is honestly a reference to his former girlfriend JuneBug. It's purely a coincidence, but in light of current rumors, it's a potentially problematic one.]*

CARY MONTALVO tells the party that Solomon Stillwater has a tattoo on his forearm of the initials JB, a tribute to his then-girlfriend JuneBug. This conversation came up one night when Solomon was teasingly trying to convince his wife that the tattoo stood for "Just Bonnie." Bonnie wisely pointed out that the tattoo had no doubt been acquired in some Keerian dive bar and that Solomon was lucky his arm wasn't gangrenous. Cary tells the party Solomon agreed with that and no one gave the tattoo another thought until people with too much time on their hands decided Solomon was secretly a pirate king... and not just any pirate king, but the one whose initials are JB. Let the record show, Cary says, that this is just one reason why tattoos are a bad idea. *[Solomon's tattoo is honestly a reference to his former girlfriend JuneBug. It's purely a coincidence, but in light of current rumors, it's a potentially problematic one.]*

*If the party asks prior to Saturday at 4pm, **BONNIE STILLWATER** is somewhat concerned about the rumors surrounding Solomon being Jack Brigham, not because she even remotely believes these rumors but purely because she doesn't like anything negative being said about her husband. **SOLOMON STILLWATER** finds the whole thing ridiculous and a little amusing. They can answer any questions the party has. *If the party asks after Saturday at 4pm, either of the Stillwaters can show somewhat more concern.* *[Although both Solomon and Bonnie are level-headed people, we want them to be concerned enough that it feels satisfying to save Solomon during the trial. Feel free to check in with the EMs to see how seriously the party is taking this charge and we can decide how must to play this up or down.]**

FENWICK MICHAELS tells the party that officially speaking, he has no opinion or vested interest in any of the charges Justice Wilde is investigating here in World's Edge, but just between them, he is really hoping that Solomon Stillwater is actually Jack Brigham, the Pirate King! Of course, Fenwick says, piracy is a terrible crime and must be prosecuted to the fullest extent allowable by law, but also the man is a celebrity! Fenwick has never met a celebrity before! He tells the party that he'd honestly assumed that Jack Brigham had died, because there hadn't been any mention of him - no attacks, nothing! - for two years now. But now, Fenwick says, it all makes sense! If Jack Brigham has been laying low, incognito in a little inland town, just biding his time! Allegedly, of course. *[This reminds the party of Jack's general timeline and the way it dovetails Solomon's. This is a coincidence, but neither Fenwick nor the party know that.]*

DIMITRI tells the party that Solomon Stillwater is a good man but not someone whose bad side he recommends getting on. It's easy sometimes to see Solomon welcoming people and start thinking of him just as that person - accommodating and friendly - but if ever a fight breaks out in the tavern or even if there's a customer being rude with one of the servers, there is a different side of Solomon. At

those times, Dimitri says, you remember that Solomon was a ship's captain, and on board the ship, his word is law. Solomon is a powerful man and not someone you'd want to cross. *[This is completely true and serves to balance the party's idea of Solomon.]*

CAL COLEMAN should be sure to meet this party at least once or ideally once on Friday and again on Saturday. There's no specific information Cal needs to convey, but he should be his normally amoral and predatory self. *[Lots of this party's satisfaction comes from taking Cal down, so it's better if they have a healthy dislike of him.]*

Sometime between Saturday 4-8pm, SCARLET BILLOWS should be sure to meet this party. In addition to demonstrating her delightful personality, Scarlet tells the party (or tells others where the party can overhear) that she has a boyfriend who's very rich and very powerful. She won't divulge his identity, although she clearly wants people to wonder. *[Scarlet shouldn't get into any specifics here because it gets a little confusing to know what they are, given that this is an alternate version of Scarlet who never left World's Edge. Presumably she's still with Jack Brigham in this reality? Let us agree not to worry too much about this question. Mostly we want the party to dislike Scarlet. If they're also aware she has a mystery boyfriend, that's helpful but not essential.]*

Saturday after 10pm, T-BONE & JERSEY PETE approach the party to ask if they can borrow a little money. T-Bone explains that they're short on money at the moment - real short, actually. Like, completely broke - and they want to buy a drink for the guy behind the bar 'cause he seems like a real stand-up guy. Jersey Pete explains that a week ago, him and the Bone both came into some unexpected funds. See, Pete was approached by an unfamiliar gentleman and hired to do a real important but also kinda peculiar task: all he had to do was walk into town and come into the tavern, and then he had to say he recognized the drawing hanging on the bar, that it was Mister Scurvy Jack Brigham. Jersey Pete tells the party that this was a strange sort of job but he was eager to do it on account of the unfamiliar gentleman paying him 75 royals for the job. T-Bone tells the party that he was real jealous of Pete lucking into this job, getting all that money just for saying a thing, but that two days later, that same gentleman came and hired T-Bone to do the same exact thing! Both men agree that it was a real good job and a real good week. Sadly, they have both spent their hard-earned salaries, almost certainly on alcohol. The men tell the party that they decided to come into town to see if the unfamiliar gentleman needed them to do any more tasks for him. Sadly, they haven't been able to find said gentleman anywhere. Imagine their surprise when they came into the tavern and find the man in the picture - the man they had to say was Scurvy Jack Brigham - behind the bar! Jersey Pete tells the party that they'd like to buy the guy a refreshing beverage, since it's because of him they got paid such good salaries this week. Of course, to be companionable, they should really have beverages themselves, too. To keep the guy company, that is. Sadly, they lack the funds to buy said beverages. Is the party able to help? *If the party asks, neither T-Bone nor Jersey Pete is able to describe the unfamiliar gentleman who hired them, except that it was a man and they don't see him in the tavern now. [This proves that at least some of the 'evidence' against Solomon is false.]*

Either Saturday after 10pm or Sunday at breakfast, SAMUELSON tells the party that he has only just now been shown the actual letter which Madame Sprink received from the surviving servant in Keer. There are certain inconsistencies in the letter which give him pause, he says. Samuelson tells the party that the letter refers to the stables being set on fire, which is odd, given that the Sprinks' home in Concordia has no stables. The letter claims that the attack ranged throughout Concordia and Vigilton, which seems unlikely given these towns are approximately 300 miles apart. The writer says that the valley is quiet, although Concordia sits on a hill. And perhaps most tellingly, the letter is correctly spelled and punctuated, a feat Samuelson would be surprised if any of the Sprinks other servants could manage. *[Samuelson doesn't actually say "the letter is fake", but it is, as is the attack. Cal sent the letter to Geneva knowing she'd be outraged and knowing that after two years of inactivity from Jack Brigham, an attack at the time that Solomon is in Keer would be suspicious. Of course, it won't take terribly long for people to learn there wasn't actually an attack, but by that time, Cal hopes that he will own the tavern and the treasure hidden beneath it will be his.]*

CAL COLEMAN is not out after 4pm on Saturday.

Revelations:

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens to a ruddy glow. Murky russet light filters into the... barn? No, smaller. Barely a shack, this. A henhouse, maybe. The autumn air is amber-thick here. In the warm grainy shadows, the fox lurks. His orange fur is faded but he is sleek still. Agile and hungry, he waits. Coiled in the corner, the snake watches, tasting the promise in the air. Her crimson scales shimmer and her red tongue flickers, beautiful but deadly.

Harvest time. The fruits of the hunt, ripe for plucking. Pumpkins and burgundy grapes and the golden yolks of stolen eggs. The fox and the snake move together, entwining, all sinew and muscle and want. Flesh and greed, the rust-ruby afterglow of avarice. They will pair together so long as it benefits. Watchful eyes and readied teeth. When the other's usefulness is spent, they will be discarded, destroyed with a quick snap of teeth, a sharp crack of bloodied bone.

Below the dust-dark floorboards, the treasure waits hidden, all glimmer-glow and shining. Both of them can sense it, gleaming rich and lustrous. Hunger and want. Soon, so soon, it will be theirs. Well, no. Not theirs. His, perhaps, or hers. The air shimmers with menace and bounty and then the dark grasping desire rises up thick all around and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision suggests that Cal (the fox) and Scarlet (the snake) are working together, albeit only temporarily, and also hints at the treasure hidden beneath the tavern floorboards.

On Sunday morning at 10:15, the party meets NED CROCHETT in the tavern to get the last item they need for their party path, the cedarwood box he promised them. Ned accompanies the party to perform their party path ending.

After their encounter with **ELANI EDGEWATER and the FAE**, Ned picks up the box (which still has the ritual items inside it.) He says something about how he can return the box to the bar... and then the box jerks suddenly in his hands.) The box leads Ned (and the party, we certainly hope!) back up the River Run trail toward Hillcrest. While being pulled along, Ned frets aloud what could possibly be causing this strange behavior. The party collected those necessary items for the ritual, he says, plus an item that belonged to the person to they're trying to locate. They've already found Elani, obviously. Where in the world could they be going now?

If it occurs to the party that the one other component present is the box itself, great. If they seem bewildered, Ned points this fact out, saying that the box belongs to Bonnie and Solomon and asking rhetorically if the ritual is going to summon them next. Ned reminds the party that the box previously belonged to Scarlet. He certainly hopes it isn't going to summon her, since he has absolutely no desire to see her again! Of course, Ned says, Scarlet always claimed the box was a present from her rich boyfriend. He asks dismissively and rhetorically if maybe the box is summoning *him*.

(The box doesn't pull Ned along in a totally straight line, or super-quickly. He needs to make the walk back to Hillcrest take long enough that the party has a minute or two to process what's happening, but not so long that it gets boring.)

Coming into Hillcrest, there is indeed someone there. Ned doesn't know it yet, but it is indeed Scarlet's ex-boyfriend: **SCURVY JACK BRIGHAM**. Jack has a hand on the hilt of his sword, though he hasn't drawn it. He looks vaguely hostile and slightly cautious... which isn't bad, considering that a minute ago, he was hundreds of miles away, standing on the deck of his ship. Most people would be panicked in such a situation, but Scurvy Jack isn't the panicking type.

If the party asks Jack who he is, he doesn't answer; instead he wants to know who they are and what they want. Hopefully the party can piece together how the ritual summoned a second person and explain it; if they're at a loss, Ned can provide nudges until everyone gets it.

Very soon after they encounter Jack, another person comes hurrying into Hillcrest: **SCARLET BILLOWS**. Unlike Jack, she hasn't been magically summoned; she traveled here by mundane means. The party will have met Scarlet the day before during the alternate timeline, but although they remember Scarlet, she doesn't remember them. (Hopefully this won't be confusing for the party; Scarlet shouldn't let them get sucked into a conversation about yesterday's magical hijinks.)

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible! This revelation is even trickier than some others because Scarlet is going to give (or confirm) information that incriminates her. We've tried to make suggestions here of ways she can do this without it seeming weird.]

When Scarlet catches sight of Jack, she is completely shocked and very, very unhappy. Although the party doesn't necessarily know it, Scarlet and Cal are framing Solomon for piracy by making him appear to be Jack Brigham. The presence in World's Edge of the real Jack Brigham is an extremely unwelcome wrinkle in this plan!

Scarlet and Jack have a heated exchange during which they utterly ignore the party. Although exact wording is not at all important here, this might look something like:

Scarlet: You! What the hell are you doing here? *[This is the first indication Scarlet has met Jack before, a fact they haven't heard yet.]*

Jack: What the hell am I doing here? I have no idea! I don't even know where 'here' is!

Scarlet: You can't be here!

Jack: I have no desire to be here! I was onboard my ship and then I was suddenly here! I'm trying to get back there!

Scarlet: Well, you have to go! You'll ruin everything! *[Other than the vision, this is the first indication that Scarlet is also in on the plan to frame Solomon.]*

Jack: Don't tell me what to do, Scarlet.

The two continue to bicker until the party (hopefully) intervenes to get them to calm down. If they do, or if enough time has gone on without the party stepping in, Jack takes a second to stop and look around.

Jack: Hey, wait. Is this that little town where you owned the bar?

Scarlet: Shut up, Jack.

Jack: <amused> I still can't believe you sold it without knowing! *[Other than the vague reference in the vision, the party doesn't yet know anything about the buried treasure. They hopefully know that both Scarlet and Cal have tried to buy the bar, but they don't have any idea why. Hopefully they will question Jack; if not, he can repeat variations on this line. Again, it's better if they draw the info out of him instead of him just announcing it.]*

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Scarlet: Shut. Up!

By the time the scene ends, the party needs to know that:

- Solomon isn't Jack Brigham.
- There's pirate gold buried under the tavern floor, hidden there by Jack while he and Scarlet were lovers. Scarlet only learned about the gold after selling the tavern.
- Now Scarlet and her current boyfriend Cal are trying to buy the tavern back.
- Since buying the tavern will be easier and cheaper if Solomon is locked up, Cal is using lies and subterfuge to make it appear that Solomon is Jack.

Since it shouldn't look like Scarlet is knowingly incriminating herself, Jack needs to keep moving this scene forward. He can ask the party what's going on, since he doesn't know anything about Solomon being framed. (If the party, for instance, says "Oh, you're the real Jack Brigham!", Jack says "I'm the only Jack Brigham! What the hell are you talking about?")

If the party is talking in front of Scarlet and Jack about Cal framing Solomon (but not acknowledging or realizing that Scarlet is in on this), then Scarlet can just go along with it.

If, however, the party acknowledges/implies/questions that Scarlet and Cal are working together or if they think Scarlet is acting alone, Scarlet should throw Cal under the bus. If the party hasn't already used Cal's name, she should do this at first simply by referring to Cal as "him", so she's not doing too much of the party's job for them. She might say "this is all his fault for being so sloppy" or "I told him some things I shouldn't have! Then he stole my Dawn Star and brought it here to do illegal things with it!"

Ultimately, Jack, Scarlet and Cal will be at the trial. (If the party is stressing because they're not sure Cal will be there, Scarlet can tell them she's pretty sure he will be. There's no real reason for her to say this, but we don't want the party fretting about it needlessly.)

If the party convincingly tells Scarlet that Cal is planning on double crossing her and taking the tavern for himself, she is furious. (This shouldn't be too hard a sell; Scarlet already knows Cal stole the DawnStar and she is by nature a suspicious person.) She is willing to go to the trial with the party, even if it means she goes down for this, if it means Cal also takes the fall.

Jack shouldn't distract the party while this complicated scene is happening, but at some point before this all ends, he needs to ask the obvious question: how is he supposed to get back to the ship? When Jack asks, Ned tells everyone that, when the party asked him for the cedarwood box yesterday, he did a little bit of reading about the Ritual of Togetherness. Apparently, summoned individuals will be magically returned to their place of origin approximately 3 hours after the summoning occurs. So Jack will be around for the trial without worrying that he'll be imprisoned by Justice Wilde for piracy.

CAL COLEMAN is not out on Sunday until the trial.

Pre-Trial Charge Check-In:

Sunday between 11am and noon, after all of the party's Revelation encounters have happened, **NATASHA** approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Solomon Stillwater. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Natasha encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Cal Coleman and his (now very ex-)girlfriend Scarlet Billows tried to make it look like Solomon is secretly the famous pirate Jack Brigham because they hope Solomon's arrest will allow them to buy the tavern.
- Cal and Scarlet want the tavern because there's a fortune in pirate gold underneath it, buried there by the real Jack Brigham, another of Scarlet's exes.
- Solomon cannot possibly be Jack Brigham because the real Jack Brigham is right here.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Natasha can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Natasha can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

It's possible the party may be thinking that Scarlet will do most or all of the talking at the trial, since she knows what happened. If they suggest this, Natasha should point out that Scarlet is unlucky to make a terribly sympathetic witness or to present the information terribly coherently.

Please talk to one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after talking to the party so this encounter and/or the trial plan can be adjusted as needed!

Additional Trial Scene Info:

This is not at all critical, but if it fits in:

If the party gives him an opening, when they say that there's treasure in the tavern, Solomon can do a line about "Yes! The treasure is the friends we made along the way!" To which Jack Brigham responds: "No, for real. There's probably 60 to 70,000 royals buried here. It's a serious amount of treasure."

Also, if it gets mentioned that the Ritual of Together magic is about to wear off, returning Jack to his ship, Cal Coleman can turn to him confidently and offer him a thousand royals to bring Cal back with him. To which Jack, deadpan, responds, "No. Not for ten thousand royals. I don't associate with the likes of you."

Either in the scene above or at the trial, Jack Brigham should probably tell the party why he's been so quiet for the past two years. Was he seriously wounded and needed the time to recover? Does he have so much money he simply doesn't need to pirate anymore? Has he taken up meditation or medication? So long as his answer is very, very brief, this is left up to Jack's own discretion.

At the Trial

The following is an attempt to cut down on the mega-confusion that is the Sunday pre-trial briefing. Here's what it contains:

The Charge: For each charge, the Prosecutor leads in with a reading of the indictment.

The Accused's Response: Immediately after that, the Prosecutor says that, "In this matter, how do you plead?" This line gives a rough idea of how the accused person responds.

The Key Players: Depending on whether the accused pleads guilty or not guilty, the Prosecutor then says "Given this plea..." OR "Despite this plea...", following it with "...unless there is someone present who can address this matter, we find the defendant guilty." This is, of course, the party's cue to speak. The parties often call on LOTS of people to provide testimony, but I'm not going to list every single person in this list. These are the people we'll will need to brief before the trial scene. Just because you're not listed here doesn't mean you won't have important things to say.

The Bullet Points: These are the most significant pieces of information – not necessarily for proving the accused innocent – but for telling the full, compelling story of what happened. Although it's great if the participants reveal most of this information, there are times when it may be up to a staff character to do this, because the party either hasn't learned or cannot learn the whole truth.

The Tone of the Scene: I try to write a mix of scenes: some funny ones, some sweet ones, etc., and to stagger those scenes throughout the trial so that we don't hit the same notes over and over again. It occurred to me that *I* knew how I hoped a scene would read, but that I wasn't sharing that info with others. This line tells the tone we're trying to go for.

Any Additional Info: any other random thoughts that I will otherwise write on a post-it note, or else remind Jodi of every 25 minutes all weekend long.

The Charge: Milton Peacock, charged with Embezzling

The Accused's Response: "It's true: I'm guilty of stealing all that money."

The Key Players: Milton Peacock, Miscellania, the collective Peacocks

The Bullet Points:

- Milton Peacock lied about embezzling money; in truth, there never was any money to embezzle.
- He did so in the hopes that it would make the band seem successful and generate publicity so that the band - and, more importantly, the family - could stay together.
- Unbeknownst to Milton, Miscellania deposited 12,000 royals into the account from her own funds because she loves Milton and wants to save him.

The Tone of the Scene: heartwarming (because Milton loves his family AND because Milton and Miscellania love each other)

Any Additional Info: --

The Charge: Kerrick Dealbinder, charged with Petty Larceny

The Accused's Response: "I found that crown fair and square. But... I'm giving it back now anyway."

The Key Players: Kerrick Dealbinder, Tanya Peacock, Jack Johnson, Karla Smirch

The Bullet Points:

- The crown Kerrick Dealbinder found isn't Tanya Peacock's, which is merely delayed in shipping, but rather is actually the crown jewels of Lyria, worth a lot more than 8 royals.
- It was stolen from the royal vault in Dolorón by a ring of thieves helmed by mastermind Karla Smirch, who hid it in the woods to keep her family from finding it.
- The man World's Edge knows as Jack Johnson is actually an inept palace guard who's trying to recover this valuable item before anyone there learns it's missing.

The Tone of the Scene: satisfying (because Karla Smirch is brought to justice) (and a little funny because Karla is a criminal mastermind / various people have been thwarted by the Makai / Kerrick Dealbinder has been walking around all weekend with a fortune on his head)

Any Additional Info: --

The Charge: Bracken, charged with Harassment

The Accused's Response: "Everything I did, I did for a reason... I regret any misunderstanding in this matter."

The Key Players: Bracken, Angelica Sprink (and a little but dramatic bit Pascal Valerius and Phyllis Fieri)

The Bullet Points:

- Bracken is attempting to join a secretive order of knights.
- Since one of his missions requires that he rescue a damsel in distress, Bracken has interpreted this to mean he should teach the helpless Angelica Sprink the life skills she was lacking, and this, as well as the other quests he is in the process of completing, explain his potentially questionable behavior.
- Although Bracken doesn't yet know how special and unusual this particular order is, he'll ultimately be deemed worthy of entry into this secretive and fabulous Knight Club.

The Tone of the Scene: funny (because Knight Club)

Any Additional Info: We need to figure out blocking for the Knight Club dance number (!) and make sure the music is ready to go.

The Charge: Katherine Carmichael, charged with Assault with a Deadly Weapon

The Accused's Response: "Guilty as charged."

The Key Players: Katherine Carmichael, Vernon Gill, a lot of women

The Bullet Points:

- Vernon Gill lied about everything; Katherine never shot him and he isn't actually injured.
- Katherine was willing to take the fall for this crime because she believes her readers will be disillusioned if they learn she's not actually courageous like her heroine Kit Carnage.
- In actuality, the true story of Katherine being willing to sacrifice herself for others is even more inspiring.

The Tone of the Scene: heartwarming (because Katherine is willing to take the fall for something she didn't do to prevent disillusioning her readers)

Any Additional Info: although Vernon Gill isn't a terribly pleasant character, the focus here is on Katherine's planned sacrifice, not on bringing him to justice

The Charge: Eugenie Bright, charged with Desecration

The Accused's Response: "I shouldn't have summoned a demon... except now I don't think I actually did..."

The Key Players: Eugenie Bright, Edwin Davies

The Bullet Points:

- There is no demon, but there is Edwin Davies in a demon costume.
- Edwin poisoned his mother to hasten his inheritance, and - fearful a séance would allow her to accuse him from beyond the grave - dressed up as a demon to disrupt it.
- When the wayshrines were erected, Edwin learned his aunt still had the poisoned bottle of his mother's sherry and donned his costume again in an attempt to destroy the evidence.

The Tone of the Scene: satisfying (because Edwin Davies is brought to justice for this crime. Oh, and also murder.)

Any Additional Info: --

The Charge: Dorito, charged with Murder

The Accused's Response: "I changed my mind. Not guilty!"

The Key Players: Dorito, Bane

The Bullet Points:

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- Dorito didn't kill Professor Daniel Merriweather - the party knows this because they met him this morning - but she thinks Bane did, so she confessed to protect Bane, with whom she's in love.
- Dorito thinks this because she saw Bane accessing a hidden box of academic items, and because Lenora Graves' Ouija board began spelling "d - a - n", which dyslexic Dorito thought was the Professor's ghost accusing Bane.
- Bane is actually an undercover anthropologist named Lewis Bainbridge, which is why he has a hidden tweed jacket, glasses, and a copy of his colleague's book, and he's smart enough to love Dorito back.

The Tone of the Scene: heartwarming (because Dorito confessed to protect Bane, with whom she's in love)

Any Additional Info: --

The Charge: Evelyn, charged with Industrial Sabotage

The Accused's Response: "I should not have yelled at Ursula like that, even if she deserved it. But that's all I did!"

The Key Players: Evelyn, Ursula Smirch, Ember, Karmin Smirch

The Bullet Points:

- Evelyn hasn't done anything to the Smirches' shop.
- Everything that's happened - merchandise pushed off shelves, foul globs of hair on the floor, animal carcasses left by the door - is intended not to sabotage the shop's business, but because visiting influencer Ember has been hanging out with Karmin Smirch.
- And unbeknownst to World's Edge, Ember used to be - and still essentially is - a cat.

The Tone of the Scene: funny (because fun with a laser pointer!)

Any Additional Info: --

The Charge: Aesthetika, charged with Larceny

The Accused's Response: "I haven't stolen anything and those aren't my paintings. They're quite good, though."

The Key Players: Aesthetika, Carmina Bordeaux, Frost

The Bullet Points:

- Aesthetika didn't create the paintings or steal the money; Frost did.
- All of this was done under the direction/manipulation of Carmina Bordeaux, who's seeking to frame Aesthetika as revenge for failing to make Carmina a successful artist.
- The money that's mysteriously shown up amongst Aesthetika's belongings was left there by Frost, who's trying to right the wrong he's doing.

The Tone of the Scene: satisfying (because Carmina Bordeaux is brought to justice)

Any Additional Info: --

The Charge: Danny Donovan, charged with Arson

The Accused's Response: "I wish I could tell you, man. I just don't know."

The Key Players: Danny Donovan, Aria Morgan

The Bullet Points:

- Danny didn't accidentally or purposefully set this fire; Aria's accidental knocking over a candle did.
- Aria's still alive because Danny heard her screams and ran inside to save her.
- "Every living soul" in World's Edge has forgotten what happened on Thursday night, but the ghosts who haunt The Morg saw everything, and they remember.

The Tone of the Scene: heartwarming (because Danny is the hero here instead of the perpetual screwup)

Any Additional Info: --

The Charge: Huxley and Quinoa, charged with Identity Theft

The Accused's Response: "What? I'm not sure what we're supposed to do now. Um, not guilty?"

The Key Players: Huxley, Quinoa, the Broker, Gamer, Ranger, Trainer and Companion

The Bullet Points:

- Huxley and Quinoa weren't trying to steal anyone's identity.
- They're not crooks; they're participants at an Anotherworld Adventure Weekend.
- The rest of their partymates have finally found them, and their poor Companion has been worried sick.

The Tone of the Scene: funny

Any Additional Info: The Broker, Gamer, Ranger, Trainer and Companion need to be sitting somewhere inconspicuous in the tavern where Huxley and Quinoa will conceivably not notice them until the reveal.

The Charge: Solomon Stillwater, charged with Piracy

The Accused's Response: "Don't be ridiculous. Do I look like a pirate?!" (Bonnie: "Honey, shhh.")

The Key Players: Solomon Stillwater, Scarlet Billows, Jack Brigham, Cal Coleman

The Bullet Points:

- Cal Coleman and his (now very ex-)girlfriend Scarlet Billows tried to make it look like Solomon is secretly the famous pirate Jack Brigham because they hope Solomon's arrest will allow them to buy the tavern.
- Cal and Scarlet want the tavern because there's a fortune in pirate gold underneath it, buried there by the real Jack Brigham, another of Scarlet's exes.
- Solomon cannot possibly be Jack Brigham because the real Jack Brigham is right here.

The Tone of the Scene: satisfying (because Cal and, to a lesser extent, Scarlet are brought to justice)

Any Additional Info: real Jack Brigham will be magically whisked back to his ship soon and is thus not being prosecuted at this trial

in pursuit of Truth

It was announced on Saturday that Lyrian law forbids the use of truth magic at a trial. But this doesn't mean the participants won't necessarily use magic while they're investigating their assigned allegation. Fortunately, few of these methods provide a here's-your-answer-on-a-silver-platter solution where the participants just blow a spell whistle and find out all they need to know. They might use magic to *help* them solve their allegation, but it probably won't do all the work for them.

And if it *does*, that means the party found a really clever way to use magic, and we should allow it to work, even if it's not something we expected.

Be Ready

If you have a charge against you, or if you have key information and/or a secret that pertains to a charge, there's always a chance that a party will use truth magic on you. Before the weekend, read through the following spells and prayers and consider the question(s) the party might ask. If you're not sure how you should respond, let the EMs know and we'll come up with an answer together.

Of course, the party will sometimes ask a question you totally weren't expecting, but at least you're as ready as you can be.

Especially if you get a question that you weren't expecting, make sure the party reads you the whole wording of the spell, including any notes that are on the page. (They're supposed to do this automatically, but sometimes they don't.) This will help remind you what you do and don't need to say!

Judgment Calls

Sometimes truth is subjective, so it's no big surprise that truth magic is, too.

If one of these spells is used on you, the exact way you respond may be swayed somewhat by the following:

When during the weekend is it?

If it's Saturday at 2pm, you can give a little less information. If it's Sunday at 11:05am, it's time to tell what you know if you possibly can.

Is the Companion giving you a sign?

The Companions try to let the adventure unfold as it will unless something important is at stake. If there's a reason why a little bit more or less information would be a good idea, they'll do what they can to let you know, but taking the time to make eye-contact makes this a lot easier for them.

Can you avoid being misleading?

There are times during the weekend, especially with the charges, where we want to raise ideas that aren't actually correct, but truth magic isn't usually one of those times. The party is liable to take what you say as gospel – it is, after all, a truth spell – so while you don't need to give out information that the spell doesn't call for, try to also avoid saying something that the party's going to totally misinterpret.

This means that, for instance, you might want to give the answer "not that I'm aware of" rather than "no".

Can you make this a cool experience?

Casting a spell like this might be the most significant thing a caster does all weekend. You need to stay within the bounds of the magic in question; if a spell has to be answered with a Yes or a No, there's only so much flexibility you have. But if you have a little leeway, do what you can to the opportunity interesting and worthwhile for the participants involved.

We know this is all complicated. The fact is, most staffers never get a truth spell cast on them, but a few will, and it's good to be ready if you can be. We'll talk more about this during Staff Briefing, and if you have specific questions after reading any secret you might have, let us know!

Truth-related Spells

We've included the text of the spell – and its accompanying note, if any – in italics. Our comments follow.

Instill Belief:

I, name, a caster of water, do cast the spell of Instill Belief upon you [indicate target]. The surging tides of water allow me to instill this one belief into your mind: [state the belief in five words or less]. You will believe this with all of your heart for the next fifteen minutes! Let it be done!

(note: the belief must take the form of a thought, rather than a desire or a command. You may not say: "You want to kill royalty," or "You must kill royalty," but you may say "All royalty are extremely evil." Also note that the belief must be stated in five words or less.)

Make sure you understand this prayer's note, because participants sometimes misuse it. If a participant tries to Instill Belief using something like "You hate to lie", politely tell them it won't work and suggest that they read the note and try a different 5 words, because "you hate to lie" isn't a belief. Of course, if the participant decides to say something like "Lying causes instant painful death!", that is a belief... and it'll cause virtually everybody to tell the truth – or at least not to lie – for the next fifteen minutes!

Mighty Adjective O' Power

I, name, a caster of earth, do cast the spell of Mighty Adjective O' Power upon [specify one target]. For the next five minutes, you shall be totally [state the adjective of your choice]. Let it be done!

Casting Mighty Adjective: Honest would work well – it doesn't necessarily compel you to blurt out the truth (although you might anyway) but it will certainly stop you from lying for the five minutes it lasts.

Illusion

I, name, a caster of the Air, do cast the spell of Illusion upon everyone within the sound of my voice. I will now conjure an illusion, which all of you will see, hear, and believe in your heart to be real for the next five minutes. [describe the illusion-- feel free to be creative]. Let it be done!

(note: you may warn your friends in advance that you are going to cast this spell. A person so warned will still see and hear the illusion, but will know it to be fake.)

Like the spell says, you totally believe the illusion to be real. If the party gets creative with this spell, there are about a million things they could do with it. Be ready for anything!

Interrogate

I, name, a caster of Fire, do cast the spell of Interrogate upon [specify one target]. With the power of Fire as my witness, I will now ask of you three questions. You must give the answers which you honestly believe to be the truth, answering only "yes", "no", or "I don't know". [Ask three "yes/no" questions.] I have now finished the questioning. Let it be done!

(note: you should be prepared to ask your questions before you blow your whistle -- you can't cast the spell and then stand around for five minutes thinking of questions to ask!)

This is less powerful than some of the other truth magic, because the party doesn't get open-ended answers. Happily, that also makes it easier for you to respond to – just answer yes or no!

Charm

Charm was by far the most powerful of the truth spells because it was completely open-ended. It has now been replaced by Turncoat, a combat-only spell. Yay!

The Changed World

Background

Prior to 4pm on Saturday, various parties are going to be learning about Inspirations Unlimited and the large golden tome that bookkeeper Nemaia maintains.

Nemaia's process is this: when someone comes to Inspirations Unlimited in search of help, she does not initially ask them about their project. She doesn't ask what kind of creator they are or what muse they wish to see. Instead, she says "Tell me about a difficult memory."

Often, this question is met with surprise or confusion. Nemaia acknowledges that this is a strange process. It works, however. "Creation starts from a place of discomfort", she says. Some people refuse to answer, in which case they are politely sent on their way.

But in those cases where the client does answer, Nemaia takes out her golden book and records the memory that is shared. Although she does not stipulate what sort of memory it should be, it is nearly always of a person. Places and things don't leave as vivid marks on the soul as other people do.

Nemaia listens for as long as the person speaks, recording notes in her book. When the person eventually draws to a close, Nemaia turns to a fresh page. Nothing - no person, no place, no situation - is all bad, she says. There are always good stories and memories about any given thing, even a very difficult thing. The good may not balance out the bad, but it is still there. And we need to remember it and acknowledge it. "Tell me your good memories of this difficult thing," she says. And these she records, there on that fresh page.

At the end of this conversation, assuming the person has met whatever invisible criteria Nemaia has set, they are matched with a muse. Before they leave Inspirations Unlimited, Nemaia does one thing more: she tears a page from her golden book, the page spelling out the good memories. This she gives to the person. It is important, no matter how challenging a situation, to remember the good pieces, she says. The page with the bad memories remains in her book. "No one," says Nemaia, "needs help remembering the bad parts."

Why and How This Matters

At 4pm, Nemaia's book - which, remember, contains only the bad memories - will be burned. At that time, the people referenced in the book will become the way they're perceived in those difficult memories.

In order for this to make sense to the participants, they're going to hear from local people who've talked to Nemaia.

This can start as early as Friday night after the 4th Friday encounters are done (because we don't want to overwhelm them too early) and will continue any time Saturday prior to 4pm.

As an example of how these interactions might work, here's one case: Belle Bishop visited Inspirations Unlimited to get help with her invention. In response to Nemaia's question, Belle talked about her bridesmaids, describing them as "catty and petty and mean and toxic." After the 4pm change takes effect, the bridesmaids are all going to change, becoming so toxic that they're carrying around poisoned swords.

When Belle talks to parties before 4pm, she may well include little references to other information: the specific difficult memory she told Nemaia, the creative project she's working on, and/or the good memories she has of her bridesmaid. However, *none of that info is as important as the person(s) described and the description given*, because that's what's going to let parties figure out the post-4pm world. That means that Belle can share other information with a party if they're interested, but she should still try to highlight the most important info... while of course not acting like it will ever be relevant.

We'll talk more about this in the staff briefing. If you're someone who's going to be talking about the golden pages with parties and this still feels confusing, please check in with an EM!

Other Important Notes

All parties have traveler lore that tells them about Nemaia's book and process. (There are two versions of this; 10 of the parties get the lore on p. 207 while Glendeep gets the lore on p. 207, which also gives them charge info.) In all cases, the lore is triggered by "a large golden book, or a golden piece of paper."

Everyone in town who's talked to Nemaia is carrying around a folded-up sheet of gold paper, theoretically listing the good memories they have of the person in question. When talking to parties, these characters SHOULD show parties the folded up paper (because we want parties to associate the gold color with the change that happens, and because we want to trigger their traveler lore) but they SHOULD NOT show parties the actual writing. This is because we don't actually want to generate a whole bunch of extra text, and also because letting them read this will only be distracting. If parties ask to read it, these characters can give a brief synopsis of the good memory below but tell them the paper itself is private.

Note also that some of the following characters will be trying to talk to certain parties (these set up the three Saturday teamwork challenges) while the others will be talking to a given number of parties with no requirements about which parties those are.

Lastly, of course, we want these interactions to feel as natural as possible. The characters shouldn't seem like they're seeking out a party to pointedly talk about a strange gold paper they carry around. Instead, perhaps, they can initiate a conversation with a given party and then if the party mentions remembering something, they can casually pull the paper from their pocket, mentioning that they carry around a reminder of a good memory.

Again, we'll talk about all of this in the staff briefing and you should talk to an EM if you need ideas of how to do this!

An Example

We're asking the people with the golden pages to do a complicated thing, so here's an example of how one of these interactions might look:

Electra ideally needs to approach at least 4 parties and tell them something rather negative about Obsidian. This is critical, because otherwise no one will understand the way Obsidian changes after 4pm. At the same time, we don't want the parties to dislike either Obsidian or Electra. In fact, Electra actually has quite positive feelings about the person she's describing, which is the case for most of the encounters above.

Here's Electra's Golden Page write-up:

ELECTRA

reason for visiting the muses: Electra would like to be a more compelling public speaker (Dramina)

difficult memory: staging a protest to demand renovation of the local orphanage, a protest Obsidian thought was ill-advised

person described: Obsidian

description given: "He's not doing enough because he's afraid."

good memory: Obsidian patrolling around the orphanage to make certain there weren't Wolven raiding parties there

parties to tell: any parties, hopefully at least 4

Okay, so we need Electra to focus on the idea of Obsidian not doing enough because he's afraid... and we want the parties to still like both Electra and Obsidian.

Maybe Electra approaches Clairia on Saturday morning. After they chat for a few minutes, someone in the party talks about an unfair Skeever trick that was played on them. Electra can use this opening to talk about something else she finds unfair, the shamefully decrepit state of the local orphanage. Maybe she tells the party she was planning a protest where she'd chain herself to the building until repairs were made and that she went to seek out Dramina at Inspirations Unlimited in hopes the muse could help her become a better public speaker.

"I was so angry at Obsidian!" Electra might tell Clairia. "He thought the protest was ill-advised. I was convinced he wasn't doing enough because he was afraid. I told Nemaia all about it. After I talked for a while, she made me tell her the flip side of things. I thought about all the times Obsidian patrolled around the orphanage and elsewhere to make sure there aren't raiding parties there. That's not the work of someone who's not doing enough or who's afraid. Imagine, Obsidian afraid!" Maybe when she says that last part, she slides the folded up gold paper out of her pouch and says "I carry this around to remind myself not to make hasty decisions."

Hopefully, this doesn't feel too contrived as an interaction. And it repeats the most important elements of the info: focusing on Obsidian and the idea that he might be too afraid to act, and linking this idea to the gold page.

The Golden Pages

The following characters are all approaching parties to reference the gold papers they carry with them.

PANSY GOLDEN

reason for visiting the muses: although she's uncomfortable admitting it, Pansy wants to be someone important, like her sister Poppy is. She visited to try to figure out how she might go about that. (Miscellania)

difficult memory: a rough day in the tavern when she cleaned up a huge pot of spilled soup... while listening to people talk about how wonderful her sister is

person described: Poppy Golden

description given: "She's never done a real day of work in her life."

good memory: sewing a bag to hold Poppy's ritual components and Poppy complimenting how much time and effort she put into it

parties to tell: Clairia, P'loa, Uri-Kesh

LINCROFT SPENCE

reason for visiting the muses: Lincroft desperately seeks inspiration for a second novel (Lexia)

difficult memory: sitting and staring at the blank page but no words coming

person described: himself

description given: "This inability to write is driving me mad."

good memory: rereading passages from his first novel and being proud of them

parties to tell: Elsewhich, Glendeep, Sythwan, Waylon

ARIA MORGAN

reason for visiting the muses: Aria visited Inspirations Unlimited on Friday. Now that the theater has burned, she wonders if she should start dancing again. It's not her passion, but with the theater gone, she feels she has little else left. (Koreos)

difficult memory: standing in the burnt ruin of the Morg

person described: the ghosts that haunt the Morg

description given: "The theater belongs just to the ghosts now."

good memory: feeling the loving presence of the theater ghosts around her as she grew up

parties to tell: Arden, Dolorón, Keer, Noctara

SAMUELSON

reason for visiting the muses: Samuelson is trying to recreate a delicious soufflé he remembers Cook making during his childhood (Kulinos)

difficult memory: attempting to prepare said soufflé for his employers, who referred to it as a soufflee and then poured ketchup on it

person(s) described: Bartleby and Geneva Sprink

description given: "classless and barbaric"

good memory: Bartleby referring to the "soufflee" as a "gusticular delight" and going back for thirds

parties to tell: any 3 or 4 parties

EQUINOXIOUS

reason for visiting the muses: Equi was asking many questions about drawing. Ultimately, Nemaia ascertained that Equi wasn't asking for herself, but rather because she wants to support Jpeg, whom she worries is wasting his talent hanging around with the other cultists. Of this, Nemaia said, "Ah. I think what you want is to learn to be a muse. We can help you with that." (Aesthetika)

difficult memory: watching the men of the Compound - Jpeg included - refuse to have a conversation about what to do now that the world hasn't actually ended

person(s) described: the men in the Compound

description given: "hopelessly childish"

good memory: Diesel, Bane and Jpeg staying awake with Moxie during a thunderstorm

parties to tell: any 3 or 4 parties

BELLE BISHOP

reason for visiting the muses: Belle sought ongoing inspiration as she continues to add features to the Bellaphone (Teknos)

difficult memory: an unpleasant misunderstanding and argument

person(s) described: her bridesmaids

description given: “catty and petty and mean and toxic”

good memory: her friends apologizing and accepting each other’s apologies in return

parties to tell: any parties, hopefully at least 6

ISAIAH COOKE

reason for visiting the muses: Isaiah would like inspiration for his poetry (Lexia)

difficult memory: taking notes during a 7-hour baronial planning session where the Baron’s family failed to reach a conclusion

person(s) described: the Valerius siblings

description given: “too busy debating to actually accomplish anything”

good memory: Baroness Adina thanking him for his patience and reminding him how much they all care about the barony

parties to tell: any parties, hopefully at least 6

NED CROCHETT

reason for visiting the muses: Ned’s embarrassed by this, but he’s always wanted become a really good whistler. It was several years ago that he visited Inspirations Unlimited, before Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater bought the tavern. (Melados)

difficult memory: his boss Scarlet yelling at him about the shirt he was wearing. After this startled him enough that he dropped a dish, she’d yelled at him for dropping the dish. Then yelled that he was too slow cleaning up the broken dish and also yelled because he was requiring constant supervision.

person described: Scarlet Billows

description given: “She’s always mad about something and you just can’t get away from her.”

good memory: the best Ned could come up with was a time Scarlet sent him down into the root cellar where he hung out with spiders and couldn’t hear her for a few minutes. Being around Scarlet really makes you appreciate silence.

parties to tell: any parties, hopefully at least 6

ELECTRA

reason for visiting the muses: Electra would like to be a more compelling public speaker (Dramina)

difficult memory: staging a protest to demand renovation of the local orphanage, a protest Obsidian thought was ill-advised

person described: Obsidian

description given: “He’s not doing enough because he’s afraid.”

good memory: Obsidian patrolling around the orphanage to make certain there weren’t Wolven raiding parties there

parties to tell: any parties, hopefully at least 4

Saturday at 4pm

Just before 4, Cal Coleman has (theoretically) gone to Inspirations Unlimited. He’s come to World’s Edge to learn their proprietary business secrets, which he believes are in Nemaia’s book. He wants a look at it *now*.

When Cal arrives, Nemaia isn’t there. In fact, only Floria is present. Although the muses have all been told repeatedly never to give anyone access to the book, Cal pressures Floria to let him see it and she acquiesces.

Cal is outraged when he learns there aren’t any profitable secrets in the book and throws it into the fire.

The Sky Turns Black

At 4pm, the Companions tell their parties that the sky turns black and the earth shakes.

In Inspirations Unlimited (which is closed from 3:45pm onward on Saturday) Cal and Floria are both (theoretically) knocked unconscious by the force of the magical blast.

And all over town - and, although we don't see it directly, theoretically all across Lyria as well - people who are described in the book change in profoundly significant - and profoundly negative - ways.

Some People Change...

Unlike some plots where more and more characters get "sucked in" to the negative magic, this is a plot where everyone who's going to change changes immediately. At the same time, not all of those people are out at 4pm, because we still want to ramp up the negative effects.

Starting at 4pm, parties will encounter characters who are now changed. As a way of visually distinguishing people who've changed, those people wear the same costumes they wore before but they have shimmering gold faces. They're recognizable, but they look spooky and wrong.

...But the Participants Don't

None of the participants or Companions change, and unlike the rest of the townspeople, they are aware that something strange and wrong is going on. At first, it seems that they are the only people of whom this is true. Although they probably won't realize it for a while, this is because the Cup of Insight ritual they all performed earlier with the Makai affords them the clarity to see this world for what it is: a strangely-altered version of reality. The Makai are similarly unaffected, as are Belle Bishop and Cary Montalvo, both of whom also performed the Cup of Insight. Since none of these people are out from 4 – 6pm, this won't be immediately obvious.

Saturday Early Evening

Floria (5 - 7pm)

At 5pm, Floria regains consciousness. Nemaia's gold book is just smoldering embers, and there is no sign of Cal Coleman.

Floria is distraught. She stumbles out of Inspirations Unlimited, telling any parties she encounters that this is all her fault. She doesn't yet know about all the changes to the world, but she knows that something terrible has happened. She explains to any participants she meets that Cal has burned the book. She takes full responsibility for this.

Brimstone (5 - 7pm)

As a being essentially made of magic, Brimstone is also aware of this magically-changed world. He doesn't know what has caused it, but he's certain it wasn't his doing. He circulates during this time, sharing this fact with anyone he encounters.

The Makai (6 - 8pm)

At 6pm, Kora Peacekeeper, Kyli Talespinner and Kullis Toolforger begin circulating among the parties. It is clear, they say, that something strange has happened in town. They speculate that the Cup of Insight ritual which they and the participants performed earlier in the day has granted them all perception enough to stay outside of whatever has happened. They tell the parties that they will hold a council in the tavern at 8pm, in hopes that something may be done to put things back as they were before.

How Unchanged Characters Think and Act

If you're out as a non-Makai character who hasn't been changed at 4pm, you have an important job to do, which is to make this world seem creepy and wrong without your character actually knowing it's creepy and wrong.

Important Answers

- Can you (that is, a unchanged character) see the changed (gold) characters? Yes.
- Can you talk with the changed characters? Yes
- Do you notice that the changed characters have gold faces? No. They look normal to you.
- Do you notice that the changed characters are acting differently than usual? No. This is how they've always been.
- Do you find the changed characters' actions upsetting? They're upsetting because they're upsetting, but not because the character has changed. That is, Obsidian has always been a frightened man, and it's hard to watch someone live in fear. For the participants, this is upsetting *because they remember how real-world Obsidian is*. You don't, so that's not what you find upsetting about it.
- Does Inspirations Unlimited still exist? Yes, although it's currently closed. Other than Floria, no one knows that anything unusual happened there today. (If participants ask, you know as much about Nemaia and the golden book as you did before 4pm. You don't associate anything in this world - which is, again, normal for you - with the book.)

- If I'm a character who had a golden page in the regular world, what do I say/think/remember after 4pm? Most of the golden page characters aren't out 4-8pm. If you are, the EMs will brief you separately.
- After the 10pm ritual happens, do you remember the events from 4-10pm? No. Of course, certain exceptions apply. If you set up your penultimate step meeting during this time, you're darn sure still going to go to it. But don't get drawn into conversations about all this. Once things change back, normal is how it's always been.

How Changed (Gold) Characters Think and Act

If you're one of the characters who changes at 4pm, the section below details how you in particular will think and act. A few guidelines apply to all of these characters.

Important Answers

- Do you (that is, a changed (gold) character) know that you haven't always been this way? No. Your current reality is the only reality you know.
- Do you remember the participants? Yes, although your current viewpoint might color your memories of earlier interactions. (e.g. changed Obsidian will remember Uri-Kesh but might say "Oh, you've come back! I don't have the box for you! Please don't hurt me!")
- What should you say to a participant who asks "Why is your face gold?" Just tell them that you have no idea what they're talking about. You look like you've always looked. Then move on.
- How intense should you make this? In general, this depends on what time it is. 7pm should feel more intense than 4pm. Remember that you can always ramp the intensity up but that it is virtually impossible to ramp the intensity back down. When you can, check in with an EM (there will be several 'in the field' as well as two in the Basement) to see whether it's okay to up the intensity. (Note that the teamwork challenge gatekeeper characters will likely keep the same intensity throughout, which is to say: be as intense as you need to sell the challenge but not more than that. Constant high-intensity is exhausting for you and for the participants.)
- Do you still do your challenge if you're a changed character? Do you still give out your charge information? As a general rule, if you still need to do your challenge/charge info and you possibly *can* do so, do it. Bartleby Sprink can completely still do his What A Surprise! challenge while being a disgusting pig. Diesel can still do his Test of Ten challenge while being childish, and yes, he can modify a question or two ("name 10 words for poop"). If Ember is able to take a photo of the party and *then* kill them, go for it. As for charge info, use your discretion and/or ask an EM!
- After the 10pm ritual happens, do you remember the events from 4-10pm? No. Again, certain exceptions apply. Do your penultimate step, do your kitchen shift, blah blah blah. Once things change back, normal is how it's always been.

Changed Characters

POPPY GOLDEN

why: In reality, Poppy is responsible for performing the complicated rituals that keep the portal to the Court of Mirrors closed. But changed Poppy has "never done a real day of work in her life." She cannot be bothered to perform the rituals, so the portal is open.

when: 4-8pm

what: Poppy acts as the gatekeeper to the Court of Mirrors challenge (p. 548) for three parties, but she herself is not actively involved in the challenge itself. There are 6 gauntlets who perform the challenge, none of whom is a "brand-name" character.

where: Poppy is in the Valerius outer room; the Court is in the second and third rooms.

how: Poppy sits contentedly on a cushion, admiring herself in the mirror but otherwise taking no actions.

LINCROFT SPENCE

why: "This inability to write is driving me mad."

when: 4-8pm

what: Lincroft will be administering the Mind of a Madman challenge (p. 542) to four parties. Also inside the Mind are 4 masked characters (none of whom is a "brand-name" character) dressed in dirty white garments covered with scrawled and crossed out words. They are Lincroft's rough drafts and they mock and torment him.

where: Lincroft wanders aimlessly outside the tavern until a party is available for the challenge. At that time, he will escort them to the tents in the parking lot.

how: Lincroft talks quietly to himself, trying to string together a coherent idea and failing. He writes a word or two in his book, then rips out the page and throws it away in disgust. Note that he's deeply distressed but not the screaming/ranting form of mad, which is very hard to do or be around.

THE MORGAN THEATER GHOSTS

why: "The theater belongs just to the ghosts now."

when: 4-8pm

what: the ghosts will administer the Ghost Theater challenge (p. 545) for four parties. None of them are the ghosts of a "brand-name" character, nor are they the ghosts of any of the named Morgan actors the party from Clairia will encounter on Sunday.

where: inside the wooden "theater" canopy

how: The ghosts periodically look around sadly at the burned theater and then return to being their dramatically theatrical selves.

BARTLEBY and GENEVA SPRINK

why: The Sprinks are "classless and barbaric."

when: 6-8pm

what: Although no one in the regular world is likely to confuse the Sprinks - especially Bartleby - with old money, they are still over-the-top posh. In this changed world, they are... well, classless and barbaric is maybe too kind.

where: wandering and/or in the tavern

how: The Sprinks are largely comic relief in this storyline. Probably much of their shift will consist of eating in the tavern, which will not actually feature a trough, but only just barely. They are reminded to please not waste too much food or to get too much mess on their costumes.

DIESEL, BANE and JPEG

why: The male post-apocalyptic cultists are "hopelessly childish."

when: 4-6pm (plus Bane is out 6-8pm as well)

what: The cultists are overgrown children.

where: probably mostly in Greystone Clearing until it gets a bit dark, then wandering and/or in the tavern. They can play this by ear.

how: Butt butt fart butt

EMBER, MILA and TANYA PEACOCK (4-6pm) and CRABTREE, ESMERELDA, LENORA GRAVES and PEARL BRYCE (6-8pm)

why: The bridesmaids are "catty and petty and mean and toxic."

when: 4-6pm and 6-8pm

what: The bridesmaids are this plot's poison-wielding combat. There is more information on page 550.

where: anywhere there's not a party busy with something else and there's not another monster group immediately nearby.

how: They're drunk and armed and looking for fun. Their idea of fun may not match the participants'.

ADINA VALERIUS and PASCAL VALERIUS

why: the Valerius siblings are "too busy debating to accomplish anything"

when: 4-6pm

what: In reality, the Valerius siblings (including Baroness Adina) are governing by committee and although this is a cumbersome process, the barony is doing well. In this changed world, the Wolven are a larger threat, but the Valerii are too mired in debate to address this or other pressing issues.

where: probably in the Valerius house to start, although after they've seen the first 2 parties to enter the Court of Mirrors, they may want to wander and encounter other participants.

how: Adina and Pascal are intellectually aware of problems in the barony but are endlessly discussing minutia instead of dealing with them. (e.g. "A dangerous portal has opened in our living room. Perhaps we should convene a committee to address the situation?" / "A committee! That feels like a rash choice when we haven't done real research on exactly what sort of dark parallel dimension the portal leads to.") Although these debates can begin semi-comically, as the alternate timeline proceeds, the family's inability to act should start to feel grimmer and grimmer.

SYLVIE VALERIUS and NIX VALERIUS

why: the Valerius siblings are "too busy debating to accomplish anything"

when: 6-8pm

what: In reality, the Valerius siblings (including Baroness Adina) are governing by committee and although this is a cumbersome process, the barony is doing well. In this changed world, the Wolven are a larger threat, but the Valerii are too mired in debate to address this or other pressing issues.

where: probably directly in front of and/or inside the tavern

how: Sylvie and Nix are intellectually aware of problems in the barony but are endlessly discussing minutia instead of dealing with them. (e.g. "Wolven raiders continue to enter the tavern and citizens are being menaced. Perhaps we should convene a committee to address the situation?" / "I disagree. A series of strongly-worded letters should be our first step.") Although these debates can begin semi-comically, as the alternate timeline proceeds, the family's inability to act should feel grimmer and grimmer.

SCARLET BILLOWS

why: "No matter what anyone does, she's always right there to scream about it."

when: 4-8pm

what: In reality, Scarlet sold the tavern two years ago to the Stillwaters, and no one has seen her since. But in this changed world, Scarlet has never left, and the dark, disorderly tavern reflects that.

where: in the tavern

how: Scarlet's tavern is very different from the hospitable place the Stillwaters have created. From 4-6pm, this will probably mean Scarlet being volatile on the porch, yelling at staff who displease her and etc. As the alternate timeline goes on, the presence of Wolven in the tavern, where Scarlet is happy to have them, will hopefully make this world feel increasingly grim.

OBSIDIAN

why: "He's not doing enough because he's afraid."

when: 7-8pm (plus at the 8pm meeting and Wolven battle)

what: Obsidian is now terrified of the Wolven he has fought for so long.

where: in the tavern

how: Obsidian fears for his own safety, as well as that of any participants he encounters.

Changed Time Timeline

3:00 pm – Anna Kelly, Brace Peters, Bri Taborn, Lane Daniels and Mike Robb (Gauntleteers who arrive early) and Laura Hiatt and Matt Miles (Valerii who'll be at the house at that time anyway) convert the second room of the Valerius house into Crypt space

3:45 pm – people who need to be in changed costumes at 4pm extricate themselves from participant encounters if needed

3:45 pm - staff in Inspirations Unlimited gently shoo out any parties that are inside so IU can close

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3:45 pm - staff in the tavern gently shoo out any parties that are inside so the tavern can change; Solomon Stillwater, Ned Crochett, Bailey and Valentina change the tablecloths and swap over other tavern decor

4:00 pm – Dave Nadig and Jeff Yaus pull down draperies for the Ghost Theater

5:00pm - Floria circulates to tell the story of Cal Coleman burning the book

5:00pm - Brimstone circulates to clarify that this change wasn't his doing

6:00 pm – Kora Peacekeeper, Kyli Talespinner and Kullis Toolforger go out to spread word of the 8pm council

8:00 pm – the Makai, assisted by Aleeya Witchborn, Santiago West, Belle Bishop, Cary Montalvo, Floria and Obsidian, hold the council meeting with the participants

the 8pm meeting

staff involved:

Kemma Runereader -- Eileen Christiansen

Kira -- Kelsey Schultz

Kovi Woundtender -- Jodi Riley

Kyson Wayseeker -- Rich Longmore

Kerrick Dealbinder -- Greg Rothauser

Kora Peacekeeper -- Lynn Chiavacci

Kullis Toolforger -- Erhard Konerding

Kyli Talespinner -- Marsha Gershon

Kazim Firestarter -- John Nann

Kiko Truthspeaker -- Gretchen Albright

Kable Worldwatcher – Matthew Scott

Aleeya Witchborn -- Deb Lack

Santiago West Valerius -- Neal Desai

Belle Bishop -- Alison Morris

Cary Montalvo -- Rob Daviau

Floria -- Mara Feingold-Link

Changed Obsidian -- Brian Scassellati

Where: in the Inn at World's Edge

Info/Activity: Kora Peacekeeper, Kyli Talespinner and Kullis Toolforger have asked that everyone who can please come to the Inn at 8pm to attempt to fix whatever's happened in town.

When all the parties are there, Kemma Runereader thanks them for coming. She tells the assembled parties that, clearly, something strange has happened in town. They believe the Cup of Insight ritual has granted them all perception enough to stay outside of everything that's happened. Like the visiting adventurers, Belle and Cary have done the Cup of Insight and are thus aware of the changes to the town. Runereader says that, for reasons connected to the change, it appears that Floria also knows what's happened. Floria looks near tears; she can only nod sadly.

Kerrick Dealbinder then asks the other townspeople of World's Edge who are present – that is, the Companions – if they would please station themselves outside the tavern, to sound the alarm in case an attack is imminent. These staff exit to the Basement so they can get ready to go out as part of the Saturday evening activities.

Runereader asks the assembled participants to please tell all they can about how this world is changed and what they think is going on. Floria interrupts, blurting out that this is all her fault. Runereader holds up her hand to quiet Floria. She needs to know what others have observed and then find a way forward.

This is a chance for the participants to talk about what they've observed. The Makai should draw different parties into the conversation if possible. The Makai keep probing, asking more and more questions, until a few things are clear to everyone:

- Cal Coleman threw Nemaia's golden book into a fire.
- Because Nemaia tears out the pages of good memories and gives them to the people who speak with her, the pages that were left in the book detail bad memories only.
- Everyone who is mentioned in the book has now become the version of themselves described in those bad memories.

The Makai shouldn't move forward till people understand this, and if the Makai need to direct the conversation more, then so be it. But if the participants are getting it on their own, great.

The participants may want to tell Runereader about individual things they've learned, like certain people who are profoundly changed. This is fine but not necessary. We want to make the parties feel like they've learned things without letting this scene drag on too long.

Floria then tearfully confirms/explains that this change in the world is her fault. Nemaia has told the muses never to let anyone touch the book! Floria explains that Cal was very insistent about getting a look at the book and that she thus let him read it even though she knew she shouldn't. It made him so angry, seeing that there weren't any corporate secrets in the book like he was expecting, and that's what made him throw it into the fire. When she came to, she explains, Cal was already gone. This is all her fault, and she will do anything she can to help set things right!

Runereader turns now to Aleeya and Santiago. She explains that, although this must be hard for them to believe, this version of the world is not the real one. The Makai have been investigating to see if it is possible to set things right and restore the changed people in town - and throughout the world - to their true selves.

Runereader asks that everyone assembled listen very closely to what she needs to tell them. She believes that fixing things is possible, but that it is liable to prove extremely arduous. They will face many challenges, and it will almost certainly be very dangerous. She asks the assembled crowd if they are willing to help. Hopefully they say yes!

Dealbinder says that, if they're going to fix what's wrong, the first step of this process is to address those people who are injured. He gestures to Toolforger, who pulls forth a technomagical wand **PROP**, blows a whistle and then reads: "This wand affects all people who are within the sound of my voice, causing them to be restored to life and to full health, leaving their free-hits unchanged."

Runereader says that she has been doing some research and thinks she's found a ritual that may allow them to undo the damage that's been done. It's called the Rite of Restoration. Dealbinder reads from a book **PROP**, reading the italicized words below, then pausing so a Makai can explain:

Performing the Rite of Restoration requires the following components:

- *"8 Hand of Death pendants – Corpses of the wealthy are sometimes buried wearing these powerful magic amulets."* Kazim Firestarter says that most bodies are, of course, below ground, but the Valerius family places its dead in their family crypt. Runereader nods, saying that that they must enter the crypt to claim the 8 pendants.
- *"8 tokens of undying affection – Extremely rare, such an item may be claimed from certain ghostly spirits."* Kovi Woundtender says that they need to go to the graveyard to claim these. She reminds the participants that, each year during the Rites of Remembrance, ghostly spirits engage in an unearthly dance in the World's Edge graveyard.
- *"the Gloom Crystal -- This enchanted pendant is said to belong to the Dreadwright."* Kira says that the Dreadwright, a powerfully-magical warrior, can be summoned in the Forsaken Forest, if there are casters and swordfighters willing to battle against him.
- *"a Radiant Staff – this enchanted artifact is capable of storing tremendous magical energy and then transferring it as needed."* Aleeya Witchborn says that she has a letter describing how a Radiant Staff might be claimed, if people are brave and cunning enough to sneak undetected through a group of NightWalkers.
- *"a Soul Magnet – This mighty talisman can only be worn by a Banshee, making the obtaining of one difficult indeed. All men must avoid the Banshee or be caught up in her powerful magic. Only a woman wearing the Pendant of Fortuna D'Oro can kill a Banshee."* Kiko Truthspeaker says that a Banshee has been seen in the area near the Badger Scout campsite. Unfortunately, the Banshee is accompanied by a large horde of ghouls; still, there is no other way to claim a Soul Magnet. She asks if anyone present has a pendant of Fortuna D'Oro. [This item goes out in a monster's pouch so that one of the participants will definitely have it.] Truthspeaker says that a group will have to kill the Banshee (and her attendant ghouls) in order to claim the Soul Magnet pendant.
- *"a Portal Stone – Paradoxically, this holy item is created when a cauldron is placed in an area of concentrated evil energy and ritual words spoken over it by a High Priest."* Runereader says that she knows of a place with profoundly evil energy; it's within the Wild Lands. She looks to Obsidian and speaks gently. "Obsidian. I know you are afraid, but there is a ritual that only you can perform." Obsidian is clearly terrified; he tells her he cannot go into the Wild Lands. Runereader tells him that he won't need to go alone; she will send a band of warriors along who will promise to protect him from the Wolven so that he can complete the ritual. Obsidian looks unconvinced but stays quiet.
- *"Lastly, the consecrated relic of a holy saint."* Runereader says she spoke with Santiago about the Crown of St. Mora, which recently came into his possession. Santiago explains that St. Mora is the patron saint of the dying. Her crown is a powerfully sacred item but putting it on comes with a high cost. Santiago doesn't know for certain what that cost will be, but his research indicates that the crown demands a sacrifice. Runereader says that Floria has volunteered to put on the crown.

Runereader: You understand, my dear, what Santiago is saying? About the Crown demanding a sacrifice?

Floria: I do. I know it will hurt, and Santiago explained it's possible it could kill me. But I have to do this! If I hadn't let that man get his hands on Nemaia's book, none of this would have happened. If anyone is going to be sacrificed, it needs to be me. If there's any chance it will fix all this.

Runereader: Well then, so long as you understand, we don't have any time to waste. I'll need you to put it on now. <*She lifts the box holding the crown **PROP** down from the bar and opens it.*> I...?

Floria: I... thought the Crown was in there?

Santiago: The Crown was in there!

<*Everyone spends a minute looking around frantically and confusedly*>

Cary: Belle. What the hell is on your head?!?

Belle: <*As she comes from behind the bar, she reaches a hand up absent-mindedly to touch the thing on her head, which is, of course, the Crown of St. Mora*> Oh, this? I found it in a box on the bar! I'm sorry, what were we talking about?

Cary: Take. It. Off.

Belle: <*she tries*> Um. It... won't come off.

Floria: But I need to put it on. This is all my fault! I need to be the one who wears the Crown!

Santiago: I think there's a way to transfer it. But I'd need my Sacred Shield...

Cary: I can get it.

Santiago: It's up at the Makai camp. When Runereader talked to me before about all this, I left it there. But now, there are way too many Wolven raiding parties out there. There's no way to get to the Makai camp and back safely!

Cary: <*he draws his sword **PROP***> You'd be surprised...

Cary exits to get the Shield, and Belle, Santiago and Floria exit in order to research how to remove the Crown.

Runereader says that she needs some additional supplies collected. She asks Kullis Toolforger, Kora Peacekeeper and Kyli Talespinner to go retrieve them. They exit. (This is because these people need additional prep time before the Saturday evening activities they're part of.)

Runereader then acknowledges that they are very different people, from very different lands. She asks that they now set aside these differences, each going where his or her own strengths lie. (In other words, don't feel like you need to stay with your partymates!)

As she is saying this, the other staff people present should move to stand in different parts of the room. (It doesn't matter who stands where, so long as everyone is spread out enough that they can accommodate having a mob of participants around them.)

Runereader then recaps the needed components, this time announcing the specifics of how many people are needed:

- 8 people must enter the Valerius crypt and walk among the dead to claim the Hand of Death pendants – those who will, go now to stand with Kazim Firestarter
- 8 people must approach the dance of the dead to claim tokens of undying affection – those who will, go now to stand with Kovi Woundtender
- 8 people – 4 casters and 4 more who are *not* casters – must venture into the Forsaken Forest to do battle against the Dreadwright and claim the Gloom Crystal -- those who will, go now to stand with Kira
- 6 people must sneak among the Nightwalkers to claim the Radiant Staff – those who will, go now to stand with Aleeya Witchborn
- 18 warriors must journey into the Wild Lands to protect Obsidian while he creates a Portal Stone – those who will, go now to stand with Obsidian and Kysen Wayseeker
- 18 people, none of whom can be men, must stand together against the Banshee and her army of ghouls to claim the Soul Magnet – those who will, go now to stand with Kiko Truthspeaker and Kable Worldwatcher

It's occasionally tricky to get participants broken into groups. A few participants get a little pushy about insisting they be allowed to do a certain activity, even though there were already more than enough people in that group. If the Makai see any of this behavior, they should feel free to resolve these problems in the way that seems fairest to all the participants.

Note that the Valerius crypt activity, the caster battle and the dance of the dead activity require *exactly* eight people each, while the Nightwalker activity requires exactly six. The others are more flexible – if 20 people go to fight the Wolven and 16 go fight the Banshee, that's fine. However, if 26 fight the Wolven and 10 the Banshee, that won't work.

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The participants may have questions about these activities. Most of these questions – like "exactly *how many* ghouls will there be?" and "what *kind* of unparalleled evil exists in the graveyard?" etc – should go unanswered. The Makai can respond simply with "I have no idea."

While participants break into groups, Dealbinder and Runereader circulate, checking to see which group needs more people, etc.

Once the groups are successfully broken down in the correct sizes, Runereader announces that everyone will go on their missions and then return to the tavern. She needs most of the Makai to stay to prepare for the ritual, she says.

Runereader wishes the groups good luck. The others can then begin explaining the information contained in the subsequent pages.

Item(s) to give to the participants: none

Other items staff people need with them: the book explaining the ritual, including cheat-sheet outlines for this scene; Toolforger's whistle and healing wand, Cary's sword, the Crown of St. Mora and its box

getting the Hand of Death pendants from the Valerius crypt

staff involved:

Kazim Firestarter -- John Nann

Death -- Jeff Foley

the corpse of Arbella Valerius -- Peggy O'Connell

the corpse of Beatrice Valerius -- Linda Bennet

the corpse of Constantine Valerius -- Gareth Hinds

the corpse of Donatello Valerius -- Chris Reichert

the corpse of Edmund Valerius -- Erhard Konerding

the corpse of Ferdinand Valerius -- Lance Nathan

the corpse of Guinevere Valerius -- Tasi O'Malley

the corpse of Horatio Valerius -- Eli Hunt

Sergeant of this activity: Peggy O'Connell

Where: in the Valerius family crypt

of participants on this mission: 8

Info for the Makai to give group: Firestarter tells the participants that he will lead them to the Valerius crypt, which is at the back of the Valerius family home. He says that, after he drops them off there, they should get the Hand of Death pendants (which the corpses there will be wearing) and then return. He doesn't tell them any more than this!! (i.e. he does NOT say that Death will be in there or anything like that.) If the participants have questions ("will we have to do anything special to get the pendants from the bodies?"), Firestarter says he doesn't know.

Firestarter then escorts the group out the front door of the tavern, up Valinor's Path and then Autumn's Path, then right on Rascal Run to reach the crypt. (It's important that he goes this way, rather than through the parking lot and up Gilded Way, because we don't want them to be getting in the way of the Banshee encounter.) Firestarter shouldn't allow the group to wait around for a while in the tavern (realistically, they have no idea what they'll encounter in the crypt, so there's really not much strategizing they can do) or to dawdle along the way. When they arrive at the crypt, Firestarter opens the door and gestures for the group to go inside. (The primary reasons Firestarter is escorting the group are to prevent them from getting lost or confused on the way to the crypt, or from dilly-dallying before entering. This is a time-consuming challenge anyway, and if the group starts it late, it takes forever to finish! Once the group is inside, Firestarter should return quickly to the Basement to become a Ghoul!)

Activity: The participants will enter the Valerius family crypt, which will be set up in the back two rooms of the Horse Camp building. In the first room, bunks will be set up on both sides of the door, creating an aisle for the participants to walk down. These bunks are the crypt biers; many of the biers will have bodies lying in them. Each body should remain perfectly still as the participants enter (i.e. please don't open your eyes at them or any of these haunted-house type tricks. This encounter will get scary soon enough. And besides, all the participants will be *expecting* the dead to move, so it's really eerier if you're still.)

Each corpse wears a Hand of Death pendant around the neck. If any of the participants attempt to remove the pendant, let them. (You don't have to make it easy, though. Let them experience the fun of lifting up a corpse's head to rob a grave...)

If the participants are dawdling in the bier-room and/or attempting to remove the Hand of Death pendants, Death (who will be waiting in shadow in the second room) will call out for the participants to enter. If the participants are moving down the aisle already, Death can just wait for them to reach the second room on their own.

Death informs the participants that they may not simply come into "his house" and steal what they want. He says that, fortunately for them, he is in a good mood. Therefore, he will allow the participants a chance to win the pendants they seek.

Before explaining the rules of the contest, Death calls the Valerius dead to come to him. (He can call them all by name, or however seems coolest.) All 8 corpses slowly get up and enter the second room. (The corpses don't shuffle like zombies or anything, but they are slow-moving and quiet.) Death announces that the participants may gain the Hand of Death pendants by beating the Valerius dead at challenges of the participants' choosing. The rules are as follows:

Each of the participants must choose a different challenge. Once the challenge has been clearly stated, the Valerii may choose their defender. If the participant wins the challenge, he gets the Hand of Death pendant from that corpse. If the corpse wins, the participant must wait until all the other participants have gone, and then he can declare a different challenge. (The defender this time may be a different Valerius.) Once a participant has won a Hand of Death pendant, he may not compete again.

Before the first participants declares his challenge, Death should encourage the participants to talk together to determine how to best utilize each person's strengths. (This is important for two reasons: 1) because a significant goal of this encounter is to have each participant articulate her own strengths to the rest of the group, and 2) because having the participants plan the challenges together adds cool elements of strategy and problem-solving.) Death should also observe the following rules, although he only needs to announce them if it seems relevant:

- Death should not allow any contests of pure luck. (e.g.. flipping a coin, etc.) (We want participants to feel pride in their particular skills. There's little pride involved in winning a coin toss.)
- Death should not allow contests that he feels are (in reality) too dangerous to the people involved.
- Death should not allow contests where the winner is already evident. ("I challenge you to be as tall as I am.")
- Death should not allow contests so silly (burping contests, etc.) they spoil the mood. This is at Death's discretion.
- All contests should be different. If the first challenge is sword-fighting, dirk-fighting is probably too similar. Again, this is at Death's discretion.
- In any subjective contest (e.g. singing, drawing, etc.) Death is the judge. All Decisions of Death are Final.

In general, the Valerii should compete to the best of their abilities for the first round of challenges. For the second round (when participants who lost the first time try a different challenge) the Valerius corpses should use their judgment about whether to "throw" the competition or not. If this encounter has already lasted the prescribed amount of time, or if the participant in question is seeming really dejected, then the staff person should probably lose as realistically as possible.

However, it's also important that no participant feels we let them win because they were pathetic, so all staff people should use their best judgment on this. If the participants still seem into the activity, it's best if every participant genuinely wins!

Educational Goals: to force each person to articulate their skills and strengths. To encourage the participants to determine the best way to utilize the talents of the entire group.

Item(s) to give the participants: 8 Hand of Death pendants

Other item(s) staff people need with them: Death should make sure that there is a pencil and paper available, since many challenges might require these items. Other than that, participants will need to use the items they already have with them. Someone should make sure they have the blue lightbulb(s), which will go in the inner room, providing the only light.

Approximate time this activity should take: 1 hour - 75 minutes (starting when the participants enter the crypt)

getting the Radiant Staff from the Nightwalkers

staff involved:

Aleeya Witchborn -- Deb Lack

the Nightwalkers -- Jen Morris, Katie Paugh, Kevin Kulp, Mara Feingold-Link, Mike Scandizzo, Scott Moore

Iolanthe Witchborn -- Michelle Nathan

Sergeant of this activity: Scott Moore

Where: in the woods above Hillcrest

of participants on this mission: 6

Info for the Makai to give group: Aleeya Witchborn tells the group that Kemma Runereader and the other Makai spoke with her, explaining that they need a Radiant Staff for the ritual they're planning. Aleeya has information about a Radiant Staff in a note written by a member of her mother's coven, shortly before Iolanthe died. Aleeya reads the letter aloud:

This concerns our ongoing (and, we might add, underappreciated) attempts to protect the people and property of World's Edge. To this end, we have enchanted an extremely powerful magical artifact, a Radiant Staff. It is not wholly clear to us at this time what the Staff will be needed for; but various premonitions and portents make it clear that it will be required at some time in the future.

Our experiences with the citizenry of World's Edge convince us that they are a well-meaning but occasionally misguided lot who might be tempted to waste the Staff's power on some sort of triviality. To ensure that this does not happen, we have placed the Staff in a magical vault of sorts. This vault will keep the Staff safe until it is needed by virtue of the fact that we and we alone can reclaim it.

Given that the Staff may not be required until rather far in the future, we record here the method by which it may be reclaimed:

To claim the Staff, we must enter the warded ring beyond Hillcrest. No outside sources of light may be brought into this ring.

The warded area is guarded by our Nightwalkers. The Nightwalkers were created using drops of Iolanthe's own blood, ensuring that her Witchborn blood will repel them. She and anyone with her will be safe from the Nightwalkers.

The seven of us must proceed to the very center of the ring which we have marked with an everburning lantern. Iolanthe will stand at the lantern while the rest of us encircle her and clasp hands, forming a ring around her. We will speak the words "The ward is unlocked" three times in unison.

Iolanthe will remain at the lantern. The other six of us will each move towards the periphery of the warded circle. Of course, once we leave Iolanthe's side, we will be as vulnerable as any to the Nightwalkers. Blind and deaf though they are, they can sense heat and motion, and for this reason, each of us must walk alone, lest the greater warmth of two bodies draw them closer. And, of course, we need to move slowly, lest our haste alert them to our presence.

Moving so, each of us must proceed to the outer edge of the ring. There, each of us must claim the pendant-keys that wait for us. No one person may claim more than one pendant. The Staff will be reclaimed by all of us, or none at all.

Once each of us has placed her pendant 'round her neck, she may return – still slowly and alone – to the center of the ring. When all of us have returned, we must join hands once more about Iolanthe, and speak the words "The ward is opened" in unison.

If all has gone as it should, the Radiant Staff will then be returned to us.

Aleeya reminds them that the note claims only the original coven members can reclaim the staff. Iolanthe Witchborn is no longer living, but Aleeya shares Iolanthe's blood. Aleeya is hoping this will be enough to "unlock" the magical vault the coven set up long ago.

Aleeya asks the group if any of them know anything about Nightwalkers. If there is a ranger in the group, s/he can read the Creature Lore about these creatures to the other participants. If there are no rangers present, Aleeya gives the group the following information, especially making sure they understand the underlined parts:

Little is known about these dark and mysterious creatures. They are both deaf and blind but can innately sense heat and motion. The touch of a nightwalker is paralytic, and only the embrace of a living soul can restore vigor and motion to the immobilized victim. Nightwalkers are unharmed by weapon or magic; one's only protection is to avoid them completely.

Aleeya talks to the group about what this means. The note from the coven has already given some information about the Nightwalkers, but the lore tells the group a bit more, like the fact that the Nightwalkers can't be affected by weapons or magic. (Aleeya doesn't have to volunteer this info, but if any of the group suggest it, keeper's prayers don't work on the Nightwalkers either.)

The fact that Nightwalkers are deaf and blind means that the group doesn't need to worry about moving silently or hiding behind trees or whatever.

It's also important to know that the Nightwalkers' touch is paralytic, and that if someone is frozen this way, it takes a hug from another living person to un-freeze them.

Lastly, the note has already said this, but it's really important that the group understand the part that states that the Nightwalkers can sense both heat and motion. The part about heat means the more people there are close together, the likelier it is that Nightwalkers will find them. And the part about motion, of course, means that the faster they move, the more at risk they are. [This challenge only works if the participants understand this, so it's important to make sure they do!]

Before going out, Aleeya should check with the Basement to make sure all the Nightwalkers have had time to get in place!

Activity: Aleeya leads the participants up to Hillcrest. She tells them to leave their swords/bows/dirks, shields, and spell/prayerbooks there, since none of those things will be useful against the Nightwalkers and will only encumber them. If any of them are carrying much else (big party path items, etc.) they should leave those as well. (If participants are concerned about this, Aleeya can quickly reassure them on reality that nothing bad will happen to the items. If it's raining at the time, Aleeya should just have them leave all these things in the tavern.)

Aleeya also reminds the participants that, during the following activity, they may not use flashlights or other lanterns/light sources. (The note from the coven actually says that "no outside light source may be brought into the area", and people who want to are welcome to leave these items with their other belongings. If, however, people would prefer to keep their flashlights with them "just in case", that's fine.)

Aleeya reminds the groups that, once they enter the warded ring, there will be Nightwalkers there. They will be safe from the Nightwalkers as long as they're with her – that is, while they're walking into the center and walking back out again. When they need to split up, however, they will all be vulnerable. She asks the group if they understand what they need to do to keep themselves safe from the Nightwalkers. Aleeya shouldn't proceed until she's sure the group understands all of the above-stated rules! Aleeya should remind the party, on reality, that they must not try to run while doing this activity. (This may well seem like it goes without saying here, but years ago when we did a version of this activity, we had multiple instances of people trying this. This is both incredibly unsafe and also means that the activity doesn't work. Therefore, Aleeya should take a minute and make clear that they're not to do this, period.)

Aleeya then leads the group into the wood "above" Hillcrest (not toward the Makai camp, but more-or-less continuing in the direction the path into Hillcrest is already going.) There will be a trail of small lanterns to lead the way; we will also show Aleeya the locations for this challenge before the event begins.

When the group reaches the end of the trail of small lanterns, they will be able to see one larger lantern hanging by itself in the woods. This is the center of the warded ring, Aleeya tells the group, and she leads them to it.

Once they are at the light, Aleeya reminds them they need to join hands in a circle around her and say the words "The ward is unlocked" three times loudly in unison.

While the participants have been making their way to the central lantern, the Nightwalkers have each been waiting next to one of the smaller lanterns that ring the circle. Unlike the central lantern, which is lit when the participants arrive, the small lanterns that ring the circle only get turned on when the participants say their "The ward is unlocked" part.

The participants then need to each head toward a different light to claim a pendant there.

While they do this, the Nightwalkers patrol the area. In general, ONLY the Sergeant of the Nightwalkers should actually paralyze anyone. (Otherwise, this encounter will take *forever*.) The Sergeant should paralyze at least one participant during the encounter, but probably no more than 2 total. Of course, if another Nightwalker is standing near a participant who's waving their arms around or flagrantly moving fast, then that Nightwalker should paralyze that participant in the interest of maintaining "realism." When paralyzing a participant, the Nightwalker should grasp the participant's arm firmly enough that that person knows they're paralyzed. (The Nightwalker can also whisper "you're paralyzed until embraced by a living person" if it doesn't seem like the participant understands.)

The original purpose of this encounter was to provide an adrenaline-producing activity that was not combat-based. The Nightwalkers can fulfill this goal by making the activity as scary as possible. Staring right at the participant with wide “unseeing” Nightwalker eyes is effective for this, as is staying very close (for a minute or so) to a participant while they try not to move at all.

Once the participants have claimed the pendant-keys and returned to the central lantern, the Nightwalkers should just fade back into the darkness. The participants each put on their pendant, surround Aleeya at the central lantern, join hands and say “The ward is opened” three times in unison. When they do this, Aleeya is able to take the staff that’s attached to the central lantern’s pole. (It’s attached with twist-ties or something else trivial to remove.)

Aleeya speaks up then. She’s sort of musing, but she also needs to speak loudly, so that she’s audible to more than just the participants. She says that something’s been bothering her about all this. She remembers her mother talking about this warded circle, a long time ago. Aleeya says that she doesn’t remember much about what her mother said, but... she’s pretty sure there was supposed to be a final test of some kind.

A voice in the darkness says “Very good, Aleeya.”

This, of course, is the voice of Iolanthe Witchborn. The participants won’t ever see her, but she needs to be hidden near enough so she can hear them (at least a little) while still being outside the warded ring. Possibly she’ll have a microphone that’s transmitting to a wireless outdoor speaker near the central lantern, or she might just need to project. (The hope, of course, is that her voice will seem impossibly and mysteriously close to them.) We’ll need to work the locations for all this out during set-up.

Aleeya says “Um... mom?”

Iolanthe: “I am sorry that our methods for protecting our creation have caused you difficulty. And I am sorry that I am with you now only in spirit rather than in the flesh. But you were correct: there is one final test before the staff can be yours, and it is this: Aleeya Witchborn, it is time for you to call your own coven to lead, and you are now commanded to do so. No longer can you enjoy the smiles and the sunshine of the Roamer ways. A witch’s path is a dark and dour one. Are you ready to inherit the legacy of your foremothers and the fate assigned to you at birth?”

Aleeya: (pausing for a minute before answering): “No! I mean, yes, I think I’d like a coven of my own. But... I don’t want to do it your way! I want parties and sunshine and happy times, too! I’m *not* you, and I won’t *be* you!”

Iolanthe: “The Radiant Staff is an item of great power. It was always our concern that it would fall into the hands of those who live without integrity. No matter what comes to pass this night, remember: Never let someone else tell you who to be. Congratulations, all of you. The staff is yours. And... Aleeya, go forth, and be your very own sort of witch.”

When Iolanthe says “Congratulations”, Aleeya surreptitiously flips the small switch on the staff, so that it starts to glow. Now it looks like a Radiant Staff.

Aleeya: (quietly): “I love you, mama.”

Iolanthe: “I love you too, sweet girl.”

And then, unbothered by Nightwalkers, they are able to leave together.

Educational Goals: to force the group to design a strategy that verifies and maintains the safety of every member of the group.

Item(s) to give the participants: the Radiant Staff

Other item(s) staff people need with them: the poles for the lanterns will be in place already, but staff need to take the central lantern, 6 smaller lanterns to ring the perimeter and the other small lanterns with them; they also need to bring the speakers and microphone with them, as well as the Radiant Staff and whatever we’re using to attach it to the center pole.

Approximate time this activity should take: 30 minutes (from the time when the participants arrived at the warded ring)

getting the Tokens of Undying Affection from the dance of the dead

staff involved:

Kovi Woundtender -- Jodi Riley

the Beast -- Greg Reid

the Ghost Dancers -- Ben Warren, Edgar Fisher, Jeff Anderson, Jess Schoolman, Jo Agostinelli, Lynn Chiavacci, Marsha Gershon, Morgan Harris-Warrick

Sergeant of this activity: Edgar Fisher

Where: in the Graveyard (note: ghost dancers need to remove the graves and hide them in the woods before the participants arrive. If there's time, it would be great if the ghost dancers could then set the graves back up when they're done with this encounter. If there's no time, however, remind the EMs about this and someone can re-set the graves later.)

of participants on this mission: 8

Info for the Makai to give group: Before the participants leave the Inn, Woundtender asks if any of them know the stories about what happens in the World's Edge graveyard around the Rites of Remembrance. If any of the participants present are travelers, they will have this information in their lore. If not, other participants may have heard some of this. Either way, Woundtender should make sure that the participants know the following:

Far less peaceful are the dark legends you have heard about the World's Edge graveyard. It is said that, every year during the Rites of Remembrance, the spirits of the pure and honorable who have died rise from the ground in which they are laid and engage in a unearthly dance. Few mortals see this sight and live, but those that do describe the heartbreaking beauty of this dance of the dead. But then the survivors grow ashen-faced and whisper of a force of unparalleled evil that lurks there. With trembling hands, they warn their listeners to stay far, far away from that graveyard on these nights.

Woundtender has never seen this dance of the dead, and she knows nothing further about it. She tells them to go quickly to the graveyard, and not to stop for anything along the way. (Mostly, we just want them not to dawdle walking there, since we don't want the activity to take too long. But this also sounds scary and ominous, which is a nice side benefit.)

Note that some of the participant groups are being led to their encounter and some are not. This group is not. As soon as the participants leave, Woundtender should come downstairs.

Activity: When the participants reach the graveyard, they will see four ghostly couples, waltzing to the music that comes from the woods. (The Beast will actually be controlling the sound system playing the music, although of course the participants won't see that.) Each ghost looks deeply into his/her partner's eyes and will occasionally speak to the partner.

If the participants attempt to speak with the ghost dancers, the ghosts will simply ignore the participants and will continue dancing. If a participant has a magical artifact that allows them to Speak With Ghost and use it on one of the dancers, that couple will stop dancing just long enough to say: "We wish we could help you, but we cannot. We cannot stop dancing. Please understand; we will fall to the Beast if we do." And then they will resume dancing.

If a living participant attempts to "cut in" to the dance, the ghosts simply shake their heads and continue dancing. If Speak With Ghost is still in effect and the keeper attempts to cut in, the ghost who has been cast on will say "I cannot dance with you. I am a ghost." If there is no such magic in effect, the ghosts gestures to themselves, to their pale faces and ghostly attire, and then sadly shake their heads 'no.' If participants enter the dance as a couple but don't attempt to actually dance with any of the ghosts, this will work (although it won't get them any closer to achieving their goal of getting tokens of affection.)

After the participants have been present for a few minutes, the Beast begins to speak for the first time. (He is still hidden in the woods at this point.) The Beast is the "force of unparalleled evil" referred to in the traveler's lore. On this night, he attempts to capture the souls of the honorable ghosts. The ghosts dance because the purity and beauty of the dance serve to repel the Beast's evil nature. But if the ghosts break their concentration even briefly, their souls are in danger.

The Beast calls out to the ghosts, entreating them to come with him, promising that then they will be able to rest. As he speaks, the ghost dancers focus intently on their partners, desperately trying to keep anyone from being seduced away by the Beast's lies. As his entreaties are ignored, the Beast begins to lose patience. He begins hissing, snarling, and cursing at the dancers, threatening that they cannot resist him much longer.

After about 5-10 minutes, the Beast will grow even more impatient and will actually come into the clearing where the dance is taking place. He continues to menace (without touching) the ghostly dancers. As the Beast pays attention to an individual pair of dancers, they should stare into each other's eyes even more urgently, whispering to each other as they fight to avoid being "pulled away" by the Beast's mental powers.

Before they themselves enter the dance, the participants may try to kill the Beast or may try to stop him in some other way. Neither magic nor weapons (including Mystical Sleep, soothing, etc.) will have any effect on the Beast other than to annoy him further.

At some point in the action, the participants will hopefully realize that they must somehow enter the dance, but that they can only do so if they themselves are ghosts. Realizing intellectually that one needs to be a ghost and actually making the decision to take one's own life are two very different things. It will probably take the participants a considerable amount of time to take the necessary action. (Past participants, however, have said that this was a very powerful and meaningful scene for them.)

If 20-25 minutes have gone by and the participants have not yet killed themselves, or if they continue to attack or impede the Beast, the Beast will kill one of the participants. If this person is resurrected, the Beast will continue to kill until one of the participants becomes a ghost. (The Beast can kill merely by pointing at the participant in question and describing something horrible and fatal that happens to him/her.)

If this ghostly participant attempts to enter the dance, she can now speak with the ghost dancers. However, they tell her that she cannot "cut in" because then one of the ghost dancers will not have a partner. Hopefully, this will suggest to the participants that another participant must also kill himself so that both ghost participants can enter the dance at the same time. If more time passes without the participants realizing this, the Beast should kill another participant. After this, the Beast should not kill any other participants.

If pairs of ghost participants start dancing but don't attempt to waltz with any of the ghost dancers, the ghost dancers will eventually cut in on the participants so that the participants get "integrated" into the dance.

If there have been two ghostly participants for several minutes but they still haven't made any move to enter the dance, then the dancers should pull them in and give each of them a staff dance partner.

Note: with this whole activity, it's much better if the staff err on the side of waiting too long for the participants to take action, rather than hurrying to "help them figure it out".

Once the participants have entered the dance, their dance partners can tell them all about the situation: about how the Beast torments them in this way every year, and that they must resist. (If a ghost does "slip away" and fall under the Beast's control, then they themselves will become a thing of great evil, just as the Beast himself is. All the ghosts are pure souls who deplore this fate.) They beg their dance partners to keep up the dance and help them stay focused so they do not slip away.

The dancers can tell the participants their names (they aren't the ghosts of any "brand-name" characters, so they should just make up random names) and ask the participants about themselves.

If the participants ask at all about the tokens of affection, the ghosts look a little shocked and say that they've only just met the participants.

Occasionally while dancing with the participants, each ghost dancer begins to "slip away": his eyes become wide and unfocussed and his words trail off. He turns his head slowly toward the Beast. In order to call him back, his participant dance-partner must speak to him, look into his eyes, call his name or anything else to regain contact. If the participant isn't getting it, the ghost can become more obvious or can whisper "help me" or something. If other ghosts notice this happening, they can also tell the participant what do to.

After all the participants have entered the dance, the Beast should leave the clearing for just a moment. At the end of the next song, he should switch to the "crescendo waltz" - about five minutes of continuous dancing that speeds up and speeds up to final dramatic conclusion. As the music gets faster, the dancers will all need to move faster and the Beast will begin to scream and howl. When the music ends, the Beast realizes he has been thwarted. He gives a last horrible scream and collapses to the ground, dead.

The ghost dancers (once they've caught their breath!) will thankfully tell the participants that they've never before managed to last without at least one soul slipping away. They believe that, by doing so, they have finally broken the Beast's hold over them. As a symbol of their grateful appreciation, each ghost takes a pendant from under their shirt and places it around the participant's neck as a token of their undying affection. The ghosts then waft off into the woods.

(After the participants have gone, the ghost dancers need to replace all the gravestones. Please be certain to put Jon Golden's gravestone where it was in the center of the clearing, so that Sythwan's party path ending will work!)

Educational Goals: to force the participants to have enough confidence in their own ideas that they will take dramatic action - in this case, suicide - without knowing for sure whether it is "the right thing to do". To encourage personal sacrifice for the greater good. To require the participants to establish intense personal contact with a stranger (their ghostly dance partner).

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Item(s) to give the participants: pendants to serve as "tokens of undying affection"

Other item(s) staff people need with them: the sound system, extra batteries, matches and candles for the torches

Approximate time this activity should take: 45 minutes - 1 hour (starting when the participants arrive at the graveyard)

getting the Gloom Crystal from the Dreadwright and his Fallen

staff involved:

Kira -- Kelsey Shultz

the Dreadwright -- Cris Shuldiner

the Fallen Spokesman -- Ozzie Osborne

the Fallen -- Ariel Jaffee, Dave Nadig, Henny Admoni, Kayla Schlenz, Kenneth Reeves, Kim Ricket, Kris Size, Mike Robb, Ozzie Osborne

Sergeant of this activity: Ozzie Osborne

Where: the Forsaken Forest

of participants on this mission: 8 (4 casters and 4 non-casters)

Info for the Makai to give group: This group must retrieve the Gloom Crystal, a pendant which is currently in the possession of the Dreadwright. Kira tells the participants that the only way to claim this item is to go into the Forsaken Forest and defeat the Dreadwright in battle.

Kira asks if any of them know the stories about the Forsaken Forest. If any of the participants present are travelers, they will have this information in their lore. If not, other participants may have heard some of this. Either way, Kira should make sure that the participants know the following:

The folk of World's Edge claim the Forsaken Forest is home to the Dreadwright, a magical warrior of such tremendous power that the glade in which he made his home was scoured barren of all living things and is in truth a forest no more. Is it true that merely entering this foul place renders a person too terrified to speak and too weak to walk? People say so, but few know for sure. Some say there's an enchanted artifact that lets one enter the Forest, but surely the prudent choice is simply to stay out of this malevolent clearing... or possibly out of World's Edge entirely.

Kira says that there are indeed artifacts – enchanted bracers – that let people enter the Forest without succumbing to terror or weakness. Kira has the bracers for them and will give them out momentarily.

First, Kira explains the following things to the participants:

- When they enter the Forsaken Forest, the Dreadwright will first force them to fight his minions, whom he calls the Fallen. We can think of this as “Phase 1” of the challenge.
- During Phase 1, they will be magically bound together: one caster bound to one non-caster. They may pair themselves up any way they wish.
- During Phase 1, all four casters will be invulnerable. However, if a non-caster is killed, the caster bound to him/her is also immediately killed.
- The Forest is powerfully magical. A caster who uses the Death spell there will not suffer from spell fatigue.
- If anyone survives Phase 1, they will then need to fight the Dreadwright. We can think of this as “Phase 2” of the challenge.
- The Dreadwright is a magical warrior. While he is on the field – that is, during Phase 2 – no magic of any kind – no caster spells, seeker wards, maker wands or magical items – may be used.
- During Phase 2, the casters and non-casters are no longer bound together, so the death of one of them does no harm to the paired person.
- During Phase 2, the casters are no longer invulnerable.

Kira should take the time to ensure that all of the participants are clear on these rules. (This is important because it will be harder for the Fallen or the Dreadwright to enlighten any confused participants. Also, this is a faster activity than the others, so there's no need to rush the participants out.)

After everyone is clear on the rules, Kira presents them with the 8 enchanted bracers. In addition to allowing them to enter the Forsaken Forest, each pair of bracers (one for a caster, one for a non-caster) provides an additional benefit as described below.

Kira encourages the participants to pair up and to choose who will receive which bracers. Again, this activity is significantly quicker than most/all the other activities, so we're hoping that pairing up/choosing bracers will take a while and will be an opportunity for strategizing. Kira shouldn't do the strategizing for the participants, but if it hasn't seemed to occur to them that they *can* and *should* strategize, she may want to ask, "Is there any benefit to giving certain bracers to certain people?" or somesuch.

State-of-being scrolls for the bracers all say "You may read this" on the outside. They are as follows:

Steelbound Bracers

You may both enter the Forsaken Forest without suffering ill effects.

All free-hits are now restored to both of you.

[Both wearers join right hands and speak the words: "The power of steel binds us together."]

From now until the Dreadwright appears, the force of steel binds you together. If the non-caster who wears this bracer is killed, they loudly call out "Steelbound! I am slain!" If this happens, the caster who wears this bracer is immediately killed as well.

Ironbound Bracers

You may both enter the Forsaken Forest without suffering ill effects.

For the next two hours, both of you have your non-sword arms rendered invulnerable. Blows to this arm do not remove free-hits or cause wounds. You may thus use this arm as a shield; you may NOT use it to shove, hit, restrain or grab an opponent.

[Both wearers join right hands and speak the words: "The power of iron binds us together."]

From now until the Dreadwright appears, the force of iron binds you together. If the non-caster who wears this bracer is killed, they loudly call out "Ironbound! I am slain!" If this happens, the caster who wears this bracer is immediately killed as well.

Copperbound Bracers

You may both enter the Forsaken Forest without suffering ill effects.

The caster of this pair may choose any two previously-used spells from your spellbook; these spells are now renewed.

[Both wearers join right hands and speak the words: "The power of copper binds us together."]

From now until the Dreadwright appears, the force of copper binds you together. If the non-caster who wears this bracer is killed, they loudly call out "Copperbound! I am slain!" If this happens, the caster who wears this bracer is immediately killed as well.

[Note: one copperbound bracer should have two spell-stickers with it.]

Brassbound Bracers

You may both enter the Forsaken Forest without suffering ill effects.

The caster of this pair may place these two spell pages – Trumpet Blast and Brass Knuckles – into your spellbook.

[Both wearers join right hands and speak the words: "The power of brass binds us together."]

From now until the Dreadwright appears, the force of brass binds you together. If the non-caster who wears this bracer is killed, they loudly call out "Brassbound! I am slain!" If this happens, the caster who wears this bracer is immediately killed as well.

The two spell pages each have a sticker attached. The text is as follows:

Trumpet Blast

I, [name], a brassbound caster, do cast the spell of Trumpet Blast upon [specify one target]. Your mind is now filled with an earsplitting note audible only to you! For the next minute, you can do nothing but cover your ears. Let it be done!

Brass Knuckles

I, [name], a brassbound caster, do cast the spell of Brass Knuckles upon [specify two targets]. You are each struck solidly in the jaw with the magical might of brass! You will be knocked backward and stunned. Let it be done!

Once the participants understand all this, they can leave the tavern whenever they want. Kira should let the Basement know before the participants go out.

Note that some of the participant groups are being led to their encounter and some are not. This group is not. As soon as the participants leave, Kira should come downstairs.

Activity: When the participants arrive at the path leading into the Forsaken Forest, they find one of the Fallen – the Spokesman – waiting for them. When any of the Fallen speak, they do so in a near-monotone, staring at the participants with wide, haunted eyes. This one speaks to them now and says: “My master sensed you coming. It amuses him that you think yourselves worthy to challenge him. You will fight against those of us who serve him. If any of you survive, he will then show himself. Come this way.”

He leads them up into the clearing. 5 smallish (approximately 15” in diameter) rings are lit on the ground: one central blue ring with 4 white rings around them. The other Fallen are visible frozen in combat-ready poses, 2 outside each of the four white rings.

The Fallen Spokesman asks, “Who among you are casters?” When the 4 casters identify themselves, he points to the center blue ring and says “During this fight, you may not leave this ring, including by teleporting out of it. Do you understand?” If anyone is confused, he should answer their questions or make clarifications. The activity doesn’t work if participants aren’t following the rules!

He then turns to the four non-casters and says, “Each of the rest of you will now go into an empty ring. During this fight, you may not leave this ring, including by teleporting out of it.”

He continues speaking to the non-casters: “At times, your ring will be lit; at other times, it will be dark. You are vulnerable only when your ring is lit. You may only act or move when your ring is lit. (or whatever to explain to them how the lights are going to go on and off) Do you understand?” Again, he should make absolutely sure they understand all parts of these rules before proceeding. (To clarify: no one may leave their ring. Non-casters may only act when their ring is lit. Casters may act the whole time.)

The Spokesman continues: “I will join my comrades now. Soon, we will fight you. If you are lucky, you won’t survive to face my master.”

He then walks to the edge of the nearest circle and freezes in a combat-ready pose. The rings around all four non-casters go dark. (The light over the central caster ring, and the blue caster ring will stay on throughout “Phase 1”.)

The Fallen all stay frozen in place until a non-caster ring is lit by the Dreadwright (who is not visible to the participants), at which point they are free to move.

For non-caster rings that are lit, the Fallen should engage in normal combat with the non-caster in that ring. Fallen are free to exit and enter the four non-caster rings as they please, but they should avoid swarming a single non-caster. Most of the time, we expect 1-2 Fallen to be in each ring, occasionally as many as 3 but no more.

For non-caster rings that are dark, the non-caster is unable to act or move, but the Fallen can move freely. Fallen in darkened rings should not attack the participants, but can move and whisper to them. We are hoping that this adds to the intensity and creepiness of the scene, as the participants will never know when their ring will come back on and having the Fallen stalking behind and around them is likely to keep them on edge. Fallen should change rings frequently while the rings are dark so that no single participant ends up fighting the same staff member repeatedly.

Fallen should ignore the casters in the center blue ring. They cannot be harmed and are not to be taunted, as it may interfere with their ability to cast.

The Dreadwright, who is controlling the lighting, should aim to provide each of the participant rings with enough time for a few spells to be cast before switching to another ring, but not long enough for the combat to necessarily resolve during a single light-on cycle. Part of the intensity of this event will result from the single-combat aspect of being alone and having all attention focused on you and part will come from the uncertainty while waiting – of never knowing when your turn will come next. After an initial lights-on time for each of the four non-caster rings, the Dreadwright should begin randomly selecting a single ring – the lack of a pattern will add to the uncertainty! The Dreadwright does not need to wait until all of the Fallen in a ring are dead before moving on and lighting another ring. As things progress, at the Dreadwright’s discretion, two or more rings can be turned on simultaneously to provide one more shock of uncertainty to the combat.

In the fight with the Fallen, hopefully at least one of the non-casters will be killed, although this should ideally happen after the fight has gone on long enough for that fighter’s paired caster to get a chance to cast most of their spells. It’s fine if 2 or 3 of the fighters are killed. The only critical rule is that the Fallen MUST NOT kill all 4 of them! One purpose of the first phase is to weaken the participants – much like the waves of Wolves or Ghouls in the other Saturday night combats – before the final action. The Dreadwright will need to decide when to end this first phase so that the final confrontation is challenging but not impossible. When “Phase 1” is over, the Fallen Spokesman steps forward close enough to be seen/heard but not so close that he gets hit by a

fighter's sword. He presses his hand against his chest or side as though staunching the flow of blood. He says: "You have bested we who serve my Master, and some of you yet survive. This angers my Master and he will soon come to finish you. Before that time, clear your dead from the field." He gestures to a safe part of the clearing where the dead can wait without getting stepped on in the next combat. The Fallen dead quietly get up and head back into the darkness as well.

The rope-lights marking the five small rings go out and a new string of red rope-lights, marking a ring around the whole clearing, and overhead lights, light up.

The Spokesman speaks again: "During this fight, you may not leave this ring."

He continues: "You who are casters are now vulnerable once more. No longer are you paired together. Your death, when it comes, will be yours and yours alone. Do you understand?" Again, he should clarify anything as needed.

He presses his hand harder into his side and his voice falters: "My Master is... angered by... your success. It will... please him... to finish you." He staggers backward, safely out of the way of the next combat, and dies.

After a few seconds, a figure emerges from the darkness: the Dreadwright. Before he reaches the ring, he says: "So. You've bested my Fallen, and some of you are still standing. That won't last. I will kill you, and once you're all dead, I will re-make you and you will serve me as my new Fallen. Let us begin, then!" And with that, he enters the ring.

It will hopefully be clearly evident how many participants are still alive. How hard the Dreadwright needs to fight will of course vary dramatically if there are 2 participants or 6. Regardless, however, he should do as all high-powered 'monsters' do, endeavoring to make the fight last a long time and be satisfying to all the participants before some of them are killed.

They've all already been told that no magic -- not caster spells, seeker wards, maker wands or magical items -- is possible when the Dreadwright is on the field. (Note that this doesn't just mean that no spells can be cast on him. It ALSO means that no spells can be used at all, so Teleport Self or Teleport Other also won't work.) Hopefully the casters remembered this rule and didn't save their spells, but if they do try to cast something, the Dreadwright says "Foolish! I am made of magic! Your paltry enchantments are impossible near me!" or whatever it takes to let them know it doesn't work.

The Dreadwright only needs to leave one participant standing at the end, but he should of course be careful about this, since it's better to leave too many participants alive than too few. He should also remember that half the remaining participants are casters; this may be the first time all weekend that they've engaged with their dirks, so the Dreadwright should be careful of both real safety issues and also of killing them too easily.

Ultimately, the Dreadwright is killed. He's wearing the Gloom Crystal pendant around his neck (on a chain long enough that the participants can get it off him easily!)

After the participants have claimed the Crystal and headed back to the tavern, the staff at this activity should make sure all lights in the Forsaken Forest are turned out so that they don't disturb SoulSpeaking.

Educational Goals: to give casters a chance to use their spells without whistle-festing the larger battle. to give non-casters a chance to shine individually. to bond pairs of participants together and give them a chance to protect each other. to force casters (some of whom don't necessarily fight much) to take responsibility for protecting others.

Item(s) to give the participants: the participants will take the Gloom Crystal pendant which the Dreadwright wears, plus the Makai need the 8 bracers to give them before they head out

Other item(s) the staff need with them: the battery pack and light switchboard (if not left at Forsaken Forest during setup)

Approximate time this activity should take: 15 - 20 minutes (starting when the participants reach the Forsaken Forest)

creating the Portal Stone amidst the Wolven siege

staff involved:

Kyson Wayseeker -- Rich Longmore

Changed Obsidian -- Brian Scassellati

the Iron General -- Mike Hsieh

the Wolven Caster -- Betsy Rosenblatt

Wolven fighters -- Abigail Vargus, Alex Sheehan, Amos Meeks, Bob Coury, Brace Peters, Bri Taborn, Chelsea Hadlock, Dana Sullivan, Dave Korka, David San Clemente, Deo Gallotto, Emily Bernier, James Surano, Janet Potter, Joyce Farnsworth, Julie Gruszynske, Justin Hart, Lane Daniels, Margot Holmes, Marléna Soble, Merri Rosen, Nadav Barkae, Paul San Clemente, Rich Pellosie, Rowan Scassellati, Tom Ricket, Tricia Boynton, Zak Terry

Sergeants of this activity: Deo Gallotto and Janet Potter

Where: the entrance to the Wild Lands (far up the Fool's Errand trail)

of participants on this mission: approximately 15

Info for the Makai to give group: Kyson Wayseeker tells the group how grateful he is that they have bravely agreed to accompany Obsidian to the Wild Lands. Wayseeker warns the assembled group that there is liable to be a significant Wolven presence in the Wild Lands, and surely they will attempt to disrupt any beneficial ritual done there.

Obsidian says that he hasn't ever done the ritual to create a Portal Stone before, and he's not certain he can, but the ritual is quite straightforward. Obsidian says that the ritual must be performed over a cauldron. The cauldron itself need not be remarkable in any way, but the manner of its conveyance is. Within 100 yards of the loci of concentrated evil energy, it must be borne aloft by two sanctified Cauldron Bearers, one upon either side, and from the time this area is entered until the ritual is complete, the cauldron may not touch the ground.

Obsidian has two pendants that he has already sanctified that are to be worn by the Cauldron Bearers. Two participants will need to serve as Cauldron Bearers:

- The Cauldron Bearers can volunteer or be chosen any other way, but it needs to be done quickly.
- The Cauldron Bearers must wear the pendants. This helps the Wolven to identify them and sets the role apart as something unique that not anyone can do.
- Anyone can carry the cauldron as far as the entrance to the Wild Lands, but from that point onward, only the two Cauldron Bearers who wear the pendants may hold it. They both may (should!) also carry swords in their non-cauldron-carrying hands. (This may help with the choosing process, because it means that having a left-handed person as one of the Cauldron Bearers makes a lot of sense.)
- This last constraint won't be evident to the participants, but it will be easier if neither Cauldron Bearer is a caster. If they're not considering this, then the staff don't need to do anything, but if they're planning on putting a caster in either of these roles, Wayseeker can point out that you can't carry a cauldron and a spellbook and a dirk. If a Cauldron Bearer is a caster and they run out of spells, they'll have nothing left. (In actuality, the issue is the Wolven are going to try to engage the Cauldron Bearers without killing them, and having a caster who's free to unleash all the spells in her book is going to make for a very long Wolven battle.) But again, if the participants are truly set on doing this, the Makai can let them.

Wayseeker reminds the group that time is of the essence. There is nothing more to be done, so they should be on their way. (The participants may want to strategize, but the Makai can reassure them that they'll have plenty of time to do this on the walk to the Wild Lands. If they take too long to get going, then this activity takes forever!) Wayseeker explains that Runereader needs him to stay behind, so he will not be accompanying them. He wishes them well. Wayseeker alerts the Basement that this group is heading out at the same time that he reports for his own activity.

Activity: Obsidian lead the participants to the Wild Lands. We'll choose the ritual location before the event begins.

When they get close to the ritual location, Obsidian informs the Cauldron Bearers that it is time for them to take the cauldron, and reminds them that they may not let it touch the ground until the ritual is done. They can walk the rest of the way, at which time Obsidian can take his position just behind the cauldron and can begin the ritual. For this, he lights a smudgestick and places it in the cauldron; this will cause smoke to waft out. He then crosses his hands over his chest and begins chanting in a low voice. Obsidian can say whatever he wants, obviously. He needs to remain in that same location throughout the battle, and needs to ensure that the Cauldron Bearers stay with him. (It's unlikely they'd try to move away, but we're mentioning it just in case.)

The Wolven will remain hidden while the participants enter the well-lit circle and Obsidian continues chanting.

This is another Wolven siege battle. Instead of putting the Wolven in the middle of the well-lit area and having the participants charge in, we will instead have the participants defending the staff members (especially Obsidian) as well as the Cauldron Bearers (who are also able to defend themselves somewhat) in the middle of the well-lit area while the Wolven attack the area in waves. We've found that this change does three important things:

- (1) it makes the fight safer, since the participants have a reason to stay in the light
- (2) it makes it easier for the Wolven to control the fight and make the fight challenging without being overwhelming
- (3) it adds tension as fewer and fewer of the participants are left standing to defend against the Wolven horde

There are indeed a large number of Wolven in the Wild Lands, but they will be hidden out of sight near the well-lit circle where the combat will occur. Most of the Wolven should be together in a large group, with 2-3 small groups of 2-3 Wolven each hidden out of sight at strategic points around the circle. The Wolven should select spots that allow them to enter the circle without tripping over the lighting wires, and where the participants will not spot them as they enter the circle. The Wolven will position a scout partway down Fool's Errand, so that the staff will have some warning before the participants arrive.

After about a minute of Obsidian's ritual, the Iron General will howl loudly from the woods. He can taunt the participants, saying how much he appreciates them bringing themselves out here. He should be very much at ease... they are, after all, in his neck of the woods now... and he is certainly not alone. He howls once more, and the rest of the Wolven join him. (This should give the participants a clear understanding that they are surrounded. This will help to keep them focused on staying near Obsidian, and the Cauldron Bearers in the center of the light.)

The Iron General can then send in 6-7 Wolven fighters as the first attack wave. When those Wolven are dead, he can give the participants a moment to recover and then order another wave of Wolven to assault them, repeating this process until only a handful (3-5) of participants are left standing (see below).

During this battle, Obsidian also needs to make sure that dead participants are gathered back behind him and sitting down. This is important for safety reasons, and also because otherwise the Wolven think there are more living participants than there really are and keep attacking!

Some things to keep in mind:

- The fight should be close, but in the end, the participants should be successful. It's fine if they suffer heavy casualties, but at least a few of them must survive.
- The Cauldron Bearers should survive. We want to make sure the battle is exciting for them, but not to put the entire ritual in danger. The Iron General or the Wolven Caster will designate certain Wolven to engage, but not to kill, the Cauldron Bearers. Wolven should only do this if explicitly instructed to.
- Each Wolven fighter in each wave can cause a wound or two. After the first few waves, there will likely be many injured limbs among the participants. After 3 waves, there will likely be some dead participants. Later waves of Wolven may need to have fewer Wolven, based on how quickly their numbers begin to drop. The activity sergeant will be responsible for adjusting the number of Wolven fighters in each wave.
- We will need most if not all of the staff to be in more than one wave. Leaving a few dead Wolven bodies on the ground near the edges of the circle will make things look very creepy for the participants, especially as the later waves add more and more bodies to the pile, but most of the dead bodies will need to roll off into the woods and then get back up. Don't let the participants see you do this! A good idea is to wait until the next wave has started attacking and then stay low and get off the battlefield while the participants are distracted.
- Obsidian will try to keep the dead participants in one spot by encouraging the live participants to move the bodies of their fallen comrades to a safe spot near the center of the field. While walking to the Wild Lands, Obsidian should warn the participants that the area is warded to prevent ghosts from wandering. We want it to be clear who is alive and who is dead and to make sure that no participants are trampled in the making of this siege.

- The Iron General should give the participants a few moments to collect themselves after each wave... this will give them time to clear the battlefield. It will also let their desperation start to sink in as they realize that there is no end in sight and there are fewer and fewer of them left standing after each wave. Taunting is a part of the job description.
- There will be one Wolven spellcaster (who will also be carrying a sword), who should stay hidden with the Iron General. The job of this spellcaster is to maintain the nature of the challenge that this combat presents. We don't think that it will be necessary for this spellcaster to do anything during the battle, but you never know what those wily participants will do. The caster should nullify or redirect any mass-impact spells (like Illusion) that would end the battle too quickly and easily. Please use your judgment about this and utilize this only if absolutely necessary. We don't want the participant casters to feel useless. If it is critical to use a Nullify spell, the caster should specify in the spell wording that the spell is too powerful to be Redirected or Reflected; the staff's (correct but initially puzzling) assertion that Nullify cannot be Reflected has caused much participant confusion in the past.)
- Remember that it will be quite dark (even with the generator and lights we'll have going) and that the participants will probably be really scared. Be extra careful to avoid dangerous situations, especially those caused by fallen bodies (participants and Wolven!).

In the third or fourth wave (depending on the number of participants still standing, but hopefully when about half the participants are dead), the Iron General will join the attack, staying in the lit area for the remainder of the encounter. The job of directing Wolven waves will be assumed by the Wolven Caster.

When there are only 2-4 participants left standing, the Iron General (and depending on the number of live participants, a bodyguard or two) will make one final assault against the Cauldron Bearers. Once the Iron General and the last of the accompanying bodyguard Wolven are defeated, Obsidian will quickly gather together the surviving participants and ghosts and hastily return to the tavern.

Educational Goals: to force the participants to devise a unique strategy for a combat situation

Item(s) to give the participants: None

Other item(s) staff people need to have with them: The Wolven need a spell whistle for the caster. Obsidian needs to have a smudge stick and the portal stone, the cauldron, and the two pendants.

Approximate time this activity should take: 20-25 minutes (starting when the Wolven scout first spots the participants)

getting the Soul Magnet from the Banshee and her Ghouls

staff involved:

Kiko Truthspeaker -- Gretchen Albright

Kable Worldwatcher -- Matthew Scott

the Banshee -- Mirin Scassellati

the Ghouls -- Aaron Size, Alison Morris, Ana Quintana, Anna Kelly, Blake Geno, Brian Neff, Christine Reeves, Cliff Young, Dave Kamin, Dorian Hart, Erin Geno, Esther Lee, Greg Rothauser, Jen Platt, Jim Vincent, John Nann, Kelsey Schultz, Laura Hiatt, Lori Nadig, Matt Miles, Matthew Scott, Melissa Crouch Chang, Neal Desai, Nils Klinkenberg, Rich Longmore, Rob Daviau, Sherry Rinell, Tenille Reichert and Vanessa Robb

Sergeants of this activity: Laura Hiatt and Nils Klinkenberg

Where: between the two horse-stable barns

of participants on this mission: approximately 16 (none of them male)

Info for the Makai to give group: This group must retrieve the Soul Magnet pin the Banshee wears. Kiko Truthspeaker tells them (in case they're confused) that there is no way to do this except to kill the Banshee and all the Ghouls.

Truthspeaker asks the group if any of them know about Banshees and Ghouls. If there is a ranger in the group, she can read the Creature Lore about these creatures to the other participants. If there are no rangers present, Truthspeaker gives the group the following information, especially making sure they understand the underlined parts:

When an extraordinarily evil woman dies, she may return in the form of a banshee. Banshees roam the land, wailing a low, mournful cry. Any living man who hears the banshee's cry has no choice but to follow her endlessly till he eventually dies of fatigue, exposure or starvation. It is fortunate that banshees are very rare, because they are virtually invulnerable. Immune to magic, a banshee can only be killed by a woman wearing the Pendant of Fortuna d'Oro.

Ghouls are the foulest of the walking dead. They feed upon human corpses and especially enjoy those that are freshly killed. Normally, ghouls are as vulnerable as living humans to either steel or magic. However, ghouls who are with a banshee will continue to rise up even after they are "killed." For this reason, it is even more important to destroy ghouls as soon as they are found. If they do find a banshee and join her entourage of tormented souls, the ghouls have become virtually immortal and will terrorize the infested land forever.

Kable Worldwatcher asks the group if they understand the specifics of the Pendant of Fortuna d'Oro. If there is a maker in the group, she can read the Item Lore about the pendant to the other participants. If there are no makers present, Worldwatcher gives the group the following information, especially making sure they understand the underlined parts:

This enchanted item, forged by a caster-smith many, many years ago, is said to allow the wearer to kill the hated Banshee. ... The pendant must be worn for at least twenty minutes before its magical benefits are felt. And for the entire time it is worn - right from the moment it is placed around the neck - it renders the wearer so weak that she cannot stand, but must either sit or be carried about.

Worldwatcher should make certain that the participants understand that the wearer of the pendant cannot stand *at all*. (Past participants have said "You just want me to kinda pretend that, right? I can put my arm around someone else's shoulder..." No deal. The pendant wearer must be fully seated, or she must be carried so that her *entire weight* is borne by someone(s) else. Otherwise this activity is not nearly as challenging, nor is it as cool when the participants succeed.)

Truthspeaker shows the participants on a map where the Banshee was last spotted. (Between the two horse-barns.) She tells them that the Banshee may wander seeking new victims, so she may not be there when they arrive. Truthspeaker encourages the party to wait somewhere in that area for the Banshee. (This is important because the Banshee doesn't go out right away; we don't want the participants to think they're in the wrong place when they show up and she's not there.)

Truthspeaker tells the party that she'll come along to make sure they find the right spot. (Worldwatcher, of course, will not.) She tells them she has never held a weapon, and thus will not be fighting alongside them. (Truthspeaker should also NOT participate in the activity in any other significant way, like carrying the pendant-wearer!)

Once all of this information has been given, Worldwatcher tells the group that Runereader needs him elsewhere; he can leave at this time to go down to the Basement. (He does *not* need to wait while the group puts the pendant on.)

Once the participants understand all this, they can leave the tavern whenever they want. They may wish to put on the Pendant of Fortuna d'Oro while still in the tavern and then wait for its magic to take effect before going outside. It's fine if the group wants to do this, or if the participants want to head out immediately, that's also fine. Truthspeaker should let the Basement know before the participants go out.

Activity: Because this is the quickest of the Saturday night activities, the Banshee and Ghouls will not be heading out right away. Rather, they will wait approximately 15 minutes until after the participants have gone out.

The Banshee, with Ghouls shambling along around her, will head out the back of the lodge and up toward the horse barns. Since we're not sure exactly where the participants will be or what sort of strategy they will use (they might be hiding in the horse stables or behind the barns, they might be standing out in the open, they might be wandering themselves, looking for the Banshee, etc.) it will be hard to formulate a clear strategy for the staff to use. The only tactical rule that should be followed is that the Ghouls shouldn't all be on one side of the Banshee. Instead, they should be more-or-less surrounding her as they all walk. This is so that, if the participants do have an ambush set up, the Banshee can't be killed too quickly.

While they walk, the Banshee should be moaning and wailing in as eerie a fashion as possible. She shouldn't be too loud, since we don't want other groups of (male) participants to hear her and accidentally get sucked in by her magic!

Basic rules for the combat:

- The participants should ultimately be successful, although we want the fight to take a while and be challenging. It's okay if the participants suffer pretty heavy casualties.
- The Banshee is immune to all magic (even if the caster is the person wearing the Pendant of Fortuna d'Oro.) If a spell whistle is blown, she should still freeze and should instantly become silent so that the caster can be heard. If a spell is targeted at her, she can just shake her head. Either way, she can resume wailing as soon as the casting is finished.
- The Banshee shouldn't run, but she can move away from the participant wearing the pendant. (Since this participant is being carried, she probably won't be moving super-fast either.) Once those participants catch up with her, a torso hit from the participant wearing the pendant will kill the Banshee.
- The Ghouls shamble around, moving in a way that suggests their decomposing bodies no longer function correctly. They can move at normal speed, though.
- As long as the Banshee is alive, a Ghoul that is "killed" stays on the ground for 30 seconds and then clammers to its feet again. (This time can be increased if participants are doing badly/shortened if they're doing too well too quickly.)
- If a participant dies and no other participants are paying attention to her corpse, a Ghoul or two may begin to "feed" on her. This won't actually do any further damage to the participant (after all, she's already dead), but the Ghouls can still attempt to make it a disgusting and/or scary experience. They can lean in close to the dead participant, mumbling about how they will gnaw on fingerbones and suck on eyeballs, etc. etc.
- While the Ghouls are fighting, they should optimally be both nauseating (maybe with non-sword-arms hanging limp and lifeless and gurgling sounds in the throat to suggest that they're decomposing internally) and also frighteningly evil (staring meanly into participants' eyes, gloating about feasting on their corpses after they die, etc.) The more horrible the Ghouls are, the better the participants will feel after killing them, so let's all be gross out there, okay?
- Once the Banshee is killed (the sudden silence should be a big clue that this has happened), the Ghouls will continue to fight normally. But once each Ghoul dies, he's now permanently dead.

Educational Goals: to force non-male participants (some of whom don't necessarily fight much) to take responsibility for protecting others. to establish a situation that seems too challenging and then allowing participants to succeed at it.

Item(s) to give the participants: the participants will take the Soul Magnet pin which is pinned to the Banshee's chest

Other item(s) the staff need with them: none

Approximate time this activity should take: 15 - 20 minutes (starting when the Banshee & ghouls arrive in the clearing between the horse barns)

performing the Rite of Restoration

staff involved:

Kemma Runereader -- Eileen Christiansen

Kira -- Kelsey Schultz

Kovi Woundtender -- Jodi Riley

Kyson Wayseeker -- Rich Longmore

Kerrick Dealbinder -- Greg Rothauser

Kora Peacekeeper -- Lynn Chiavacci

Kullis Toolforger -- Erhard Konerding

Kyli Talespinner -- Marsha Gershon

Kazim Firestarter -- John Nann

Kiko Truthspeaker -- Gretchen Albright

Kable Worldwatcher – Matthew Scott

Aleeya Witchborn -- Deb Lack

Santiago West Valerius -- Neal Desai

Belle Bishop -- Alison Morris

Cary Montalvo -- Rob Daviau

Floria -- Mara Feingold-Link

Adina Valerius -- Jen Platt

Where: Windvale

Info/Activity: As groups begin returning to the tavern, any Makai or Companions who are in the tavern should keep the Basement apprised as groups return. As groups get back, the relevant staff can turn back into Makai and head upstairs, as can Companions.

Until recently, it has been the Makai who cast the ritual components into the enchanted fire. Because we've had good luck with doing this a new way, we'll continue with our recent improvement of having this function performed by selected participants, in hopes that this will make them feel more involved in the scene.

Therefore, as different groups return to the tavern, the assembled Makai should choose someone from each group to cast that group's items into the fire. (That is, they need to choose someone who went to the Dance to cast in all the Tokens of Undying Affection, someone who went to the Banshee battle to cast the Soul Magnet, etc.) The Makai should ideally be choosing people who have not already been the focus of a given scene (e.g. not the person who wore the pendant of Fortuna d'Oro, not that inevitable loud guy who went to the Wolven battle, etc.) The Makai should also choose people without super full cloaks/skirts/sleeves, very long hair or anything that's going to be unsafe when standing next to the fire. One of the Makai should write down the names of these six participants and which component(s) they have.

The Makai are in the tavern, as is Cary, who's returned with the books and Sacred Shield, but there is no sign yet of Belle, Floria or Santiago. Deciding they can't wait any longer, Kemma Runereader leads them all to Windvale, where Kazim Firestarter has built a fire.

The Makai encourage participants to sit in the lower pews, keeping all the participants close to the stage area. The people chosen to cast components into the fire should be down front or right on the aisle. The Makai tell these people that they'll be called up when it is time to cast the components into the fire and that they should return to their seats after they do so.

Kullis Toolforger takes out a technomagical wand, blows a whistle and reads the wand effect: "This wand affects all people who are within the sound of my voice, causing them to be restored to life and to full health, leaving their free-hits unchanged."

Everything is ready to go... except for the Crown sacrifice.

Belle, Santiago and Floria come in, Belle still wearing the Crown. Floria is crying quietly. Cary reassures them that he's successfully retrieved Santiago's books and Shield. Santiago apologizes for sending Cary on a dangerous mission needlessly. He then explains that he did find a way he could take the Crown off Belle, which is by deconsecrating it.

Cary: Excellent. We can do that now, then.

Santiago: Yes. We could. I could. I could do that and then reconsecrate it...

Cary: So... let's do that. Now, please.

Belle: It won't work, Cary. Santiago's been looking into it this whole time. It will take weeks to reconsecrate the Crown. It could be a couple months, even.

Cary: Okay...?

Belle: World's Edge can't wait that long. You saw it out there, Cary. Things are bad, and this is the only way to put them right. It needs to happen now. I need to do the ritual.

Cary: No. You can't do the ritual. You're getting married tomorrow.

Belle: I'm the only one who can do it, Cary.

Cary: The person who wears the crown is a sacrifice, Belle. You'll get sick, or weak, or... you could die, Belle. You can't do it.

Belle: What did you tell me, Cary? All those years, when I asked you to leave the Phantoms. When I begged you to let someone else risk their life, what did you say?

Cary: I said I had to do it.

Belle: And why was that?

Cary: Because I was the only one who could. Because people would die if I didn't.

Belle: Well then. How is this any different, now? How is this any different except that now you're the one who can only wait and hope?

Cary: Godsdammit, Belle. I might lose you! I can't stand losing you.

Belle: I know, love. What did you tell me, every time I said that?

Cary: That if I didn't do what needed doing, you'd have lost me anyway. *<He takes a shaky breath>* I hate this.

Belle: I know, love. I do, too. But I put this crown on, so for better or worse, I'm now the only one who can maybe save the town. Now it's my turn to be the hero. *<she embraces him hard and then pulls away. Then she says, to Runereader>* We need to do this now.

Cary: Just... I'm sorry, Belle.

Belle: For what?

Cary: I'm sorry that I didn't understand, before. I knew it was hard for you, to just... wait and hope. But I didn't know just how hard it was. You've always been the hero, Belle.

Belle: *<to Runereader>* Gods, just do this now.

Kemma Runereader: *<she looks at Cary and Floria, who stand on either side of Belle, and at Santiago. They all nod sadly.>* All right, then.

<Participant 1>, please place the Hand of Death pendants upon the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, these pendants are our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 2>, please place the Tokens of Undying Affection upon the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, these tokens are our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 3>, please place the Soul Magnet upon the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, this magnet is our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 4>, please place the Gloom Crystal upon the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, this crystal is our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 5>, please pass the Radiant Staff over the fire. *<This person does.>* Seasons, this energy is our offering, willingly given.

<Participant 6>, please place the Portal Stone upon the fire. <This person does.> Seasons, this stone is our offering, willingly given.

And Seasons, this... <she takes a deep breath> Seasons, in your infinite grace, this woman Belle Bishop stands before you, in the crown of St. Mora. Know that her sacrifice is willingly and so bravely given.

Kemma Runereader: Let this ritual be thus completed! Let all those whose goodness was cruelly burned away be made whole once again. In the name of the Four, this I pray.

<Cary makes a move to catch Belle, but she doesn't fall or even falter. Seeing this, he embraces her hard, lifting her off her feet.>

Cary: <joyfully> Belle! You're all right!

Belle: <After he eventually sets her down, she looks at him and giggles> I am! <she runs her hand over his arm flirtatiously> Now I'm very, very good! <she looks into his face, still coquettish> And you are...?

Cary: I'm.... what? Are you all right, Belle?

Belle: I am, but you have the advantage of me. I'm Belle Bishop. And what's your name, handsome?

<Everyone looks at her, confused.>

Santiago: Belle. You... know who you are, right?

Belle: Of course! I'm Belle Bishop. I live in World's Edge, a small village at the western end of Moreth.

Santiago: And you know who I am, right?

Belle: I'm afraid I don't. <she looks around. She is curious but not frightened or upset.> My goodness, what a crowd! <she turns to Floria> I love your laurel wreath! I don't think I could pull off that look! I... <she reaches up absently and touches the crown, which she then takes off and looks at> Oh, well that's a questionable fashion choice! <turns back to Floria> I'm Belle Bishop. <she holds out a hand to shake> It's a pleasure to meet you, ...?

Cary: What the hell is going on? She's all right, isn't she? The ritual didn't hurt her!

Santiago: <slowly> It didn't affect her physically, I don't think. The Crown is consecrated to Saint Mora, so we thought it would take her life force, either some of it or... or all of it. St. Mora's feast day is all about the line between life and death. But... today isn't that feast day. It's the Rite of Remembrance.

Cary: So she shouldn't have been hurt, then!

Belle: I'm afraid you've all lost me. Who are we talking about?

Santiago: She wasn't hurt, not physically. The Crown demands a sacrifice. It didn't take her life force. It's the Rite of Remembrance. I think it took her memory.

Cary: No! She knows who she is!

Belle: I'm sorry, are you talking about me? Of course I know who I am! I'm Belle Bishop! You might have heard of me, actually: I'm the inventor of the Bellaphone? A device that allows vocal communication across long distances? If you'd like to learn more, you can reach me at 203-555-6041.

Santiago: She knows who she is. But she doesn't know who we are. Those memories... that's what the Crown took.

Cary: <desperately> When are they coming back?

Santiago: It... it was a sacrifice, Cary. I don't think they're coming back.

Belle: People seem very worked up, but really, there's no problem here. <to Cary, flirtatiously> But I asked you who you are. Tell me a little about yourself.

Cary: I... I'm someone who's real proud of you, Belle. <He's holding it together, but barely.> But I think I need to be somewhere else for a while. <He leaves.>

Belle: <she watches him go. Then...> Huh. He's cute. But... a little strange, right? <she turns to Santiago; she is still quite upbeat> I'm afraid I didn't catch your name. But maybe you could show me around a little bit? This place is so interesting!

Santiago looks semi-bewilderedly at Kemma Runereader, who shrugs back. Santiago offers Belle his arm and escorts her away from Windvale.

Just then, Baroness Adina Valerius arrives. Her face is no longer gold, and she seems her normal pre-4pm self.

Adina Valerius: My goodness, what a crowd! I'm not sure why you're all gathered here, but Solomon has made apple crisp to mark the end of the Rites...

Kemma Runereader: Baroness! Everything... is well with you?

Adina: Of course! Please do join us in the tavern when you conclude... whatever this is! <*She leaves*>

Kemma Runereader: It's likely the people of this town won't remember what happened here tonight, which is probably a blessing. But you have all risked much to save a place that is not your home. You have made these people whole again. Those of us who know... we will not forget your courage and your sacrifices. From the bottom of my heart: thank you.

The assembled staff lead the participants back to the tavern.

Educational Goals: to allow all the participants to see their work matter; to share an important message

Item(s) to give the participants: None

Other item(s) staff people need to have with them: Kullis Toolforger's wand, means to start the fire and water to put it out

Approximate time this activity should take: 15 minutes

The Rites of Remembrance Draw to a Close

Putting the World Back

While the participants and Makai are performing the Rite of Restoration, staff who've just gotten back from their Saturday night activities need to quickly get back into regular costumes.

Meanwhile, Back in the Tavern...

For the remainder of Saturday night, there is little else that participants need to do. We *really* hope that all of them can stay awake long enough to do Soul Speaking, and to that end, we will start getting parties to do this about 5-10 minutes after they all get back to the tavern. Some parties will probably choose to go to sleep right after Soul Speaking, and that's fine.

For parties that would like to do a little bit more, or for those parties who need to wait while other groups are Soul Speaking before them, they can do some sparring in front of the tavern, or just hang out in the tavern or by the campfire and relax and eat apple crisp.

campfire – Kazim Firestarter and Kira

It's always fun, during Set-up, to sit around a campfire. It finally occurred to us that the participants might like that, too.

If it's a nice evening, Kazim Firestarter can get a fire going in the sizable fire circle in front of the tavern (down by the lake.) If this happens, staff and participants are welcome to sit here and chat.

Obviously, we need to make certain the fire is out before everyone goes to sleep.

Soul Speaking - Obsidian, Electra, Al Bishop, Santiago Valerius, Mila, Crabtree, Evelyn, Bonnie Stillwater, Dramina and additional staff as needed

Of the Saturday night activities, Soul Speaking is the highest priority. We want all participants to experience Soul Speaking; some past participants have told us later that it was the most touching and memorable part of the weekend for them. It's also the only activity which the party needs to do all together. For these reasons, the other staff need to help our staff keepers and Soul Speaking coordinator (Henny Admoni) ensure that all participants have time for this.

Obsidian, Electra and Al will be in the Bower of Dreams, Fern Grotto and Spring Glen, presiding over the Soul Speaking activity itself. Santiago Valerius, Mila, Crabtree, Evelyn, Bonnie Stillwater and Dramina (and additional staff as needed) will be "shuttling" parties back and forth from this area, making sure to keep waiting parties back far enough so that they don't disturb the quiet and privacy in Soul Speaking locations themselves.

Soul Speaking itself doesn't take very long. If another party is "on deck" to start the activity soon after the first party finishes it, we can move all the participants through the activity efficiently, which will mean that Obsidian and co. won't have to stand outside waiting all night and the other staff people helping with this won't have to miss all the tavern festivities. (Other keepers – if it seems that having more staffers helping out with the shuttling would be useful, please pull whoever you need.)

festivities

We'll be serving dessert in the tavern. If you're scheduled to be in the tavern but you haven't been given a particular task here, then you're free to relax.

Monsters

The majority of you will spend at least a little time on "monster duty", so please familiarize yourself with the following:

Chitters

Chitters are clumsy and timid. They are the weakest of the monsters in World's Edge. They are usually dangerous only in groups. Chitters will attack human parties sometimes; other times they simply run away. Their speech sounds like high-pitched chattering (hence their name.) Chitters are not terribly bright; they will not ambush, fake wounds, or anything like that. The rangers' Soothe ability works on Chitters.

The participants will encounter Chitters primarily on Friday night and Saturday morning. The primary purpose of these encounters will be to raise the participants' confidence and to give them an introduction to combat where they may be successful. Unless told otherwise, staff playing Chitters should be careful to only wound 0-3 of the members of a party; Chitters shouldn't ever be able to kill a participant.

Chitters are identifiable by their dark green faces with stubby yellow horns. Their bodies are covered with green skin (a green jumpsuit) and each has a large spinal ridge running the length of its back. They are clothed only by a rough piece of burlap.

Skeevers

Skeevers have yellowish-brown skin with flabby cheeks and pug noses. They dress much as humans do, although their clothing tends to be worn and sloppy. Many Skeevers wear cowls on their heads.

Skeevers are known for being sneaky, untrustworthy, and cowardly. Unlike Chitters, they will ambush, etc. Although they are better fighters than Chitters, a group of Skeevers will still not necessarily attack a party of humans. They are likely to try to get what they want by trickery, etc., although they also sometimes attack without provocation. Speaking understandable though broken English, Skeevers are frequently extremely complimentary and obsequious; they do this in an obvious attempt to kiss-up to and/or trick their listeners into a false sense of security. Rangers' Soothe ability does *not* work on Skeevers (because they're too smart for it.)

The participants will encounter Skeevers throughout the weekend. Fights with these creatures should allow the participants to practice their combat skills against worthy though not terribly deadly opponents. In general, Skeevers should try to wound participants rather than killing them. A combat with these creatures should never result in more than two deaths to a party.

Anders

Anders have creased greenish skin and bright orange hair which stands straight up from their heads. Anders inhabiting a given region will often dress alike; the World's Edge Ander community wears purple and orange plaid tunics.

Many Anders have high pitched voices. They speak reasonably good English, although many still greet each other with "Hoopahoppa!", a word in their own language which can be approximately translated as a combination of "hello", "I love you", and "would you like to play?"

Anders worship Lady Luck and thus believe games and gambling to be sacred. Playful and fun-loving, Anders delight in wagers of all sorts. ("I'll bet I can jump further than you!" "Well, I'll bet I can balance more coins on my nose!" "Let's see who can stand on their head the longest!" etc. etc.) The villagers of World's Edge regard Anders as either amusing little friends or as harmless annoyances, depending upon the townsperson's personality.

Every party of Anders will be accompanied by a keeper. Although these keepers do not have the same prayers that the participant keepers will, they are the only ones who can restore Free-Hits. Each group of Anders will have a specific game or challenge activity. They will offer any participant parties they encounter the following wager: if the participants are successful at the game, the Ander keeper will restore a certain number of Free-Hits to the party members. (With these encounters, we can provide the participants with additional opportunities to practice teamwork and problem-solving.)

Anders will never start a fight against participants (or any other humans, for that matter.) If any participants attack the Anders, (which they probably/hopefully won't do) these Anders will attempt to run away. If a party attempts to force an Ander keeper to restore their Free-Hits, this will prove impossible. Any keeper needs to concentrate in order to have a prayer work; an Ander with a sword at its throat will be totally unable to maintain this necessary concentration.

Informal Otherworld tradition is that game-loving Anders are themselves named after games. (i.e. Hopscotch, Red Rover, etc.) If you are scheduled to play an Ander, you are welcome to choose any name you want.

Worlogs

Worlogs are large and powerful fighters, but very stupid. Worlogs will almost always attack a party of humans. They have no language, only snarls and growls. Worlogs may sometimes attack their own kind (a good thing for staff playing Worlogs to do if a party is losing badly) or other smaller monsters. Like Chitters, Worlogs are too stupid to ambush a party or use other forms of strategy. The rangers' Soothe ability works on Worlogs. Although all Worlogs are ferocious opponents, the females of the species are especially deadly.

Because Worlogs are so stupid, they tend to get confused easily, especially by loud sounds. A sound like a very loud shout will cause a Worlog to temporarily glance in that direction, potentially distracting it from the person it's fighting. Note that this will only work so many times during one combat; Worlogs shouldn't keep looking if the same person screams again and again.

Worlog faces are a deep red color; they resemble a cross between a dog (with small pointed ears) and a pig (with a blunt snout-like nose). Their bodies are huge (courtesy of foam tummy-padding) and reddish brown. Worlogs drape themselves with loose fabric made of coarse rope. Female Worlogs have a distinctive patch of dark green/brown skin on their stomachs which is visible through this "clothing".

Participants will encounter Worlogs beginning Saturday around noon and continuing through Sunday. Worlogs will be alone or in groups of two or at most three. Fights with Worlogs should allow the participants to further improve their combat skills. Fights with Worlogs may kill one or sometimes two party members but should never kill more than three party members.

the Wolven

Lyrian law prohibits capital punishment except for crimes where a member of the aristocracy has been murdered. This means that many hardened criminals may not legally be put to death. Rather than being imprisoned in Lyrian jails, many of these most violent of offenders are exiled to the Wild Lands, where it is assumed that they will soon perish of the elements. Lyria has been practicing this system of justice for many, many years.

Unfortunately, some of the most dangerous criminals -- rather than dying amidst the harsh landscape of the Wild Lands -- have instead thrived there. They have come together into a band of vicious outlaws called the Wolven.

A Wolven fighter's battle skill is on par with that of Worlogs, with the large difference that Wolven are cunning and bloodthirsty. Their one weakness is that they are very afraid of ghosts. Wolven will shy away from one ghost and flee from a party with three or more. (Staff playing Wolven should remember to role-play this fear of ghosts since it will help prevent a party that's already hurting from being totally slaughtered.)

In addition to their great skill in battle, Wolven are loathsome and despicable enemies. Unlike Worlogs, who fight instinctively, Wolven are cruel and enjoy causing pain. It is common for Wolven to taunt and curse at their victims before actually killing them. (Staff should feel free to role-play this, but keep insults adventure-based rather than personally-based. It's great to say "This seeker is a fool! He risks his own life to save his worthless friends!" Please don't say "Hey, seeker! You're fat and you have a big nose!" which may hurt participants' feelings for real.) There are also Wolven casters.

Wolven usually dress in dark colors. We now use the Wolven eye-masks which are more comfortable than the old bandana-style masks, in that they allow Wolven to breathe and speak. However, people who can't wear eye masks (because of glasses or whatever) can still wear the bandana-masks if desired. If you are killed while playing a Wolven and the participants remove your face-mask, make sure they understand on reality that the face they're seeing is an unfamiliar one. (i.e. we don't want participants thinking "Wow, the bartender is secretly a Wolven!")

Participants will encounter Wolven from Saturday afternoon onward. Fights with Wolven will usually result in at least one participant death, and possibly more. These fights should never kill more than four members of a party. Staff playing Wolven should take special care to keep the fight safe and to make sure it's in a decently-lit location. Participants will be very frightened/pumped-up and may tend to swing wildly or too hard. Be extra careful about this, and read the advice in the Interacting with the Participants section for info on what to do if there's a problem.

Wolven Captains

The Wolven band has several captains, about whom the parties will receive information. A group of Wolven will not necessarily have a captain with it. The captains serve little purpose except adding interest to the story, although the lore about them makes it even clearer to the participants that the Wolven are too evil to be "reasoned with" or to be dealt with except by fighting. Each Captain wears one red leather bracer that designates their rank.

Cursed Warriors

Very occasionally, particularly wicked individuals will engage in a dark and corrupting ritual designed to bring themselves great power at the expense of their very souls. Having so completed such a malevolent process, the resulting individuals are henceforth known as cursed warriors.

Both humans and inhuman creatures may become cursed warriors though even among vicious beasts and outlaw gangs, such an action is frowned upon. It does, however, confer exceptional strength and skill upon the fighter in question.

Anyone may fight a cursed warrior, but keepers are particularly effective against these fearsome foes.

It is easy to distinguish a cursed warrior. The dark ritual that imbues one with power turns their skin a deep and unnatural purple.

There aren't many cursed warriors out, but hopefully they'll make a big impression! Cursed warriors are immune to *all* magic: spells, wands and artifacts.

A cursed warrior does *not* seek out the party's keeper (although if a keeper is really reluctant to engage in combat or seems to have forgotten that this is a special keeper thing, it would be good for the cursed warrior to get in the keeper's way as much as possible.) The rationale here is that we want cursed warriors to be the keeper's moment to shine in combat. There's a big difference between stepping into the fight to protect your partymates vs. fighting in self-defense.

Sword blows from a non-keeper will matter little to a cursed warrior. How many hits from a keeper they can take is relatively dependent upon the keeper's comfort level in combat; if the keeper is a proficient/comfortable fighter, it's great to give them an interesting fight, but if this isn't the case, the cursed warrior should take an early (and loud!) wound so the keeper knows they're being effective and is encouraged to keep it up!

Lastly: it's not impossible that a staff person playing a cursed warrior will get hit a lot. If you're scheduled in this role and you're not feeling physically or emotionally up to that, just let the EMs know and we can swap you out for someone else.

things to remember when playing a monster

Accidents happen, yes, but please do try not to wipe out a party. In general, seek to wound rather than to kill.

As much as possible, try to fight participants one-on-one. Although they may gang up on you, you shouldn't gang up on them. This makes it much harder to register blows and can lead to participants swinging wildly and too hard.

Unless you are specifically told otherwise, fight with only one sword. (We don't have enough swords for this. Plus, the participants' skill levels are already way below what yours are. Give them a break!)

As much as possible, avoid the party's Companion. (The Companions are also trying their best to stay out of the way in combat, so this should help.) If it's going to look totally ridiculous if you don't attack the Companion (i.e. you'd have to run around him/her to get to the party), then give him/her a limb wound and let him/her fall to the side. Then avoid him/her.

Also, try not to attack other staffpeople. If a staffperson engages you, put up a good-looking fight and then die. Certain staff characters may purposely go after monsters, but most other staff will try to stay out of combat. If you see a staffperson engaged in intense conversation with a party, do your best to avoid the whole area. (If a party is having a really cool encounter with a staffperson or is trying to solve a challenge, this is a bad time to have some monsters come charging up.)

After midnight, stay away from both Hillcrest and Rosedale, where the participants will be staying. We had several complaints in the past of combat-related-noise outside the cabins while people were trying to sleep, so please be careful to respect this rule.

Four areas – the Bower of Dreams, Heart's Ease Bluff, the Shrine of AllSeasons and the Fern Grotto - are sacred ground. No combat may happen there (i.e. it's physically impossible.) This goes for offensive magic as well. Treat the area like a circle of protection.

Some monsters (especially the Skeevers) may play various tricks on parties. Although this is perfectly fine, please don't repeat the same trick more than two or maybe three times, and don't do anything more than once to the same party.

Be careful of the participants and be careful of yourself. If an area might be too dark or too hilly/rocky/whatever for combat, move the fight. Please see the Interacting with the Participants section for advice what to do if there's a problem with safety.

other critters

There are several other types of monster-nasties which participants may encounter during the weekend. They are described in the Creature Lore which follows and are also in the relevant activity descriptions.

a few words about magical artifacts

When you're out as a monster, the participants might use a magical artifact on you. Most magical artifacts work like a spell; the participant blows a spell whistle and announces how the artifact affects you. There are a few artifacts that have no "announcement" component, however. These are artifacts that make the participant more powerful against certain types of opponents. The Sword of Worlog Slaying and Little Blue Riding-Hood's Basket of Big-Bad-Wolven Slaying are two examples. (There aren't many more than these.) These will be shown during the staff pre-adventure briefing so that, if you encounter a participant with the item, you'll be able to recognize it and respond correctly.

SKEEVERS

sneaky & cowardly
 dirty-yellow faces with sunken flesh
 fairly intelligent - can't be soothed
 may attack unprovoked if they believe they
 might profit from doing so
 sometimes seek to get what they want through
 trade or trickery rather than violence

**CHITTERS**

weak & clumsy
 deep blue-green skin/yellow horns/protruding spines
 unintelligent, so **can be Soothed**
 may run away... but may fight because
 they are too stupid not to

**WORLOGS**

large & powterful
 but deeply stupid
 reddish-brown skin

no language of their own &
 understand no human speech
 but a calm tone will still soothe

**THE WOLVEN**

Some of Lyria's most violent
 offenders are exiled to the
 Wild Lands, where it's assumed
 they'll perish in the harsh
 landscape. Some have instead
 thrived there, coming together
 into a band of vicious outlaws
 who call themselves the Wolven.

Their Captains each wear a
 blood-red bracer indicating rank.

They are loathsome enemies
 who enjoy causing pain.

ANDERS ↗
 creased greenish skin & bright orange hair
 playful & loving
 Anders worship Lady Luck,
 and believe game-playing to be sacred.
 Their keepers can restore Free-Hits
 (ensure one is lucky in combat.)



BANSHEES
 When an extraordinarily evil woman dies,
 she may return as a banshee.
 Any man who hears her terrible cry
 will follow her endlessly until he dies
 of fatigue or starvation. It is fortunate
 that banshees are so rare, because
 they are virtually invulnerable.
 Immune to magic, a banshee can
 only be killed by a woman wearing
 the Pendant of Fortuna d'Oro.



NIGHTWALKERS
 Little is known about
 these creatures.
 Deaf and blind, they innately
 sense heat and motion.
 Their touch is paralytic, and only
 the embrace of a living soul can
 restore vigor and motion to the
 immobilized victim. Nightwalkers
 are unharmed by weapons or
 magic; one's only protection is
 to avoid them completely.

GHOULS
 Foullest of the walking dead,
 ghouls feed on corpses.
 Normally vulnerable to steel or magic,
 ghouls in the company of a banshee
 will rise up after they are "killed."
 Destroy ghouls as soon as
 they are found, lest they join a banshee's
 entourage of tormented souls, becoming
 virtually immortal and terrorizing
 the infested land forever.

Currency

Every staff person should know the value of coins; you do NOT need to memorize how much various items cost. If your character will be doing any buying or selling, these prices will be posted with you at the event.

Coins of the Realm

- small silver coin (called a "silver") = 1 royal
- large silver coin (called a "crown silver") = 5 royals
- small gold coin (called a "gold") = 10 royals
- large gold coin (called a "crown gold") = 50 royals

Hershey Kisses cannot be used as currency!!!

Each party will begin the weekend with 50 royals. All of this will be in coins, rather than in treasure.

Only you can prevent inflation!

We try hard to prevent the massive inflation that sometimes happens at events. When the parties get too much money, things like spell renewal and buying healing potions become way too easy, which can mess up the balance between groups. Our basic strategy to correct this is to charge relatively high prices for things and to not give out too much money, figuring that it's pretty easy to get more money out to the participants if they really need it. (Giving them more money is much easier than taking away the money they already have.) For this reason, please stick closely to the values described on these pages.

Treasure

- silver without gems = 15 royals
- gold without gems = 25 royals
- gems other than blue or clear = 35 royals
- "sapphires" (blue gems) = 50 royals
- "diamonds" (clear gems) = 75 royals

Treasure value may fluctuate +/- 5 royals based on actual aesthetics of the item.

Note that these prices are for the entire item; earrings count as one item rather than two. Also note that an item with a mix of gems will be priced at the approximate average of the two values, i.e. a brooch with a mix of red and clear gems will be worth around 55 royals, the average of 35 and 75. It will NOT be worth 110 royals; the two prices don't ever get added together.

Otherwise the participants will be multimillionaires by Saturday at noon!

Treasure chests usually contain between 25 and 75 royals worth of treasure. Occasionally (20%) they may contain up to 120 royals worth.

Monsters

There's been confusion about this in the past, so, to clarify: When a party kills a group of monsters, they should get one treasure pouch from the group, not one from each monster:

- each Chitter party will be carrying between 3 and 10 royals.
- each Skeever party will be carrying between 10 and 20 royals.
- Anders usually carry no currency.
- each Worlog party will be carrying between 30 and 40 royals.
- each Wolven party will be carrying between 40-75 royals.
- each Wolven Captain party will be carrying between 75-100 royals.

These values may be made up of currency, treasure or both.

Trade-in Values

If parties bring these items to the Inn, the Smirches' shop, Crabtree & Evelyn's or to Tinker Bill, they will receive money for them. This is to encourage them to bring these items back to us, rather than leaving them in their cabins or the woods!

pouches	2 royals
empty chests	5 royals (make sure to get the lock, if the chest had one)
traps	5 royals
empty potion bottles	1 royal
used technomagical wand components	5 royals

Meals

breakfast	5 royals per person
lunch	10 royals per person
supper	15 royals per person
snacks	3 royals per person
dessert	5 royals per person

Lockpicking

Tinker Bill, the staff of the **Inn at World's Edge** and the staff of **Inspirations Unlimited** charge 15 royals to open a lock.

Any of the Smirches charge 30 royals or 50% of the chest contents' value. (The party needs to state whether they're paying the 30 royals OR the 50% *before* the chest is opened, obviously.)

Merchandise

technomagical wand component	40 royals
magic sword	160 royals
large shield	180 royals

Technomagical Wand Components

There are three different components needed to form a complete technomagical wand: a Target, a Qualifier and an Action (e.g. "This wand affects ALL HUMANS" / "who are WEARING RED" / "causing them to HEAL ONE WOUND".)

In this plot, wand components are distributed from several sources:

Each party will receive one wand component, a beneficial Action, in the loot-drop they get after fighting Skeevens on Friday night.

Each party's maker will receive one wand component, a Target affecting all adventurers from that duchy, after their party's traveler completes a puzzle.

Wand components are for sale from **the Smirches** for 40 royals each. The Smirches sell a variety of Targets, Qualifiers and Actions, all of which are the same price. The party's maker is allowed to choose the component(s) desired.

Wand components are being given away by **Inspirations Unlimited**. When a party completes the Marble Maze Challenge, that party's maker can choose 3 components blindly: 1 from the tray of Targets, 1 from the Qualifiers and 1 from the Actions. When a party completes the Hivemind Challenge, that party's maker can choose 2 components blindly from the tray(s) of their choice.

Wolven Captain Gaspar will have 2 wand component pieces on him when the party Searches him.

Increased Abilities

3 additional lock combos	40 royals (available to makers only)
resistance to next spell	40 royals
immunity to poison	40 royals (renders one immune to the next exposure to poison)
immunity to next trap	50 royals (available to makers only)

Renewal of Prayers

Crabtree & Evelyn charge the following amounts to renew prayers:

Heal All Wounds	40 royals	Holy Renewal	80 royals
Heal Single Wound	30 royals	Life	60 royals

Renewal of Spells

Crabtree & Evelyn charge the following amounts to renew spells:

Brainfry	40 royals	Paralysis	30 royals
Death	60 royals	Peacemaker	30 royals
Dispel Magic	30 royals	Petrify	30 royals
Entangle	30 royals	Poison	50 royals
Flamehilt	30 royals	Redirect	40 royals
Forget	30 royals	Reflect	30 royals
Frostgrip	30 royals	Rootfoot	50 royals
Honor Bind	20 royals	Self-Sacrifice	20 royals
Identify	30 royals	Single Combat	60 royals
Illusion	40 royals	Sleep	40 royals
Instill Belief	40 royals	Smokeform	30 royals
Interrogate	50 royals	Stone Fist	20 royals
Lame	20 royals	Swampfoot	40 royals
Lightning Bolt	30 royals	Teleport Other	30 royals
Magic Gust	20 royals	Teleport Self	30 royals
Mighty Adjective	50 royals	Turncoat	40 royals
Mute	30 royals	Whirlwind	40 royals

Potions

The Smirches charge double the cost of the equivalent prayer. (i.e. a potion of Heal All Wounds costs 80 royals.) None of these potions have side-effects.

Treasure Appraisal

The following is a verbatim copy of the Treasure Appraisal that participant makers receive. Makers are allowed to share this information with anyone they want (although they can't let other people read directly from the sheet) and we encourage them to discuss this information with their parties. All makers receive the same Treasure Appraisal.

NOTE: We are in the process of replacing this info sheet with something much cooler-looking. Stay tuned!

Coins of the Realm

Of course, everyone knows the value of the coins used throughout Lyria, although many have never touched a Crown Gold with their own hands...

small silver coin (called a "silver") = 1 royal

large silver coin (called a "crown silver") = 5 royals

small gold coin (called a "gold") = 10 royals

large gold coin (called a "crown gold") = 50 royals

Treasure and Objets d'Art

The value of treasure will of course fluctuate somewhat based on the aesthetics of the item in question, as well as on the party's skill with bargaining. Still, some general guidelines hold true:

Treasure with gems is more highly valued than that without. A fine piece of silver jewelry, unadorned with gems, is frequently valued around fifteen royals. Plain gold jewelry is worth slightly more. (With all values, of course, the amount refers to the "entire item." Earrings count as one item.)

A piece of jewelry set with gems may command an asking price of around thirty-five royals. This refers only to the more common gems: the garnets, amethysts, rubies, amber, emeralds... Of greater value are sapphires, shining the deep, clear blue of the evening sky. And then there are the diamonds, which command the highest prices of them all. A lovely piece set with many diamonds might bring seventy-five royals or more.

Legends tell of a few pieces of special value in the history of World's Edge:

the Tyrellian Cross

Stories say that this brooch is made of a metal of unknown origin but rumored to be from a fallen star. Set exclusively with emeralds, it is supposed to be dazzling to behold. With round gems at its corners, the Cross gets its name from the four long, narrow gems radiating from the center. At one point, the Cross was supposed to be worth at least 110 royals...and that was many, many years ago...

the Laurel of Light

This necklace is reported to be made of finest gold. The front of the chain is comprised of five filigreed golden leaves, four small ones and a large cluster in the center. The leaves are set with diamonds, emeralds and pearls in such a way so that they blaze with gorgeous light. More dainty than the Tyrellian Cross, the Laurel is probably its near-equal in value.

Alora's medal

Not all items gain their value just from the loveliness of the design or the worth of the raw materials. A local woman named Alora was many years ago awarded a medal from the King of Lyria, in honor of her amazing skill with a sword. This medal -- a narrow silver bar from which hangs a silver circle bearing an uncut pale-green gem -- has not been seen in World's Edge since the vicious attack which took the lives of Alora and both her children. Though probably lost forever, this item is still talked about and valued. Surely it would bring a great price if ever it were found.

Magical Artifacts

Among magically enchanted jewelry, totally different rules apply, since the value here lies in the enchantment rather than in the actual item itself. Among such items, green is said to be an especially positive color, especially likely to be used for beneficial items. Silver, a great conductor of magic into the body, may thus be used both for healing and harming. Items fashioned in the shape of animals are said to be quite lucky.

the Pendant of Fortuna d'Oro

This enchanted item, forged by a caster-smith many, many years ago, is said to allow the wearer to kill the hated Banshee. Certainly the pendant is lovely in its own right; it is a golden filigree sphere set with three large hematite stones and a small, round ruby near the top. Disconcertingly, two of the grey hematites make it appear that the pendant has a dark, piercing gaze. Such beauty and power has a

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cost, though: The pendant must be worn for at least twenty minutes before its magical benefits are felt. And for the entire time it is worn - right from the moment it is placed around the neck - it renders the wearer so weak that she cannot stand, but must either sit or be carried about. So powerful is the pendant that it will resist any attempt to dispel or alter any of its effects.

Lore

trigger: the motto “Honor, Duty, Courage”, written beneath a crest

this lore given to: all travelers

This is the crest of the Valerius family. Theirs is a proud and aristocratic lineage, but one shrouded in sadness as well.

Twenty years ago, Baroness Cassandra Valerius and her husband William were murdered by outlaws. The older Valerius children were not at home during the attack, but young Nicolette, just an infant at that time, was in the house with her parents. Thankfully, the child escaped the outlaws' notice and was the attack's only survivor. Local keepers arrived at the house following the assault, but there was nothing they could do to save the Baron or Baroness.

Honoré Valerius, twenty-seven years old at the time of the attack, became Baron on that day and remains so now. Despite this inauspicious beginning, Honoré's tenure as leader of the barony has been a good one, and the village of World's Edge has flourished under his competent and just guidance. Both well-respected and well-liked, Baron Honoré is considered to be a man of irreproachable character, doing all that he can for his people.

Only recently has this era of good fortune come to an end. At the end of this past winter, the Baron turned his attention to the most pressing business at hand, temporarily setting aside matters of lesser import like routine paperwork and inspections. Late in February, World's Edge experienced brilliantly sunny skies and unseasonably warm temperatures. Townspeople weary of cold grey days ventured outside, but in the hills, snow melted at a perilous rate, and that water raced toward lower ground, bringing rocks and logs and other detritus with it. The floodwaters slammed into the Silverspan Bridge, one of the structures Honoré intended to inspect just as soon as he was able. The bridge's wooden supports couldn't withstand the water's sudden impact, and the mighty Silverspan was swept away... along with the three people who'd been crossing it.

This tragedy, coming after so many years of serendipitous luck, may have shaken some resident's faith in Honoré, but seemingly none are as affected as the Baron himself. He is said to be a shadow of his former self, nearly paralyzed by fear that he will make another wrong decision that costs additional lives.

Surely this crisis of faith would have spelled disaster for the small village, but it seems that those closest to the Baron - his wife, Baroness Adina Rose Valerius, and his younger siblings - have stepped up to provide much needed assistance. Would that more noble families so honorably upheld their aristocratic responsibilities!

trigger: a mention of the Makai

this lore given to: all travelers

Many years ago, you met a traveler named Selwyn who hailed from western Moreth, although not as far west as World's Edge. You remember him speaking of a sect of people called the Makai. Selwyn knew a bit of information about this unusual group, although he had never seen any of them face to face.

Three centuries ago, Selwyn reminded you, certain wealthy and powerful keepers began asserting that the Season they themselves served was the most holy source of healing and power, that the others were in some way inferior. Political factions rallied behind these false claims, using them as an excuse to achieve dominance over rival factions. It seemed possible that religious civil war would erupt.

A small but devoted group of people convened who were particularly horrified by this religious infighting. Wanting nothing to do with this manufactured strife between keepers of different Seasons, this sect moved to a remote and mountainous region far away from the populated center of Lyria.

There, the sect built themselves a small homeground. Deeply troubled by the heretical one-upmanship they had witnessed – by keepers who asserted that Autumn was more powerful than Summer or that Winter was a false god while Spring was a true one – these people began ordaining their own priests as keepers of AllSeasons. They called themselves Makai, which in the old language means “unified.”

In time, thankfully, reason reasserted itself in Lyria. The self-serving keepers who had sought power through discord were removed from power. But the Makai chose not to return from their remote homeground.

According to Selwyn, the sect still survives today. They live apart from Lyrian society, in the inhospitable mountains that separate Lyria from the Wild Lands, and most people who do not live in western Moreth have never even heard of them. In fact, Selwyn said, even many people who lived in the most remote, provincial corner of the duchy – and it was probably World's Edge he had in mind when he said this – have never seen one of the Makai up close, and fewer still have spoken to one. He estimated that there were probably about four or five hundred Makai total, although he admitted that he wasn't at all certain of this number.

When young Makai reach the age of eighteen, they “take the ink,” receiving tattoos as a sign of personal commitment to the community, and to the Makai ideals of spirituality and peace. Before this important step, the sect performs a coming-of-age ritual where the young people in question determine whether or not they do indeed wish to remain a part of the sect, and if so, what their roles in the community will be.

Interestingly, the Makai have no casters among their number. They have no prohibition against magic – which they apparently call ‘hex’ – but for some unknown reason, simply have no members born with magical ability.

trigger: a gravestone bearing the name ‘Alora’

this lore given to: all travelers

You have heard the tale of Alora, a seeker from Moreth’s past. She was renowned for her skill with a sword and for her great courage, but her story is a sad one.

Many years ago, Alora lived in World’s Edge with her husband Obsidian and their two young daughters. Obsidian, a keeper of winter, was known as a healer of tremendous skill. As such, he was often called away from home to care for the sick and wounded. The Wolven band grew tired of Obsidian healing their victims and decided to take revenge.

One day, when he was away, a band of Wolven warriors destroyed all that Obsidian held dear. They burned his home and killed his children. On Alora’s wrist, they placed the Blood Cuff, an evil Wolven artifact. Made of silver set with rubies, the cuff drains the life from the wearer in such a way that no keeper’s prayer can ever return it.

By the time Obsidian returned, Alora too was dead.

trigger: a statue of a woman bowing her head in prayer

this lore given to: all travelers

This must be Saint Lorelei the Incorrputible, a woman who lived more than five centuries before. Lorelei was renowned as a woman of peace, carrying the Sacred Shield of a keeper of Summer but never a weapon of any kind, eschewing even a knife to cut her bread.

She is remembered primarily for journeying beyond the borders of what was then the edge of the kingdom, into the barely-settled lands that are today western Moreth. At that time, residents of this area were in danger of being kidnapped and enslaved by greedy individuals who knew that Lyrian laws would not protect those they captured.

So compelling were Lorelei’s sermons condemning slavery that powerful figures eventually put a stop to this horrifying practice, and today, St. Lorelei is celebrated with a statue at the edge of the Shrine of AllSeasons. Carved of fine ivory-colored Glendeepian marble, the statue depicts Lorelei in prayer, a pile of broken chains discarded at her feet.

The area near St. Lorelei’s statue is consecrated to her, and once every Saturday, a keeper who meditates there for 5 minutes will have one of their Heal All Wounds prayers renewed. Keepers doing so can turn their minds wholly to this meditation knowing themselves safe, since violence of any kind is impossible in the Shrine, as it is on all consecrated ground.

St. Lorelei the Incorrputible is a beloved figure, and while many sit by her statue to contemplate, it is considered a great offense to actually touch the statue.

[Attached here is a prayer-renewal sticker. After your party’s keeper sits quietly by the statue for 5 minutes, this sticker may be placed on their Sacred Shield to renew one Heal All Wounds prayer.]

trigger: a signpost inscribed “Heart’s Ease Bluff”

this lore given to: the travelers from Arden, Dolorón, Glendeep, Noctara, Sythwan and Waylon

Most villages and cities have some consecrated ground within them, and World’s Edge is no exception. The Shrine of AllSeasons, the Fern Grotto, the Spring Glen and the Bower of Dreams are of course holy places dedicated to the Seasons themselves. The Heart’s Ease Bluff, you have heard, is consecrated to the memory of a noblewoman, Lady Joan Valerius, who was instrumental in the settling of World’s Edge five centuries ago. Violence – whether corporeal or magical – is physically impossible in all of these holy places.

Far less peaceful are the dark legends you have heard about the World’s Edge graveyard. It is said that, every year during the Rites of Remembrance, the spirits of the pure and honorable rise from the ground in which they are laid and engage in a unearthly dance. Few mortals see this sight and live, but those that do describe the heartbreakin beauty of this dance of the dead. But then the survivors

grow ashen-faced and whisper of a force of unparalleled evil that lurks there. With trembling hands, they warn their listeners to stay far away from that graveyard on these nights.

Even less is known of the grove known as the Forsaken Forest. The folk of World's Edge claim the Forsaken Forest is home to the Dreadwright, a magical warrior of such tremendous power that the glade in which he made his home was scoured barren of all living things and is in truth a forest no more. Is it true that merely entering this foul place renders a person too terrified to speak and too weak to walk? People say so, but few know for sure. Some say there's an enchanted artifact that lets one enter the Forest, but surely the prudent choice is simply to stay out of this malevolent clearing... or possibly out of World's Edge entirely.

trigger: someone with the last name “Witchborn”

this lore given to: the travelers from Clairia, Elsewhich, Keer, P’loa and Uri-Kesh

Your friend Raven spoke to you once of the Witchborns of World's Edge. Theirs is a powerful legacy stretching back centuries to the legendary witch Circe Witchborn and continuing onward into modern times: Isabelle Witchborn, her daughter Iolanthe Witchborn, *her* daughter Aleeya Witchborn.

There have been Witchborns – a name handed down along matrilineal lines – in World's Edge for as long as there has been a World's Edge, and for most of that time, they were respected members of the community. Of course, there were some who feared or suspected them, because the Witchborns have always been powerful, and somewhat mysterious. But for years and years of village history, if someone needed a charm or a love potion, or was trying to have a baby, or was trying *not* to have a baby, it was a Witchborn she went to.

Iolanthe Witchborn changed that, though, she and her coven. Iolanthe was said to be the most powerful witch since Circe herself, but twenty or so years ago, her coven attempted a spell that failed catastrophically, generating a horde of Nightwalkers, ghastly snuffling abominations who wanted to wring the life out humans. Iolanthe and the rest fled from World's Edge in the face of this disaster.

Raven always believed that little Aleeya was herself destined for greatness. Perhaps she will someday undo the damage her mother has done?

trigger: someone dressed in a black military jacket with a silver star on the sleeve

this lore given to: all travelers

Only one branch of the Lyrian military wears uniforms of this type: the Phantoms.

Even after decades of peace, the kingdom of Lyria maintains a standing army. Separate from these rank-and-file soldiers, there is a small, much more selective squadron that handles missions that are particularly dangerous, important or politically-charged. Officially, they are the King's Elite Special Forces, but almost no one - including the King himself - calls them this. Everyone refers to them as the Phantoms. If a diplomat disappears or terrorists threaten, it is the Phantoms who are sent in.

In their dashing black uniforms, the Phantoms are as appealing as they are secretive, and information about their inner workings is both hard to come by and tantalizing. When you found yourself in an exclusive Dolorónian bar with a retired Phantom named Selena, you bought her a number of very expensive gin concoctions while listening to any story she was willing to share.

You were expecting - hoping for - tales of heroism, and perhaps you were a bit dismissive when Selena began to speak of a strategist named Cary Montalvo. Strategizing was one step above accounting, to your way of thinking. Selena was having none of this.

“Civilians think they know what it means to be a hero,” she said, making a dismissive gesture. “The Phantoms made Cary Montalvo a captain when he was still in his 20’s because of his mind. I never saw anyone able to make a plan like he could, to keep a hundred moving pieces in his head and see how they all fit together. I don’t say ‘genius’ lightly, but that’s what he is. Could’ve risen right up the ranks, but he wouldn’t let them promote him any higher. Wanted to stay with his soldiers. Means a lot, that.”

Selena’d signaled the bartender for another 32-royal drink and her eyes were far away, seeing something in the past. “Have you heard about the Mal Allaz Arsenal?” You have, of course. A giant sandstone fortress in Uri-Kesh, it had been taken over by terrorists, who’d rigged the insides with explosives and chained hostages within the vast building. This was almost a decade ago. *Everyone* has heard of Mal Allaz, but no one knows details except that the terrorists had ultimately been routed with astonishingly few casualties, even though the arsenal itself had been leveled in the process. *This* was the sort of story worth shelling out absurd amounts for drinks!

“I was three months from retiring, and when I heard we were infiltrating, I thought, ‘Well, old girl, it’s been a good run.’ You can’t imagine the size of a building like that. The stone walls were three feet thick and there were explosives everywhere. We went in knowing how likely it was we’d die inside, either blown to smithereens or crushed when the building came down. I was hoping it’d be

the former. I know I'd be dead either way, but it seemed like an easier way to go. You could just feel the weight of those stones around you, waiting to come crashing down. Phantoms are trained not to panic, but you could smell fear on all of us that day."

"And here inside, standing against one of those massive walls, was Cary Montalvo. He'd briefed us all on the outside, showed us the blueprints of the building. He'd marked where he believed the hostages would be - he was right - and where he thought most of the bombs would be set. He'd made the plan and given us our orders. He'd done his job. He didn't need to be inside. But he was."

"The Captain thought there'd be smaller explosions before the bigger blasts, and he was right about that, too. I tell you, there's no such thing as a 'small explosion' when you've got a million tons of stone all around you. Munitions started detonating and you can't imagine the noise and the smoke and the fear. I was lucky; I was in one of the earlier brigades. My team's making our way out, bringing some of the hostages but barely able to see through all the dust, and there was Montalvo, still with his back to that wall, and it's buckling. He had both feet braced against a stone pillar and he's keeping the damn wall up with mostly force of will alone. I saw him through the smoke and he was counting. Counting the seconds. And counting his soldiers as we got out."

"And then I was outside, but of course a lot of us weren't. At the 4-minute mark, there were 7 Phantoms left inside, plus 4 hostages. At 4 minutes and 40 seconds, there was a blast like the world was ripped open and we knew the ammo vault had blown. There were 6 people still inside. The ground was shaking like an earthquake, and the sky above the arsenal looked like it was on fire. We didn't know it then, but there were sparks raining down inside the building. Mal Allaz was Hell on earth and that's the truth."

"At 7 minutes, the building gave this shuddering sigh. I know you don't think a building can sigh, but I was there and I tell you: it was like the death rattle of a great beast. Two more Phantoms come out, carrying the final hostage, and she's unconscious but alive. And then, only then, Cary Montalvo staggers out and I swear the gods forsaken building collapses right behind him. Last man out."

"So, maybe people pooh-pooh what it means to be a strategist, but I was there, and I know I'm still alive because of Captain Montalvo's plan. People say he knows the name of every soldier who died on his watch. I don't know if that's true, but I know he's still got the scars of those godsdamned ashes. I'm guessing he's got marks on his soul that burn even though they're invisible. I hope, when that happens, that he takes comfort knowing that every single person made it out of Mal Allaz because of him."

"These have been lovely drinks, and I thank you. Don't take this the wrong way, but anyone whose concept of a hero isn't big enough to include Cary Montalvo? Isn't worth wasting my time on." And with that, Selena had tipped her hat and gone out into the Dolorónian night, leaving you with much to consider.

trigger: a banner depicting 3 stars in a line

this lore given to: all travelers

How old are you?

If you're under 30, maybe you've never heard of the Delta Garment Factory fire. Or if you've heard of it, you read about it in a history book: a terrible tragedy where over 200 people died. In your mind, it was an awful thing, but a thing that happened *in the past*.

Maybe you know that the factory operated in Lower Delta, in Uri-Kesh, and like most of those places, it relied almost exclusively on the labor of poor women and girls, some as young as 8. Possibly you know most of the deaths could've been prevented, had the exits not been locked by men who didn't want girls sneaking out for overlong lunches. Maybe you've given a moment of thought to how unspeakably terrifying it must have been for those women and girls, as the heat and flames rose around them and they waited to die.

But here's what probably *didn't* occur: *you didn't worry about it happening again*.

That's because of Orion Wilde.

Justice Orion Wilde had been a prosecutor for only four years at the time of the Delta fire. Delta Garment wasn't the only factory fire, of course, though it was the deadliest. Justice Wilde had gone after the managers of other factories, after other preventable accidents resulted in loss of lives, but when the Delta fire happened, he set his sights far higher. He prosecuted not just the men who'd personally locked the exit doors, but those men's bosses. The owners of the factory. The Delta Garment board of directors. He went after everyone in Lower Delta who'd grown rich on the backs of those poor women and girls.

And he won.

All around the kingdom, the effects rippled out from Lower Delta. Factory owners started taking far greater care. The factories became... maybe not safe. But safer.

Orion Wilde wasn't finished. He was not afraid to go after the rich and powerful. A crooked judge in Elsewhich who'd taken bribes to guarantee favorable verdicts. A corrupt duchess in Glendeep who'd hidden crimes committed by her cronies. An unscrupulous professor in Sythwan who'd destroyed evidence about dangerous chemicals. Again and again, Orion Wilde was fearless in his devotion to seeing justice done.

It's been some years since you've heard of Justice Wilde. Who can say what his latest crusade might be?

trigger: a large golden book or a golden piece of paper

this lore given to: all travelers except the traveler from Glendeep

You've never been to World's Edge before, but a playwright friend of yours named Viola told you a story about the village.

"This was after I finished *Downfall* and I hadn't the slightest idea of what to write next. No idea whatsoever, none! I heard of this place, Inspirations Unlimited, and I was desperate enough I made the trek to Moreth, to the far-west edge of the duchy."

"I got there and they sat me down with the bookkeeper. I'm not sure what I expected there, but that wasn't it. I started to explain I had some money but not lots, and Nemaia - that's her name, the bookkeeper - just held up a hand to quiet me. She peered at me and she said 'Tell me about a difficult memory.'"

"Well, I started to explain that I was a playwright - had she heard of *Downfall*? Not to brag but it was doing rather well - but she wasn't interested in any of that. She just asked me again, to tell her something difficult. I hadn't planned on talking about anything from home - why should I? - but I found myself telling her all about Javier and us fighting and all that. About how he's argumentative and belligerent and maddening. And while I was talking, Nemaia was writing all of it down in a big golden book."

"I don't know how long I talked. The words were like a flood from my brain, or maybe from my heart. When I was finished, she nodded, and then she turned to a clean page. She said something about how nothing - no person, no place, no situation - is all bad. There are always good stories and memories about anything, even a difficult thing. The good may not balance out the bad, but it is still there, and we need to remember it and acknowledge it. 'Tell me your good memories of this difficult thing,' she said."

"In case it's not obvious, I don't think Nemaia is your standard bookkeeper."

"It took me a minute, because I'd just poured out all that anger at Javier. But then... it was like it really had been poured out of me. It wasn't gone, but it wasn't all *inside me* anymore, if you follow. I told her about how he cooks me the soup his grandmother always made. I told her how he cared for the puppies that time they ate berries that made them sick. I told her about how he writes down words he especially loves and presents the little papers to me like gifts. Except I wasn't really telling Nemaia, even though she was writing it all down. I was telling myself."

"After I was done talking, she ripped the second page - the page with the good memories - out of the golden book, and she gave it to me. She told me it was important, no matter how challenging a situation, to remember the good pieces. She said it again: "They might not balance out the bad; they often don't. But still, we need to remember them." I asked if she was going to give me the first page as well, but she told me no. That page stays in the book. 'No one,' Nemaia said, 'needs help remembering the bad parts.'"

"Ultimately, she set me to work with two of her muses, Lexia and Dramina. When I told Lexia I had nothing more to write, she made me sit at a table and write 'I have nothing more to write' on a paper until finally I started having ideas just to escape the tedium. When I started to panic that the scenes I had didn't assemble into anything that made sense, Dramina put her hand on my shoulder and said, 'It's all right' in a voice that made me feel like yes, it actually was all right. They brought me sandwiches when I was writing too much to stop and they told me my words were good when I was afraid they were garbage. And then at the end of the day, Lexia would take us on some madcap little adventure: to a carnival, once. To see a sow that had just birthed a litter of tiny piglets. To sit in the tavern and eavesdrop on the servers' talk."

"I will tell you this truly, the fact that I wrote *Daughters of Water* and it won those awards? It never ever would have happened if the muses hadn't taken me in."

"And I still have the golden page. I wore it folded up inside my dress the day Javi and I married. Sometimes when he drives me mad, I take it out and reread it."

"She was right, Nemaia. It's good to have a reminder."

trigger: a large golden book, or a golden piece of paper

this lore given to: the traveler from Glendeep

You've never been to World's Edge before, but a sculptor friend of yours named Heinrich told you a story about the village.

"The work I was doing was selling so well and you'd think that would be wonderful, but I was so sick of it. I was ready to stop and become a ditch-digger. The money didn't matter anymore; I just could not carve another insipid cherub, no matter how much people wanted to pay for them. And yet I didn't want to stop sculpting. But if I didn't keep on with the cherubs, what was I doing? I had no idea. I heard of this place, *Inspirations Unlimited*, and off I went to Moreth, to the far-west edge of the duchy."

"I got there and they sat me down with the bookkeeper. I'm not sure what I expected there, but that wasn't it. I started to talk about cherubs and ditches, and Nemaia - that's her name, the bookkeeper - just held up a hand to quiet me. She peered at me and she said 'Tell me about a difficult memory.'"

"The cherubs had become plenty difficult by then, but I didn't think that was what she meant. I don't know why. Wasn't I there to become a better sculptor? You would think I would talk about sculpting. But no. I found myself telling her all about my father. Nothing I did was ever good enough for him. I told her he was withdrawn and critical. And while I was talking, Nemaia was writing all of it down in a big golden book."

"When I was finished, she nodded, and then she turned to a clean page. She said something about how nothing - no person, no place, no situation - is all bad. There are always good stories and memories about anything, even a difficult thing. The good may not balance out the bad, but it is still there, and we need to remember it and acknowledge it. 'Tell me your good memories of this difficult thing,' she said."

"That was about the time I realized Nemaia isn't your standard bookkeeper."

"I'm not sure I'd ever shared these stories with anyone before. I don't really think of them much. But I told her how my father sold two of our goats to buy me a truly fine set of chisels. He never said anything about doing it; I just found them on the table I used as a workbench. And how sometimes neighbors would come by to watch me work. I didn't realize for the longest time, but they came because my father'd bragged about me to them. I'd never told anyone that, but I told Nemaia and she wrote it all down in her book."

"After I was done talking, she ripped the second page - the page with the good memories - out of the golden book, and she gave it to me. She told me it was important, no matter how challenging a situation, to remember the good pieces. She said it again: 'They might not balance out the bad; they often don't. But still, we need to remember them.' I asked if she was going to give me the first page as well, but she told me no. That page stays in the book. 'No one,' Nemaia said, 'needs help remembering the bad parts.'"

"Ultimately, she set me to work with the most wonderful woman, a muse named Aesthetika. I'd brought my chisels with me, but we never once picked them up. Instead, she took me to look at a lake at sunrise and at a baby that was learning to walk. We sat outside at night and listened to wind. We drank white wine that was unpleasantly sweet and then she gave me bread with honey and after that the wine tasted perfect. Every time I started to reach for the chisels, she said, 'No. Not yet.' And then one morning when she said that, I argued with her. I was so excited to get to work and I couldn't bear to wait any longer, and then she said 'Well then, now the time is right.'

"The first of the beasts I carved - the work I'm now known for - I carved that day. They will never ever sell the way the damn cherubs did, but I love them, and the people who can see the beauty in their strange ugly faces, they love them too. And none of those sculptures would've happened if Aesthetika hadn't taken me in."

"I've heard she's now working to open an art school, there in World's Edge, for children that would otherwise go untaught. This is so like Aesthetika, to be doing this. I've sent her what money I can, to try to help. I owe her so much."

"I still have the golden page. I am still angry at my father, that he was unable or unwilling to praise me to my face. But every day since Lila was born, I take the good page out and reread it. Nemaia was right, that it's good to have a reminder."

trigger: someone named Lincroft Spence

this lore given to: the travelers from Elsewhich, Glendeep, Sythwan and Waylon

In 991- has it really been three years?! - Lincroft Spence published his first novel, *Whatever*. At the risk of sounding like one of those *Whatever* superfans, it's basically the best book ever.

Whatever is inspiring and heartbreakingly beautiful. Its beautifully explored themes of love, loss, forgiveness, and ambition make the story timeless and engaging. You've read it six or seven times now, and each time, you find new things to love. You have whole sections of it memorized, and who can blame you? It's that good!

And of course you're not the only one. *Whatever* is a sensation. Critics loved it. The general reading public loved it. People who don't read books bought it and read it and told their friends about it. Both "Ash" - the main character's name - and "Lincroft" experienced a surge in popularity as baby names. *Whatever* was made into a musical starring the acclaimed actor Derek Blade. It was translated into Tirothi, where the title was a word that roughly means "that which is nothing."

It's just so, so good!

Hard to believe it's been three years now. Lincroft Spence must surely be almost finished with his next novel! You cannot wait. Can. Not. Wait!

It's going to be so great!

trigger: a signpost inscribed “Knight’s Walk”

this lore given to: the traveler from Arden

Once, there were countless orders of knights in Lyria, but now many of them - even the esteemed Knights of the Golden Circle and the Sisters of the Fleur-de-Lis - have disbanded or died out. Some others remain but are now purely ceremonial in nature.

And yet there are a few groups that still follow the old ways, at least theoretically. The Order of the Black Lamp is one such organization.

Very little is known about this most secretive of groups, and in truth it is hard to be certain they still exist. Even in days of yore, they were a clandestine society. Knights were known only to each other, with new initiates drawn into the fold after a rigorous and private process.

Despite the concealed nature of all Black Lamp dealings, they were a greatly respected order that prioritized ministering to the poor and helpless and safeguarding sacred artifacts of all varieties.

And, as far as anyone knows, they are still doing these things today. Confirming this is nearly impossible because of the veil of perfect secrecy drawn over all of their dealings. In truth, even their name is a subject of debate, with some claiming they refer to themselves as the Order of the Black Lamp or possibly the Order of the Black Lantern or likewise maybe some other option entirely.

trigger: a sign inscribed with the name “Montgomery Morgan” [the sign **PROP by the theater says “the Montgomery Morgan Memorial Theater”]**

this lore given to: the traveler from Clairia

Montgomery Morgan was one of the leading actors of his time and was considered a real heartthrob. Along with his beautiful wife and fellow actor Delia Morgan, he built the Morgan Theater in World’s Edge back in 905, nearly ninety years ago.

At the time, the Morg - as it was inevitably called - was the height of glamour. The curtains were a deep red velvet, and golden sconces lit the room. When the house lights were dimmed, the music would begin to swell and the actors would step out onto the wooden stage. In the audience, people in their going-out finery would watch, enthralled, at the magical and lovely scenes that unfolded before them. Montgomery and Delia themselves would often take to the stage along with several Morgan siblings and cousins. People called them the First Family of Lyrian Theater and it was easy to see why.

Many people don’t realize it, but the Morgans had theater in their blood even before the Morg was built. In Montgomery’s very early days as an actor, he and his then-sweetheart Delia would put on pantomime shows in a horse-ring in their remote village, with audience members sitting on bales of hay to watch these simple performances. This was a long way from the glitzy stages on which he would eventually play, but Montgomery always claimed that it was passion that made theater magical rather than what the building looked like.

Be that as it may, in time even the most glamorous of stages begin to fade, and no amount of passion will rekindle their magic. Montgomery Morgan lived to be 80, with his beloved Delia dying less than a year later. People claimed that their ghosts - and the ghosts of other former performers - still made their presence felt in the old building, and the Morgan came to be known as “the hauntedest theater in Lyria.” Although it was a far cry from its start as a playground for the rich and beautiful, this notoriety helped keep the Morg afloat even as audience size was waning. Eventually, however, the small amount of ticket revenue wasn’t enough to sustain the tired old building, and the Morgan Theater was abandoned.

There is talk now, that when it comes to the the Morg, the final curtain hasn’t actually fallen. One of the few remaining members of the once-famous Morgan family apparently is at work refurbishing the old theater. Although this will require a daunting amount of money and work, it would be lovely to have the once-impressive Morgan Theater restored to its former glory!

trigger: a crossbow

this lore given to: the traveler from Dolorón

Seeing this weapon reminds you of one of the most beloved heroines in all of literature: Kit Carnage. From the moment the first book - *Resolute: The Kit Carnage Story* - was published almost 25 years ago, their protagonist set a new standard for courage and determination. With her pale blue eyes, “mop of unruly curls” and steely determination, the hero of *Shadows on the Trail*, *Deception at Dawn*, and *Journey into the Ghostlands* makes her way across the untamed expanses of the kingdom, protected only by her sharp wits and trusty crossbow. Although the violence in the stories is implied rather than explicit, the books make it abundantly clear the protagonist doesn’t take nonsense from anyone, and that she’s willing to resort to physicality when she deems it necessary.

Of course, many would argue that “literature” is the wrong term for these books. Some make that claim because the books are fiction in name only, being the thinly-disguised exploits of the author, Katherine Carmichael. Others would dispute the “literature” designation because, in their eyes, the books are written for children and are thus not worthy of such a lofty moniker.

This dismissive attitude hasn’t seemed to have hurt sales any, and the latest book, *Wide as the Sky*, was eagerly anticipated by - and sold briskly to - both young readers and many older ones as well.

trigger: the words “apocalyptic mindset”**this lore given to: the traveler from Keer**

For more than a year now, certain people all across Lyria have claimed that the world was going to end... and sooner rather than later.

The general population has paid these people little heed, considering them to be misguided or crazy or both. But those who believed the apocalypse was coming were undaunted - or maybe even encouraged - by the disbelief of the masses. As far as they were concerned, a Great Tumult was coming on September 4, 994: that is, 9/4/994.

There were different beliefs about just what, exactly, this Great Tumult would entail, except for a widespread agreement that it would be very, very bad indeed. Some maintained that human life - or possibly all life as we know it - would simply and suddenly cease to exist. Others imagined a less universal but more dramatic armageddon, with snakes falling from the skies, rivers of blood and the like.

There was difference of opinion as well about what, if anything, could be done about this end of days. Many became more devoutly religious, hoping that their devotion to the Seasons would ultimately save them from the worst of the horrors. Others claimed that nothing could be done (except, of course, panic.) There are even reports of small, scattered groups of doomsday cultists who began living as though the Tumult had already occurred, thereby hoping to acclimate themselves to the world which was to come in a sort of pre-post-apocalyptic mindset.

Ultimately, however, all of this prayer and panic and preparation has proven to be unnecessary. September 4th has come and gone and things are as they have always been.

Many cultists greeted the dawning of September 5th with mix of great relief and at least mild disappointment, proving that even if the world *did* end, human nature will remain a constant.

trigger: a signpost inscribed with the word “gilt” or “gilded”**this lore given to: the traveler from Noctara**

You have heard stories of an elite group of jewel thieves some reporters have dubbed the Gilt Crew.

Apparently, the organization - such as it is - has been responsible for thefts all over Lyria. Government buildings, mansions of the fabulously wealthy, museums and galleries... all of them have been targeted by the crew, who are responsible for hundreds of thousands of royals in stolen property.

The Gilt Crew has been remarkably successful in gaining access to even the most secure of locations and then extricating themselves after selecting only the most portable, valuable and fenceable items. Of course, some members of the group have been captured, but this has done little to stop the crew as a whole. Seemingly there is a high level of anonymity within the organization, with thieves being recruited and directed remotely.

There is speculation that there is some sort of criminal mastermind behind these heists, a powerful but unknown conductor who orchestrates all the thefts from afar. If this is true, almost nothing is known of this individual’s identity or whereabouts. If any of the apprehended thieves are aware of this person’s identity, they have failed to divulge it after extensive questioning. Rumors circulate that Gilt Crew communications are conducted entirely in writing and that missives from above are signed not with a name but with a cryptic symbol, but since law enforcement is releasing little information on the crew, nothing more is known about this.

trigger: a mention of “Jack Brigham” or “Scurvy Jack”

this lore given to: the traveler from P’loa

From the bustling ports of Uri-Kesh to the rocky shores of Keer and as far south as Tiroth, there aren’t many who sail the Tirothian Sea who don’t know the name of Scurvy Jack Brigham, the man they call the Pirate King.

He captains the ship *Misery*, and few on the seas inspire the same deference and fear as he. A barrel-chested man with piercing eyes and bushy brown beard, Scurvy Jack is not the sort to scream and storm about, but his crew and his enemies alike knew the terror of his quiet, controlled fury. It is said that he’ll slice a throat without ever raising his voice or batting an eye.

As much as he is feared, he is also beloved by his crew. A gifted leader, he is said to inspire great confidence in his followers, and he is likewise an aggressive but judicious captain. He has piloted the *Misery* safely through many a gale, and emerged victorious from many a fight, both on land and at sea.

In truth, there are rulers the world over who fail to command the respect afforded the aptly named Pirate King. Some speculate that Jack Brigham could rise through the ranks of any army, any company, any political party, should he choose to turn his attention that way, but it is plain that Scurvy Jack long ago made his choice, opting for a life of freedom and crime on the rain-lashed decks of the *Misery*.

Those who maintain that crime doesn’t pay will be hard-pressed to prove that by Jack’s example. He is said to be wealthy beyond belief, with piles of gold buried in spots all over the kingdom. There is a painting in Keer that depicts him drinking from a ruby-crusted chalice, and he is said to possess the famous Dawn Star, a gold pendant set with an orange opal and surrounded by pink tourmalines. The Pirate King is a man of exquisite taste, with the means to indulge in the finest luxuries.

Of course, there are plenty who are not enamored of the man or his choices. Stop into any dockside tavern and you’ll find a sailing captain – of a bounty-hunting frigate, a previously-plundered merchant galleon, a Lyrian man o’ war – who wants not just to see Jack Brigham dead, but to be the one who makes him so.

And perhaps the man has finally met his match? For the past couple of years, there have been scarcely any sightings of the feared Pirate King. Perhaps he has retired, or perhaps he finally found a fight he could not win? Even those who hate the man might experience a pang, thinking of the mighty Jack Brigham vanquished at last.

trigger: the name “Diamond Dora Bright”

this lore given to: the traveler from Uri-Kesh

Diamond Dora! At the height of her career, she was one of the most celebrated and beloved dancers of the Lyrian stage, and even now, almost a year after her death, she is remembered with delight by anyone who cares about the arts.

Dora - whose full name was Theodora Bright Davies - lived in World’s Edge her entire life, although she traveled often while she was dancing. She is perhaps best remembered for her two-part career. As a young woman, she danced professionally and was reasonably successful. Upon her marriage to Harold Davies, an accountant and financial manager, she gave up dancing.

After Harold’s death, the then-49-year-old Dora made the surprising decision to return to professional dancing. Perhaps even more surprising, it was this period of her career when she achieved her greatest success and fame. Writing of one of her performances when she was in her late 50’s, the *Lyrian Arts Review* said “Any audience member who believes a woman of her age is too old to dance onstage - even on so august a stage as Elsewhich’s Duncan Theater - will be educated and set straight. To see Diamond Dora Bright perform is to see jubilation, to be drawn into a magical space where there is enough beauty and joy for us all.”

By all accounts, Dora Davies brought this same measure of beauty and joy to her personal life as well. She is remembered for her brightly-colored clothing and was an enthusiastic gardener and hostess.

Theodora Bright Davies died November 20, 993, of heart failure. She is survived by her son Edwin Davies and her sister, Eugenie Bright, both of World’s Edge.

trigger: a mention of the name ‘Morgoth’

All travelers receive lore about the Wolven. There are different versions, distributed as follows:

Dresden – Dolorón and P’loa; Fury – Elsewhich, Noctara and Uri-Kesh; Hatchet – Sythwan and Waylon; Gaspar – Clairia, Glendeep and Keer; Melisande – Arden

Lyrian law prohibits capital punishment except in very specific cases. This means that many hardened criminals may not legally be put to death. Rather than being imprisoned in Lyrian jails, many of these most violent of offenders are exiled to the Wild Lands, where it is assumed that they will soon perish of the elements. Lyria has been practicing this system of justice for many, many years.

Unfortunately, some of the most dangerous criminals -- rather than dying amidst the harsh landscape of the Wild Lands -- have instead thrived there. They have come together into a band of vicious outlaws called the Wolven. Loathsome and despicable enemies, the Wolven often taunt and curse at their victims before actually killing them.

[The following two paragraphs are replaced in different parties' traveler lore, as explained above.]

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The Wolven are commanded by a small group of Captains who rule through fear and intimidation. You remember hearing a story about one of them, a woman named Dresden.

A woman of aristocratic bearing and great intelligence, Dresden worked for many years as a professional assassin in Dolorón before eventually being captured. Dresden views killing as an art and a pleasure; her skill with a sword has made her a feared opponent.

--

[All of the Wolven traveler lore concludes as follows:]

There are stories, too, of that Wolven Captain known only as the Iron General. It is said he fought for the Lyrian kingdom in the great Tirothian War. Some people say that he committed treason, passing numerous secrets to the government of Tiroth which allowed them great advantages. Other people claim that he was loyal to Lyria... so loyal, in fact, that he cold-bloodedly murdered officers of his whom he felt had made mistakes, or failed to distinguish themselves in battle.

All the stories agree on a few facts, though. He is said to be a brilliant tactician, entirely cool and collected even in the heat of battle. He is despotic, demanding complete and mindless obedience to every order. And he himself is a warrior of the highest caliber. One soldier, speaking of the Iron General, wrote "To see him on the battlefield is to embrace the sure and immediate certainty of death."

Lots of people fear the Wolven. Among the outlaws themselves, there is great fear of the Wolven Captains. But rumor says that even the other Captains, those most vicious of criminals, live in fear of Morgoth.

Morgoth was once High Priest of a large and influential barony within Noctara. A powerful man already, he sought greater and greater power, desiring far more than he could acquire through legitimate means. No one fully understands the details, but at some point Morgoth, a man of tremendous intelligence and personal charisma, turned his face away from the Seasons and toward the Darkness. He was forsaken by Winter, but some claimed that he drew upon some evil source of power to gain twisted and repellent magical abilities.

Morgoth is a master of intrigue and terror, and it is through manipulation of others that he prefers to carry out his dark deeds. When necessary, however, he is well able to strike out on his own, having both his dark magic and his considerable skill with a blade.

Unlike all the other Wolven -- captured criminals who were exiled -- Morgoth moved to the Wild Lands of his own free will, specifically for the purpose of joining, and eventually ruling, the Wolven. Recent rumors indicate that he has been successful in this quest.

Morgoth is brilliant, ruthless and boundlessly ambitious. If indeed he is now supreme master of the entire Wild Lands, how long will it be before he seeks even greater dominion?

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[Other traveler lore substitutes the following paragraphs for the Dresden information:]

The Wolven are commanded by a small group of Captains who rule through fear and intimidation. You remember hearing a story about one of them, a woman called Fury.

Fury was born in poverty in the gutters of Uri-Kesh. She quickly turned to thievery to get the things she needed and wanted. Fury learned evil magical spells from other people of the streets and is now a powerful user of magic. A vulgar and shrewish woman in the best of times, Fury's temperament and general hatred of the world have not improved since her exile to the Wild Lands.

or:

The Wolven are commanded by a small group of Captains who rule through fear and intimidation. You remember hearing a story about one of them, a man called Hatchet.

It is thought that Hatchet originally came from Waylon, but little is really known about this brutal killer. Hatchet speaks little and seems driven only by a mindless love of blood and violence. Some have compared him to a Worlog or other wild beast that kills instinctively.

or

The Wolven are commanded by a small group of Captains who rule through fear and intimidation. You remember hearing a story about one of them, a man called Gaspar.

Gaspar was an important figure in the Keerian makers' guild until it was discovered that he had been sabotaging the technomagical research of other makers, frequently in ways that proved fatal to the scholars involved. A notorious coward and sneak, Gaspar prefers to kill in ways that allow him to be far away from the actual scene of the crime. He is a master trapsmith but can and will use a sword or a technomagical wand if his attempts to kill from afar fail. There have been recent reports that Gaspar was seriously injured when an explosive device he was working on partially severed one of his arms, but it is not yet known if these reports are accurate.

or

The Wolven are commanded by a small group of Captains who rule through fear and intimidation. You remember hearing stories about one of them, a woman named Melisande.

There are conflicting stories of Melisande's upbringing in the far north of Clairia, but all agree she is renowned both for her great skill with a sword and her timeless beauty. Rumors that that beauty is maintained by bathing in blood are hopefully only tall tales, but the fact that she is both cruel and lethal cannot be disputed.

Baron Honoré Valerius -- Scott Moore

Age: 50

Usually found: in the Valerius house

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius family appears on page 203.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Clairia

When to approach a party: on Friday night or Saturday morning

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Honoré should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Honoré needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Honoré doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party!

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Clairia

When to approach a party: Honoré is assigning this party's charge. He is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, Honoré approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Danny Donovan. He tells the party that he's known Danny his whole life, and although Danny's struggled with drug addiction and hasn't always made great choices, he has a good heart. Danny would give you the shirt off his back, Honoré says, even if it meant he froze as a result. He tells the party that he's not sure when it was that Danny started using White Noise. It's an illegal drug, a white waxy gum that gets smoked in a pipe. It's depressingly easy to acquire in World's Edge, because most of the White Noise sold in Moreth and Arden gets made in the Wild Lands. Honoré tells the party that White Noise is highly addictive; he's been working for years to get rid of it, but it's very profitable, so there's no way the Wolven are going to stop manufacturing it. He was really hopeful, back last winter when he learned that Danny had stopped using. The problem, Honoré says, is that nobody wanted to hire Danny, and he was afraid that without a job, his friend was likely to relapse. Honoré tells the party that he'd talked to Aria Morgan about giving Danny a chance, and although she had concerns, she'd finally agreed. Honoré really thought everything was working out there. Danny's a hard worker when he's sober, and good with his hands. But on Thursday morning, Aria fired Danny. Honoré tells the party that he'd gone to the theater and given Aria a letter listing Danny's good points and asking her to reconsider, but he doesn't know if she read it. Even if she had, it doesn't much matter now. They all woke up on Friday morning with no memory of the night before, and by that time, the theater had largely burned down. Honoré explains that Solomon Stillwater lets Danny use a cot in a back room of the tavern, and when Danny came out of the room Friday morning, he was covered in soot. Honoré wants to believe the best of Danny, but it's hard to imagine that he wasn't involved in the fire. Honoré tells the party that he firmly believes that setting the fire was an accident, but that Aria disagrees. She's understandably heartbroken by the loss of the theater and she wants to see Danny punished for deliberate arson. Honoré hopes his faith in Danny isn't misplaced. He tells the party that he'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against his old friend.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Sythwan

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: cloudit ring

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time they encounter this party and this charge is NOT being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Honoré, Sylvie, Pascal, Nix and/or Lenora mentions Frost, the young boy who works as a servant at the Valerius house. In each of these instances, Frost was around just a few minutes ago, but has gone to run an errand or whatever. This shouldn't seem like a big deal, maybe just "Please come in! Frost can bring you some tea. Oh, that's right. He's just gone out. Here, I'll get it for you myself." Or whatever.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Honoré tells the party that he knows Eugenie Bright is wracked with guilt over her role in the destruction of Matty and Terese O'Dell's wayshrines. He says that Eugenie was there to assist in rebuilding the damaged shrines, just as he was. They were lucky that Electra was there last Saturday night when the demon returned, because otherwise all the shrines might have been destroyed. From what Honoré understands, the demon knocked Terese O'Dell's favorite teapot from her shrine, cracking it, and then moved to Matty's, where it shoved at the shrine itself and pushed the contents to the ground. It was just heading toward Dora Davies' wayshrine when Electra intercepted it.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Honoré tells the party that he wishes he could do more to help the Peacock Family Singers, especially now that so much money has been stolen from them. Honoré tells the party that the band's manager Milton Peacock has been talking to him for several weeks, asking if Honoré had any contacts with venues that might want to book the band. Honoré tells the party that he hadn't realized how much money the band had accumulated. He confesses that Milton seemed very anxious about lining up bookings for the band, which made Honoré think they weren't having much success in that area. Of course, there are rumors now that it was Milton Peacock himself who stole from the band, so perhaps he was so focused on lining up jobs because he knew the band's coffers had been emptied. The rest of the band seem like very good people, and Honoré feels for them.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Baroness Adina Rose Valerius -- Jen Platt

Age: 51

Usually found: in the Valerius house

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius family appears on page 203.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Glendeep

Approximately when: Friday night (Adina Valerius is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Adina asks the party to tell her about their mission. She is concerned about the safety of the Duke's young son and will do whatever she can to help out. However... Baroness Adina tells the party yes, she knows who Lorelei is... or, rather, who she was. The party is multiple centuries too late to actually meet her, though.

Saint Lorelei was a keeper who came to World's Edge just around the time it was first settled. She was and still is revered as a powerful holy woman, and she was instrumental in abolishing slavery in the newly-settled portions of Lyria. There's a statue of her in the Shrine of AllSeasons. Adina confesses that, although she passes the statue often, she does not usually pause to give it her full attention, but as she remembers, it doesn't have a sword.

As for a Ritual of Reclamation, this is something Adina hopes might be more fruitful. She tells the party that there are a group of Makai sect members currently camped in World's Edge. The Makai homeground is many miles away and is not recognized as part of Lyria, but that World's Edge is the nearest town to this homeground and that the Makai thus send small delegations to town. There is Makai here now, and Adina heard one of them – Kemma Runereader, that's her name – saying something about a Ritual of Reclamation. Probably the party should talk to her.

Runereader doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Adina says. She herself cannot leave at the moment, but she brings the party over to Kora Peacekeeper, and asks Peacekeeper if she would be willing to walk the party to the Makai camp. Baroness Adina wishes the party much luck in World's Edge.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: If the party expresses interest in actually going to the Shrine of AllSeasons, Adina can tell them that it's right on their way as they head to the Makai camp. She should of course not let them just head out there on their own, but she can suggest to Kora Peacekeeper that they stop off at the Shrine if there's time.

Item(s) to give this party: none

Clairia

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: Adina tells the party she does indeed have a set of Clairian silver amulets... somewhere. They were a wedding present from a distant cousin, given to her and Honoré back when they married. They're quite lovely, but she doesn't truly have a use for them. She's happy to give them to the party, once she figures out where they are. She promises to locate them today and tells the party she'll meet them in the tavern Sunday at 10am to deliver them.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none (she'll give them the silver snowflake amulets in the tavern Sunday at 10am)

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Adina tells the party that she is concerned about Frost, the boy who works as a servant in the Baron's household. He's a hard worker, Adina says, and smart as a whip. Just recently, however, he asked her if she might loan him some money. Adina tells the party that Frost's family lives on a farm outside of town. She knows there's little he himself needs so she assumes the money was for his family. She tells the party that she's asked Sylvie to check in with the family and make certain they're getting enough to eat and that they're able to pay the mortgage on the farm. Those are heavy concerns for a boy Frost's age, Adina says. She'd asked him if everything was all right, but he's very proud and he didn't want to tell her any details.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Adina tells the party that Tanya Peacock, one of the women with that visiting family of singers, is upset about a situation, and while the Baroness is sympathetic, she is unsure that there's terribly much she can do. Adina tells the party that - as Tanya explained to her *at great length* - Tanya's birthday is coming up soon and she ordered a mail-order tiara to wear on the occasion. Tanya received a notice stating that her package had been delivered, but unfortunately the package had actually *not* been delivered. Adina tells the party she informed Tanya that this was a matter for the catalog's customer service department rather than the Baron. Perhaps this would have resolved the matter but then the visiting delegation of Makai arrived in town and Kerrick Dealbinder - one of the Makai, and a man the Baroness has met before - came into the tavern wearing what Tanya believes to be her stolen tiara. Mr. Dealbinder asserts that he found this crown in a box hidden in the woods. Adina explains that she is exceedingly grateful that Justice Orion Wilde has arrived in town and that this matter is now placed in his very competent hands rather than her own.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Clairia, again

Time: 10am, Sunday (Adina is the penultimate step for this party. She gives them the item, but does not accompany them to do the ritual)

Item(s) to give this party: snowflake amulets

Arden

When to approach a party: Adina is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. She will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. She should check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Sunday between 11am and noon*, Adina approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Bracken. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Adina encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Bracken is attempting to join a secretive order of knights.
- Since one of his missions requires that he rescue a damsel in distress, Bracken has interpreted this to mean he should teach the helpless Angelica Sprink the life skills she was lacking, and this, as well as the other quests he is in the process of completing, explain his potentially questionable behavior.

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- Although Bracken doesn't yet know how special and unusual this particular order is, he'll ultimately be deemed worthy of entry into this secretive and fabulous Knight Club.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Adina can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Adina can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Lady Sylvie Valerius -- Linda Bennet

Age: 42

Usually found: in the Valerius house

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius family appears on page 203.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Keer

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: Sylvie doesn't have a permanent perfect sphere of air, but she has the means to make some: a bubble necklace. She's happy to give it to the party.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: perfect sphere of air bubble necklace

GlendeeP

When to approach a party: any time they encounter this party and this charge is NOT being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Honoré, Sylvie, Pascal, Nix and/or Lenora mentions Frost, the young boy who works as a servant at the Valerius house. In each of these instances, Frost was around just a few minutes ago, but has gone to run an errand or whatever. This shouldn't seem like a big deal, maybe just "Please come in! Frost can bring you some tea. Oh, that's right. He's just gone out. Here, I'll get it for you myself." Or whatever.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: sometime before Saturday at 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sylvie tells the party that before Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater came to World's Edge, the tavern was owned by a woman named Scarlet Billows. Scarlet owned the bar for 5 years, and when she wanted to sell it, she spread the word back in Keer, where she was originally from. Sylvie explains that that's how Solomon Stillwater heard about World's Edge in the first place. Sylvie tells the party that Solomon and Bonnie are a large improvement over Scarlet, who was a very volatile person. Perhaps it is unkind of Sylvie to say, but even on Scarlet's best days, she was not a terribly friendly person, and she was prone to outbursts of temper. Maybe this was because Scarlet missed her boyfriend. As Sylvie recalls, Scarlet spoke often about her boyfriend, a man she referred to as very rich and powerful. Scarlet refused to divulge his identity but seemed to want people to ask questions about him. Sylvie is embarrassed to confess that she sometimes wondered if this mysterious boyfriend actually existed at all, since no one ever met him, but that is probably unfair to say. Maybe Scarlet left World's Edge and settled down with this mystery man! Still, Sylvie acknowledges, there must have been things Scarlet enjoyed about running the tavern, because apparently she had a change of heart after selling the tavern and had written repeatedly asking to buy it back. Bonnie and Solomon turned down all of Scarlet's offers, and although Sylvie feels sorry for Scarlet, she confesses that she would prefer that Scarlet stay in Keer rather than returning to World's Edge.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sylvie tells the party that she adored Theodora Davies and was heartbroken when the older lady passed away last year. Theodora and her sister Eugenie - who is also delightful - lived in town their whole lives, although Dora travelled sometimes. Sylvie explains that Dora was a dancer, both up until her marriage to Harold Davies and then again years later, after Harold's death. Sylvie probably shouldn't say this, but she personally never warmed to Harold. He was very focussed on what people thought of him, if the party knows what Sylvie means? His son Edwin is quite a bit like him, although again, that's probably not very nice of Sylvie to say. Harold liked having a pretty wife like Dora, but he wasn't wild about people knowing she'd been a dancer. He probably saw it as not respectable enough. After he died, Dora went back to dancing and if anything, she was more popular with audiences than she'd been when she was young. Maybe it's crass of Sylvie to say, but Dora made a nice amount of money dancing. Not that you'd know it, most of her life, because she was also very frugal. Sylvie tells the party that as children, she remembers Edwin being annoyed that his lunch would be a cheese sandwich or whatever, instead of something fancy, something that would impress people. Maybe it was because Dora and Eugenie had grown up poor, but Dora was very careful with money, even when she was making a lot of it. Sylvie tells the party that that changed a couple years ago. It was like Dora decided that she couldn't take the money with her and she started spending it accordingly. She bought herself some jewelry and perfume and some nice sherry, but a lot of it got spent on gifts for people. She gave lots of presents to Eugenie, but she was generous with everybody. Oh, and she started throwing parties, wonderful parties with so much food and drink and music and always dancing. They were the best. Sylvie misses her terribly.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sylvie tells the party that she was concerned about Milton Peacock. He takes his responsibilities as the manager of the Peacock Family Singers very seriously, she knows, and he's been increasingly anxious about finding bookings for the band. Sylvie tells the party that she's seen Milton with Miscellania a number of times recently, and every time, both of them are animated and laughing. This is so nice to see, Sylvie says.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Lord Pascal Valerius -- Matt Miles

Age: 32

Usually found: in the Valerius house

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius family appears on page 203.

Secret Info:

Pascal is a knight in the extremely secretive Order of the Black Light. This fact will be irrelevant for 99.8% of the weekend and really super important for the remaining .2%. See page 209 for details.

How/when/where/why did Pascal become a Knight of the Black Light? I could tell you, but then I'd have to kill you.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Clairia

Approximately when: Friday night (Pascal Valerius is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: Pascal tells the party that he's happy to bring them up to the Valerius house, and he's sure Lenora Graves will be pleased to meet them.

Before leaving, Pascal needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at the Valerius house. (There technically is, but it's not always operational and it's definitely hard to access.) If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should probably do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Clairia. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Pascal should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once Pascal has escorted the party to the Valerius house and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, he returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Arden

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pascal tells the party he's very glad to see them practicing their combat skills.

He's not sure if they saw the notice Adina posted in the tavern, but there was an attack on a farmhouse that some people were saying Morgoth was responsible for. Pascal thinks that unlikely, because Morgoth usually sends others out to do his dirty work for him, like Melisande or one of the other Captains. Still, it's important to be prepared.

Item(s) to give this party: star of direction

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pascal tells the party that he was just outside the tavern Thursday mid-morning when Aria Morgan fired Danny Donovan from his job at the Morg. He assures the party that he wasn't eavesdropping on a private conversation; Aria was very unhappy and expressed that at a commensurate volume level, by which he means: very very loud. From the sounds of it, Pascal says, Danny threw away some papers that were really important and was fired as a result. Pascal tells the party that he doesn't know Danny as well as his brother does, but that he likes Danny well enough. He likes Aria as well, although she's certainly not easy-going like Danny is. Pascal acknowledges that perhaps this is why Aria had a partially-restored theater while Danny just had a drug habit. Pascal tells the party that Danny seemed resigned to his fate, after Aria sent him packing. If someone had given Pascal a public dressing-down like Danny got, he'd have been angry. If Danny was angry, Pascal says, it didn't show.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pascal tells the party that this nonsense of Ursula Smirch claiming Evelyn has some sort of vendetta against her has gone on far enough. Several weeks ago, Pascal tells the party, he needed to visit the Smirches' shop. There was some sort of dead animal outside the door. This happens, Pascal tells the party. Sometimes animals die. That is how nature works. Ursula, however, told him that Evelyn had left the animal there for the purpose of driving away business. Pascal tells the party that Evelyn is a good person. Even if she were not, he hopes she would not resort to depositing dead animals near anyone's door. For goodness' sake, Ursula needs to let this go.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time they encounter this party and this charge is NOT being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Honoré, Sylvie, Pascal, Nix and/or Lenora mentions Frost, the young boy who works as a servant at the Valerius house. In each of these instances, Frost was around just a few minutes ago, but has gone to run an errand or whatever. This shouldn't seem like a big deal, maybe just "Please come in! Frost can bring you some tea. Oh, that's right. He's just gone out. Here, I'll get it for you myself." Or whatever.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Lord Santiago West Valerius -- Neal Desai

Age: 34

Usually found: in the Valerius house

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius family appears on page 203.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

A description of the Soul Speaking Challenge appears on page 484.

(Santiago will be shuttling parties to one of the Soul Speaking locations on Saturday night.)

Waylon

Approximately when: Friday night (Santiago is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Santiago asks the party to tell him all about their mission.

Santiago assures the party that he takes their mission very seriously. He himself is Waylonian, hailing from the hill-town of Vantage, and although he now makes his home here with his husband's family, he has always heard what a good man their Duke is. He explains that knowing Ursula Smirch helps make their story a very credible one.

Of course, Santiago says, even if he himself were Duke of Moreth - which he is happily not - he would be as powerless to act as their own Duke is unless proof of Ursula's crime is presented. He is interested to hear what their Duke has to say about the spell called Testimony but confesses he knows nothing of it. He suggests the party talk to Fenwick Michaels. Fenwick serves as bailiff to the visiting prosecutor Justice Orion Wilde, and as such is more likely to know about a spell such as this one. Santiago tells the party that he's very hopeful Fenwick can assist them and assures the party that they may speak freely with the bailiff.

Sometime during the conversation, Santiago introduces the party to their Companion. Santiago says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Wade, who has been sitting at the same table. Santiago quietly lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Santiago tells the party about the highly unusual situation he discovered just this morning. He explains that he and his husband Pascal were away for several days in Mystal, Moreth's capital city, and that they only arrived home this morning. When they got here, they found the town in a state of great confusion because from what he understands, no one who was in town last night is able to remember anything from the hours of 6pm on Thursday until sometime early this very morning.

Santiago tells the party that there will be a wedding here in town on Sunday - his dear friend Belle Bishop is to marry her longtime beau Cary Montalvo - and the couple had bachelor and bachelorette parties last night. Santiago confesses that he immediately assumed that these parties might explain a general malaise and forgetfulness affecting the town, but it soon became apparent that this wasn't the case: that even people in town who had no intention of attending the parties were unable to remember anything at all. He and Pascal are able to remember Thursday night without difficulty, as are Fenwick Michaels and the rest of Justice Wilde's entourage, who also arrived in town this morning. But for everyone in town, that time is a blank. The whole thing is very perplexing!

Item(s) to give this party: none

Noctara

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Santiago is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: Santiago tells the party that he heard they were looking for a copperstone crown. He has one, and he'd be happy to let the party have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At the very end of the encounter, Santiago asks the party “So, where are you headed next?” Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they’re now in charge. Also, it would be great if Santiago could ask what other items the party is looking for. There’s a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: copperstone crown

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday at 8pm, so long as the party isn’t occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Santiago tells the party about a strange thing that happened recently concerning an important sacred relic: the Crown of St. Mora. St. Mora, the patron saint of the dying, was a revered figure from centuries ago. Her Crown is a relic which was stolen several years back from the cathedral in Mystal. This was a very upsetting theft, the Crown being a significant holy artifact. Its loss was devastating to the church. Then, two weeks ago, it suddenly appeared on the doorstep of the Valerius family’s house. Once the Rites are past, Santiago will travel to Mystal to return it to its rightful home in the cathedral.

Reason this info matters: this sets the stage for the Crown’s use during the 8pm meeting and 10pm ritual

Arden

When to approach a party: Saturday before 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Santiago is telling multiple parties about the Crown of St. Mora so that people have context for an important plot overview scene, but he gives this party information he doesn’t share with anyone else. Before doing so, he asks if he may speak with them privately. Santiago explains that the Crown of St. Mora is an important sacred relic which was stolen several years ago from the cathedral in Mystal. This was a very upsetting theft, the Crown being a significant holy artifact. Its loss was devastating to the church. Then, two weeks ago, it suddenly appeared on the doorstep of the Valerius family’s house. Once the Rites are past, Santiago will travel to Mystal to return it to its rightful home in the cathedral. All of that is completely true, Santiago says, and he has told many people the story. There is, however, an element of the story he hasn’t shared with anyone, but which he now tells the party: he was awake very late on the night the Crown was left, and he is almost positive that it was the young man Bracken who left it. [If it is after lunch, Santiago tells the party that he’s giving them this information because he heard they’re investigating the charge against Bracken. If it’s before lunch, he can say that it’s because they seem particularly trustworthy.] Santiago tells the party that Bracken - if that is indeed who it was - didn’t see Santiago, and that Santiago hasn’t said anything about this to anyone, including Bracken. Returning the Crown is a very honorable thing to do, Santiago says. But... why did Bracken have the Crown in the first place? And why leave it anonymously? Santiago says that he has been praying for guidance on this matter, but if Summer has sent him any visionary dreams on the subject, he has been unable to interpret them.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken’s, see page 83 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Santiago tells the party he thinks everyone in the Valerius household will breathe a little easier when Lady Carmina Bordeaux’s visit comes to an end. He acknowledges that this is not a terribly hospitable thing for him to say or think, but after four months of the woman’s presence, he has grown weary of the way she treats people. Santiago tells the party about an incident that happened several months ago: One evening at dinner, Lady Bordeaux announced that there would soon be a famous artist in the house. Santiago tells the party that it was rather obvious that she was speaking of herself and that she wanted those assembled to faun over her and ask excited questions. Instead, he says, Pascal - who is brilliant, but who sometimes misses social cues such as these - assumed that Lady Bordeaux was speaking about Frost, the young servant boy who

works for the family. It is true, Santiago says, that Frost is quite talented and can often be seen sitting with his sketchbook when his work is completed. Still, he tells the party, Lady Bordeaux did *not* appreciate Pascal's misunderstanding, and she snapped at him in a way that was, Santiago feels, entirely uncalled for. Santiago tells the party that in the end, it's probably unlikely that Lady Bordeaux will become an artist, either famous or obscure. She had apparently been working with Aesthetika, but once she learned that Aesthetika wasn't going to magically infuse her with talent, she grew disillusioned with the whole idea. Santiago confesses that he'd hoped this would sour Lady Bordeaux on World's Edge as a whole, but sadly, that did not happen.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Lady Nicolette (Nix) Valerius -- Julie Leviter

Age: 24

Usually found: in the Valerius house

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius family appears on page 203.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Arden

Approximately when: Friday night (Nix is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: Nix is delighted to meet the party, and she's sure Isaiah Cooke will be as well.

Before leaving, Nix needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at the Valerius house. (There technically is, but it's not always operational and it's definitely hard to access.) If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should probably do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Arden. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Nix should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once Nix has escorted the party to the Valerius house and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, she returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nix tells the party they've picked a pretty good time to visit World's Edge. The Rites of Remembrance still has a day to go, plus there'll be a trial *and* a wedding on Sunday. Usually the town is total Dullsville, but now there are actually a few things happening. Still, Nix cautions the party not to expect too much excitement while they're in town. The trial should be very cut and dried, because Orion Wilde has a reputation for wanting to get the job done with as little fuss as possible. As for the wedding, Nix isn't expecting a rager or anything, because although the bride and the groom are both okay, they're also super old. Basically, the next couple days are likely to be more interesting than World's Edge usually is... but that's not really saying much.

Item(s) to give this party: none

P'loa

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: black diamond shards

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nix tells the party that Sylvie read lots of books to her, back before she could read herself, and as a general rule, they sucked ass. Nix thinks there should be a special punishment for people who write terrible books for little kids, books where every damn thing has a moral and the action is boring and predictable and you want to punch every single one of the characters right in their smug mouths. Nix tells the party that little-kid Nix was just about to refuse to have any more reading time, which would have crushed Sylvie, but then Sylvie showed her a book called *Resolute*. Nix knew right away that it was different, she tells the party. First of all, the girl in the book was called Kit Carnage, and when Sylvie told her what “carnage” was, she was, all, “oh, hell yes.” Nix tells the party that her name wasn’t the only badass about Kit. She didn’t take any shit from anyone. Nix tells the party that she liked how Kit was an orphan, how the books talked about her “ice blue eyes” and “unmanageable curls.” Nix admits that maybe she’d liked the books a little extra because she was also an orphan and also had unmanageable curls, even though her eyes are not blue. Mostly she liked that even when Kit Carnage was afraid - which wasn’t often, but still - she did whatever needed doing. Nix tells the party that it was pretty cool when Katherine Carmichael - actual real-life Kit Carnage in the flesh! - came to World’s Edge. Now that man Vernon Gill has shown up, telling everyone about him getting shot after he mouthed off. Good, Nix says. Let him keep telling that story to everyone who’ll listen. Maybe a couple other assholes will think twice before they mouth off to some woman in a bar.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael’s, see page 90 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time they encounter this party and this charge is NOT being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Honoré, Sylvie, Pascal, Nix and/or Lenora mentions Frost, the young boy who works as a servant at the Valerius house. In each of these instances, Frost was around just a few minutes ago, but has gone to run an errand or whatever. This shouldn’t seem like a big deal, maybe just “Please come in! Frost can bring you some tea. Oh, that’s right. He’s just gone out. Here, I’ll get it for you myself.” Or whatever.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika’s, see page 120 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nix tells the party that she has heard way, way too much about Professor Daniel Merriweather over the past couple weeks. The Professor - whom she had very happily gone her whole life knowing not a damn thing about - was supposed to give a talk last Sunday at 3pm. Nix tells the party that she knows this because their houseguest Lenora Graves had been obsessing about the talk for weeks before it happened. The talk sounded like a total snoozefest to Nix, and then it didn’t matter because the Professor was a no-show. Nix tells the party that of course, Lenora was crushed. Well, first she was crushed, and then she started worrying, saying that something terrible must’ve *befallen* the Professor. Nix tells the party that she hadn’t paid much attention to this, because Lenora thinks doom and disaster lurk around every corner.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito’s, see page 105 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nix tells the party that this Huxley guy showed up yesterday. Bartleby Sprink has been talking up this visit for the past week, all “young Lord Huxley” this and “young Lord Huxley” that. Apparently this guy’s a baron’s son from Elsewhich, which is fine but he’s young only in the sense that he’s younger than a glacier. Nix tells the party that it’s pretty clear Bartleby wants to marry Angelica off to this guy, and if Angelica’s smart she’ll run in the other direction. Not only is he real old, but he’s got this sort of lost look about himself.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa’s, see page 136 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nix tells the party that it entertains her, how much Edwin Davies wants to reprimand her and can't. Nix tells the party that she doesn't care where anyone falls in the social order, but Edwin sure does, and that means he can't tell her off, no matter how much he clearly wants to. The other day, her brother Pascal asked her to bring some paperwork to Edwin. While Nix was in Miss Dora's house - she supposes it's technically Edwin's house now, but she refuses to think of it that way - she sat herself on the back of his fancy velvet settee, with her boots on the upholstery, just to see what he'd do. Nix tells the party that Edwin had looked visibly pained but of course hadn't dared say anything. If she weren't a noblewoman he'd probably be pressing charges against her right now. Asshat.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael, the party encounters a group of women - Pearl Bryce, Nix Valerius, Joni Peacock, Donna Peacock and Nina Bliss - all feverishly discussing a plan. Pearl pulls the party over and tells them what's happening. She explains that they cannot allow Katherine Carmichael to go to jail for shooting Vernon Gill. Vernon is an odious person, she says, and surely Katherine must have had a valid reason for shooting him. [Remember: none of these women know that Vernon is faking his injuries or that Katherine didn't really shoot him!] Joni tells the party that they all love the Kit Carnage books so much. Kit has been so important to all of them. Donna reiterates that they cannot let Katherine go to jail.

Nix tells the party that Pearl has come up with a plan to keep Katherine from going to jail. When Katherine's charge comes to trial, Pearl is going to claim that *she* was the one who shot Vernon. And then Nix is going to say that no, *she* shot him. Then Joni and Donna are also going to claim that *they* were the ones who shot him. With so many other people confessing, Justice Wilde can't possibly rule that Katherine is guilty! [Note: yes, this plan is 100% us ripping off the "I'm Spartacus" scene.]

Nina interrupts here. She tells the others - as she has already been doing - that this plan isn't going to work. First of all, they cannot get up and lie in a Lyrian court of law. Second of all, even if they're willing to commit perjury - which they should not be! - this plan is likely to result in a legal situation the law calls Merrick's Conundrum. In a case like this, it's not at all impossible that Justice Wilde could simply declare all of them - Katherine Carmichael *and* Pearl and Nix and Joni and Donna - guilty! He could require *all* of them to pay damages to Vernon Gill, resulting in the unpleasant Mr. Gill receiving a very, very large amount of money indeed! And he could send *all* of them to jail.

The group then resumes arguing amongst themselves, because Pearl is still insisting that they need *some* plan to save Katherine, while Nina is sympathetic but vehemently opposed to this particular plan. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

Hopefully at some point in here the party confides in these women and tells them the truth about Katherine, that she didn't shoot Vernon or anyone else. Assuming the party does this, all these women are overcome. Katherine is an inspiration! She's so brave! Hopefully, the party then makes the leap to the fact that telling Katherine's real life story will inspire women and girls just like Kit Carnage's stories do... and Katherine is actually real.

If the party *doesn't* tell these women the truth here, or if they propose a different plan, someone should tell the Basement and we'll make a plan from there! Also, if it's early enough and if it seems like the party really wants to have this scene with Katherine pre-trial, then we can send her back out at that time.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Isaiah Cooke -- Dave Korka

Age: 54

Usually found: in the Valerius house

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius family appears on page 203.

A description of the Illiterate Letter Challenge (version 1) appears on page 247.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Isaiah will be doing the Illiterate Letter Challenge with the party who visits him at the Valerius house on Friday night and the Combat Teamwork Challenge with the party who visits him on Saturday.

Arden

Approximately when: Friday (Isaiah Cooke is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they *don't*, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the illiterate letter (version 1) challenge

Info to give the party directly: Isaiah tells the party that he does indeed know about a Ritual of Location. Or, rather, he knows *of* one. He explains that he's been sorting through some papers that belonged to a Valerius great-uncle, who matriculated at the Crystal Spire but was forced to leave it after prolonged academic achievement of a disappointingly subpar nature. This particular ancestor attended a lecture on the aforementioned Ritual of Location and took notes thereupon.

Given the less-than-illustrious track record of this particular relation, Isaiah does not believe it is necessary for the Valerius family to preserve all of the great-uncle's ephemera. He is happy to give this page of notes to the party.

Reckonings 401 Professor Ditherson Friday, Sept. 17th

Various rituals exist for divinings (learning info. about particular subj.) Rit. of Location is one such. (best option? how compares to Spell of Summation?)

To perform, we need:

- a Star of Direction*
- sm. quantity of locus root*
- an argentum heart*
- a limelight*
- a chaos pendant*
- a spirit stone*
- a cowry (sp?) shell*
- citrine shards*
- riverglass jewelbox*

Eight ritual participants required; casting ability not needed (so – better than Summation Spell in this regard).

All eight sit in circle, Eldest puts on chaos pendant. Each person holds one item. All pass items (slow) around to the right. Eyes are closed whole time. While passing, all say: "Let all be known. Let all be revealed" (whispering) repeated until all items passed full circuit. When each participant back holding item had at start, eyes opened again. Revelation is granted. (Questions: what happens if item has been destroyed? This material on test???)

Isaiah tells the party that he has some ideas about where they might acquire the components they'd need for the ritual. He tells them he should write these names down right on the letter. Isaiah himself is a huge proponent of writing information down rather than relying on memorization!

- star of direction – Pascal Valerius
- locus root – Kiko Truthspeaker
- argentum heart – Moxie
- chaos pendant – Buzzkill
- spiritstone – Obsidian

- cowry shell – Charlie Peacock
- riverglass jewelbox – Karmin Smirch

Sadly, Isaiah says, there are a few things on their list that he is unaware how to procure. He has no idea who might be in possession of citrine shards.

As for a limelight, Isaiah confesses that he is at a loss as to what to tell them. A limelight provides illumination in a theater. There was a theater in World's Edge which Aria Morgan was in the process of restoring, but it tragically burned to the ground just last night. Isaiah cannot think of anywhere else that a limelight might be attained.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the class notes listing the items they'll need to find

Dolorón

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: Isaiah tells the party that it is funny - by which he means that it is markedly peculiar rather than that it is comedic or humorous in some way - that they are asking him for an incense burner. He is not in possession of such an item, but among the Valerius paperwork he was recently cataloging, there was an old diary entry that referenced an incense burner. Isaiah is happy to give this page from the diary to the party in hopes it proves useful.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the silver incense burner

any parties encountered (ideally at least 6)

When to approach a party: any time after the 4th Friday encounters and before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Isaiah references the golden page he carries from Nemaia's book. Although this paper (which he DOES show the party but DOES NOT allow them to read) reminds him of a good memory, he also vividly remembers the difficult memory he shared with Nemaia, where he described his employers, the Valerius siblings, as "too busy debating to actually accomplish anything."

Reason this info matters: Please read the Changed World section, beginning on p. 158, for the context of this info and answers to a bunch more questions!

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Isaiah tells the party that he's heard Bartleby Sprink has accused that ruffian Bracken of harassing Bartleby's daughter. Isaiah doesn't like to comment either way on an ongoing investigation, but one doesn't need to see much of Bracken's swaggering posturing to know the young man is trouble. There are reports - unsubstantiated but from *very* credible sources - saying Bracken has been spotted heading toward the Wild Lands at all hours of the night. And his clothes are little more than rags! He carries himself with a braggadocio at odds with his slovenly appearance, but that doesn't change the fact: he's an orphan and essentially a stranger, and an unkempt one at that. It's not hard to surmise what his intentions with Angelica Sprink are.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: at some point when Carmina Bordeaux is not nearby and this charge is NOT being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Isaiah tells the party that he very much hopes Lady Carmina Bordeaux won't be staying in World's Edge much longer. She's been visiting at the Valerius house for the past four months, he says, and yet it feels like it's been even longer. Isaiah tells the party that just a day or two ago, Lady Bordeaux returned from a walk and then left her muddy boots on his desk. His desk! He tells the party that Lady Bordeaux summarily announced that she needed the boots cleaned immediately and that he oughtn't use a stiff-bristled brush when cleaning them, lest he damage the leather. Isaiah reminds the party that he is a scribe, not a shoeshine boy! He says that he ultimately ended up cleaning Lady Bordeaux's boots as instructed because it was easier than correcting her. Still, the gall!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: Saturday between 6-8pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Isaiah tells the party that Ember might be popular, but he finds her exceedingly rude. Multiple times, she's come to visit someone in the Valerius family. Isaiah reminds the party that he is *not* a butler; it is *not* his job to be opening the door for every random personage who takes it into their heads to visit. Still, he welcomed Ember into the Valerius home because that is the courteous thing to do. Isaiah tells the party that, no sooner had he done so, but Ember decided to leave again. Isaiah informs the party that he has important work to be doing, and that that work does not include getting up to answer the door. Ember wastes his time and takes him away from critical baronial business! Which is rude. There, he said it! Rude!

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Poppy Golden -- Laura Hiatt

Age: 31

Usually found: in the Valerius house

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius family appears on page 203.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Sythwan

Approximately when: Friday night (Poppy is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: When Poppy hears about the party's mission – finding a man named Golden whose song will hopefully remove the cursed blight that is killing crops and causing a strange magical sadness in Sythwan – she tells them how much she'd like to help them. However, Poppy says, she's afraid she has some bad news for them, which is that the man she's quite sure they're looking for, a singer and composer named Jon Golden, died three or four months ago. Her Uncle Jon was a shy person who mostly kept to himself. Poppy remembers him telling her about a song he'd written that he'd claimed was enchanted in some way, but even though she'd asked, he'd never sung it for her, nor did she ever see the sheet music.

Poppy very much wants to help this party, though, because their mission sounds so important. She suggests they talk to Melados, who just happens to be the muse of music. This is perhaps going to sound crazy, but... it's not actually because of the music that she thinks Melados can help them. Melados was telling Poppy just yesterday about some kind of ritual to talk to someone who had died. If Melados knows a ritual like that, then... could the party talk to Jon Golden, maybe? It seems a long shot, but Poppy cannot think of anything else to suggest.

Melados doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Poppy says. Poppy herself cannot leave at the moment, but she brings the party over to Miscellania, and asks Miscellania if she would be willing to walk the party to Inspirations Unlimited. Poppy wishes the party much luck in World's Edge.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Glendeep

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: revel's cup

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Poppy tells the party about something that happened about a month ago. Ursula Smirch read a news article claiming someone had invented a machine that could restore keepers' prayers. Poppy tells the party that a machine like that wouldn't actually work and that she'd pointed that out at the time. She tells the party that her comment didn't diminish Ursula's enthusiasm one bit. Ursula claimed - this is all in the tavern, during dinner - that she was going to acquire one of these machines and keepers could just visit the shop for prayer renewals instead of "wasting time going to see Crabtree." This upset Evelyn a lot, and after several back and forth exchanges, Evelyn yelled that she wouldn't rest until Ursula was driven

out of business. Shortly after that, Poppy tells the party, some bad things started happening in and around the Smirches' shop. It's hard to picture Evelyn sneaking around, actively trying to sabotage the Smirches' business, but who can really say for sure?

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Poppy tells the party that her sister Pansy used to work cleaning house for Dora Davies. Poppy says that she was just reminded of it, seeing Dora's wayshrine. One of the things in there were Dora's perfume bottles. Poppy tells the party that she remembers Pansy coming home reeking of the old lady's perfume. Apparently Dora had no sense of smell, because she'd lost it one time she got sick and it never came back. You'd think that someone with no sense of smell wouldn't care about perfume, of course, but Pansy said that Dora just liked the bottles and that they made her feel fancy. Which is all well and good, Poppy says, but of course means that Dora used rather a heavy hand when she'd put the perfume on. Poppy says that she'd completely forgotten that until she saw the bottles in the wayshrine, and then the smell of that perfume came right back to her. It's funny how memories are like that, Poppy says.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: Poppy is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. She will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. She should check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Sunday between 11am and noon*, Poppy approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Huxley and Quinoa. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Poppy encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Huxley and Quinoa weren't trying to steal anyone's identity.
- They're not crooks; they're participants at an Anotherworld Adventure Weekend.
- The rest of their partymates have finally found them, and their poor Companion has been worried sick.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Poppy can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Poppy can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Lady Carmina Bordeaux -- Michelle Nathan

Age: 48

Usually found: in the Valerius house

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius Family appears on page 203.

Secret Info:

A great many things about her trip to World's Edge have disappointed and frustrated Lady Carmina Bordeaux, but she has bravely – dare she say heroically – soldiered on. The most marked of these difficulties has necessitated this secret.

Upon arriving in this tiny and tedious little barony, she despaired of finding entertainments worthy of her time. Then, Carmina learned of Inspirations Unlimited, an establishment that purports to turn people into successful artists, writers, inventors and the like. Carmina is a deeply sensitive individual, and no sooner had she heard this than her imagination was fired. She imagined herself sitting in a picturesque city square, selling her majestic paintings to grateful customers. She saw herself gorgeously attired at a museum opening in her honor, accepting accolades from appreciative fans. Carmina marched to Inspirations Unlimited, ready to begin this exciting new chapter of her life.

Maddeningly, access to the establishment in question is restricted by a petty tyrant named Nemaia. This small-minded despot was clearly threatened by Carmina's good taste and artistic temperament and denied Carmina's application to work with any of the "muses." A lesser woman would have been stymied by this obstacle, but Carmina expressed her displeasure loudly and damply, and soon Aesthetika – the "muse" who allegedly handles painters and other visual artists – offered to take Carmina on as a private client. There was a fee for this service, which Carmina considered rather cheeky, but nevertheless, a contract was signed.

For the next two weeks, Aesthetika lead her on a merry chase, proposing more and more ridiculous methods to make her a famous artist. At one point, the woman instructed Carmina to draw an apple, which is absurd given that Carmina obviously already knows what an apple looks like. There were many pointless conversations about "color" (Carmina, not being a toddler, knows her colors already) and "light" (Carmina wishes to be an artist, not a lamp) and "value" (Carmina has already determined that she will sell her paintings for 500 royals, so this discussion was unnecessary.) Aesthetika brought her all the way to an art museum in Mystal, which was more than a little cheeky when she was being paid to make *Carmina* a successful artist, not show off those who had already made it..

After two weeks of this nonsense, Aesthetika finally admitted that she wasn't able to do magic at all. Having learned that all of Inspirations Unlimited is a scam, Carmina insisted on receiving all her money back. Still, she was left seething at Aesthetika's outrageous mistreatment, and being a profoundly just person, she hatched a plan for restitution.

At some point over the previous few weeks, Carmina had become aware of a young servant at the Valerius house who is a passable artist. She had him draw a portrait of Crabtree and Evelyn.

During the time Aesthetika had been stringing her along, the "muse" had mentioned making paint with a slight shimmer. Carmina obviously doesn't have time to waste making paints, but she'd purchased a full set of similar pigments, and now she instructed the servant to use these to add color to the portrait. When he was done, the picture looked like the kind of unsophisticated thing Aesthetika might make, which Carmina found entertaining.

After that, it was a simple matter to "sell" the painting. Of course, by rights Carmina should now be selling her art for at least 500 royals, but this servant's work cannot hope to equal her own. She decided that 75 royals was a fair price, and at least partial recompense for the wrongs done to her.

And here was the truly clever part of her plan: Of course she could approach Crabtree and Evelyn directly, state the painting's price and let them pay her... but while this would *begin* the reparation process, it would do nothing to punish Aesthetika. Being a fair-minded person, Carmina needed justice in this matter.

So instead of contacting Crabtree and Evelyn, she simply instructed the servant to deliver the painting to their shop when they weren't there, and to collect the fee.

And then she repeated this process. With portraits of Ursula Smirch. Angelica Sprink. Irena Montalvo. And others.

The first few times, the clods in this small sad town took little notice. But then there began to be whispers that Aesthetika was a thief. Which of course she is, having stolen Carmina's time and aspirations.

The entire process is quite arduous. Carmina has to determine appropriate subjects for the paintings and set a reasonable cost, and of course it takes significant and tedious effort to monitor the servant. Still, her labors are proving worthwhile. Even though the paintings earn her far less than she deserves, the real reward comes from knowing that Aesthetika will be made to pay.

For a consummately fair-minded person such as herself, the satisfaction is exquisite.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Waylon

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: eternity mirror

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Carmina tells the party that it is outrageous the things people are able to get away with these days. Take, for example, this woman Katherine Carmichael. From what Carmina has heard, the Carmichael woman has written books in which she encourages children to break the law by bragging about her own felonious exploits! Preposterous! Well, this Carmichael person was so excited for the world to know about her criminal activities and now the world shall know just that! The books are apparently very poorly written and are only popular because most people don't know any better. Disgusting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Carmina should be sure to meet the party at least once. There's no specific information she needs to convey, but she should be sure to demonstrate her personality. Although she's probably not going to order them around (unless she's very sure she can get away with it!) she should feel free to make demands of servers, etc., in front of them, and/or to cajole or otherwise manipulate those of higher social standing. If and ONLY if truth magic is used on her, Carmina should listen carefully to the question asked. For instance, her answer to "Did you paint pictures in Aesthetika's style?" or "Did you steal money from people?" is no, whereas "Did you cause pictures to be painted in Aesthetika's style?" or "Did you cause money to be stolen?" is yes. Please talk to the EMs if you'd like help preparing for this!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Carmina tells the party that that lovely young woman Quinoa, Lord Huxley's friend, came to speak to her a little while earlier. Apparently Quinoa was looking for a very certain style of boots and had been told Lady Bordeaux had some. Carmina tells the party that she was in fact wearing the boots at that exact moment. Carmina points out that the boots are her absolute favorites and very fashionable, but that she has always heard what a delightful and influential man Baron Albert Huxley is, she was only too happy to give the boots to this young woman who is practically Baron Albert's daughter-in-law. No sooner had Carmina given Quinoa the boots than - amusingly! - Quinoa took one look at the boots and said "Ugh!" Carmina tells the party that she finds this young woman to be very droll!

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: if she's able to find the party again later on Saturday

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Carmina tells the party that she recently heard that apparently the people passing themselves off as "Huxley" and "Quinoa" are actually thieves who steal the identities of reputable citizens! This is outrageous! She graciously provided them with assistance, only now to learn that they have misrepresented themselves to her. Egregious!

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Lenora Graves -- JenMeaux Morris

Age: 42

Usually found: in the Valerius house

A description of the Icky Liquor Challenge appears on page 248.

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Lenora will be doing the Icky Liquor Challenge with the party who visits her at the Valerius house on Friday night and the Combat Teamwork Challenge with the party who visits her on Saturday.

Clairia

Approximately when: Friday (Lenora Graves is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they *don't*, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the Icky Liquor challenge

Info to give the party directly: Lenora is delighted that the party has sought her out! She does indeed know something about Ignatius' staff! Or, at least, she has recently read something about it.

Lenora explains that she has been visiting the Valerius family for the past several months, and that as a way of thanking them for their very gracious hospitality, she has been cataloging old correspondence of some of the family's ancestors.

One of those was Lord Petrus Valerius, the great-great-uncle of Baron Honoré and his siblings. Lord Petrus was a caster and was reported to be rather an eccentric. Lenora just recently read one of Petrus' journal entries that references Ignatius's staff. She's quite certain the Valerius family would want the party to have the journal entry:

Have been interested lately in this idea of summoning the staff of Ignatius from the Elemental Plane of Fire. Must find time to try this, assuming can find needed materials. (Note to self: why are pants so much smaller than they used to be? Causes chafing and other discomfort. Larger pants for all! Write letter to Editor on this subject.)

For summoning staff, research indicates that the following are needed:

- fool's gold*
- small quantity of featherflame herb*
- favor from the Court of Mirrors*
- silver amulets from the summoner's homeland (one for each summoner)*
- a phoenix egg*
- gold essence*
- a winterheart gem*
- a dragon's-egg ring*
- a carbon key*

When ready to summon, put on amulet. Kindle a small fire. Place fool's gold, favor, egg, heart-gem, ring, and gold essence equally spaced around fire.

Cast the herb and the key into the fire while calling out the magical ritual words in a grand and strong voice. (Note to self: why are the younger casters today all muttering their ritual words? Treason, I say! Comes from improper nutrition. Write letter to Editor on this subject.)

Ritual words as follows: "Flame and fire, smoke and soot. We summon you, o staff. Come to us now from the Plane of Fire, for our need of you is great. Incineradum!"

Ritual must be performed in correct spot. horse-ring on left side of Gilded Way while walking from tavern toward house. Staff will not appear exactly in same spot but more likely nearby, most probably between two horse barns.

Lenora says that she has a few ideas about where the party might acquire some of these items. She tells them to write the names down right on the journal page. She certainly knows that if she doesn't write things down, she forgets them a moment later.

- fool's gold – Jack Johnson
- featherflame herb – Kyson Wayseeker
- silver amulets – Adina Valerius
- phoenix egg – Bartleby Sprink

- gold essence – Cal Coleman
- winterheart gem – Natasha
- dragon’s-egg ring – Dramina

Lenora has no idea what a carbon key is or where to get one.

As for the favor from the Court of Mirrors, she’s not entirely certain what to tell them. The Court is some sort of parallel mirror dimension, very dark and deadly. There used to be a portal to the Court right here in this very house, but it was very dangerous and the Baron’s family has enlisted the aid of Poppy Golden, a powerful caster, to perform the rituals needed to keep the portal closed. That’s a good thing, because the last thing one wants is to be sucked into a shadowy mirror dimension on one’s way to breakfast. But it does mean she has no idea how they’ll acquire a favor from said Court.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the journal entry listing the items they’ll need to find

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: Lenora tells the party that she just knew this would be auspicious day because she dreamed last night of a pure-white cat. She does not, she says, have a silver shield pendant... but she believes she has a way for the party to get one! She explains that she has been cataloging some old correspondence for the Valerius family, and one of the things she found was a letter to Petrus Valerius, an ancestor of the Baron and his siblings. The letter was from an Ander friend of Petrus’ and references a silver shield pendant. Perhaps the party can follow the instructions in the letter to discover the very item they need!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the silver shield pendant

any parties encountered (ideally 3-4 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn’t occupied with something else. Note that Jpeg, Kira and Huxley are all giving out similar information from different perspectives. It’s awesome if they manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if they don’t.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lenora tells the party that she is so very much looking forward to Belle and Cary’s wedding on Sunday. She saw a white turtledove just this morning and this is an excellent omen... so long as the dove in question was not deceased, which this one was not. Belle and Cary are very different people, but they are so well-suited to each other and clearly very much in love.

Of course, Lenora says, no relationship is without struggles. Perhaps the party has noticed that Belle sports a tattoo on her wrist - theoretically half of a pair of matching “couple’s tattoos” - but that Cary does not. Lenora informs the party that Belle thought that it would be romantic to get matching tattoos but that she unfortunately did not discuss this with Cary beforehand. It was only after getting the tattoo that Belle learned that Cary sensibly declined to get a similar marking, tattoos being a needless source of pain and risk. Lenora tells the party that she has cautioned Belle against further impulsive actions. Regrettably, this is rather like cautioning water not to be wet, but one does what one can.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Big Musical Number and scene that follows it

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lenora tells the party that, while she certainly doesn't like to be alarmist, it's quite possible that Bracken has scarred poor Angelica Sprink *for life*. Lenora says she overheard Bracken talking to Angelica, and while she understands that the young people are prone to drama, he was telling her all sorts of grisly details of attacks and blood and whatnot. Hearing things like that is bound to be upsetting for Angelica, especially because Bracken does seem to be hanging about nearly constantly.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time they encounter this party and this charge is NOT being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Honoré, Sylvie, Pascal, Nix and/or Lenora mentions Frost, the young boy who works as a servant at the Valerius house. In each of these instances, Frost was around just a few minutes ago, but has gone to run an errand or whatever. This shouldn't seem like a big deal, maybe just "Please come in! Frost can bring you some tea. Oh, that's right. He's just gone out. Here, I'll get it for you myself." Or whatever.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lenora tells the party that she's been an avid student and devotee of Dr. Daniel Merriweather's work ever since reading his seminal work, *The Prognostician*. Lenora tells the party that when she learned the doctor had published another book, *Signs & Wonders*, she wrote to him immediately to see she might arrange to sponsor one stop on his lecture circuit. Imagine her shock to learn that Dr. Merriweather was not intending to *do* a lecture circuit! The dear man wrote to her that he imagined his work would have "limited interest outside dusty academic circles"! Nothing could be further from the truth, Lenora had assured him. Regardless of the other demands on the esteemed Dr. Merriweather's time, he graciously agreed to visit World's Edge to give a lecture. And yet here, Lenora confesses to the party, her tale grows dark. On the very day she received Dr. Merriweather's letter informing her that he would come to World's Edge, she saw three crows perched in a yew tree. Although three is a number associated with excellent fortune, crows are of course harbingers of disaster and death. And a yew tree! Could the message be any clearer?!? Lenora tells the party she should have written to Dr. Merriweather immediately and cancelled the lecture then and there, but alas, she had *so* wanted to hear him speak that she had allowed herself to think the benevolent signifier of the triad would counteract the birds *and* the tree. Oh, her curséd arrogance! The fated day - last Sunday, although it feels so much longer ago now! - arrived at last, and Lenora had come to the tavern early. Just exactly at the moment she lay her hand upon the door, Lenora heard a dog howling, and then - too late! - she knew without a doubt that something terrible had befallen the poor professor. A small crowd gathered to hear the lecture - although an embarrassingly sparse group, had Dr. Merriweather actually given his lecture, Lenora says - but they were to wait in vain, for of course the professor would never arrive. Lenora explains that she told everyone present that something awful had happened to the Professor, that he was surely injured and probably dead, but many there were unable to see the obvious signs Lenora had seen. One day later, Lenora tells the party, she could no longer bear not knowing, and she had brought her Ouija board to the tavern. Although she nurtured a fond and foolish hope that Dr. Merriweather was yet among the living, she was being driven mad not knowing, and she had asked the spirits to aid her. Lenora shows the party the very Ouija board **PROP** she used. She tells them that no sooner had she laid a fingertip to the planchette that it began to careen around the board, frantically spelling out "Daniel", Dr. Merriweather's given name. Halfway through this, that dreadful cultist Dorito had leapt to her feet. Lenora was just about to shush Dorito lest she disturb the spirits, but then the awful woman yelled that *she had murdered dear Dr. Merriweather!* Lenora tells the party that she cannot say for certain what happened after that time because she herself had fainted dead away. It is all so utterly senseless and tragic.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time on Saturday

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lenora tells the party that she's afraid she's caused all sorts of problems, but that she honestly didn't know what else to do. She just knew something bad was about to happen after she got an egg with a double yolk this morning! Lenora says she was delighted when she heard someone say that Lord Percy Huxley was in town, because she met him perhaps six or seven years ago and thought it would be pleasant to see him again. However... certainly some years have passed since their last meeting, and no one is spared the inexorable march of time. But... at least at that time, Lord Percy was 6'3" or 6'4". This man who's come to town, Lenora doesn't believe he's actually Percy Huxley. Lenora tells the party that it gives her palpitations to think of getting anyone in trouble, but that she was concerned enough to mention this matter to Justice Orion Wilde. If there is wrongdoing happening, Lenora is confident he will handle it.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lenora tells the party that the séance Eugenie Bright held was simply terrifying. Lenora tells the party that Eugenie had a table set with a velvet tablecloth sewn all around the edges with tiny bells. There was a picture of Eugenie's sister Theodora in the center of the table, and candles circling it, and once they were all present, Eugenie instructed them to hold hands and close their eyes. Eugenie had bowed her head and was just starting to speak, calling on the denizens of the spirit realm to guide them, when Lenora felt a malevolent presence in the room. The air was filled with a foul sulfurous smoke, like the miasma of The Beyond. Lenora opened her eyes to find a horrifying figure standing over them! It was 8 or 9 feet tall and its skin was a sick green, the color of mouldering leaves. It stepped closer and closer, slamming a clawed fist down upon the table. Lenora knew immediately that this could only be a demon, that grimmest of fiends. Demons feast on anger, growing stronger in the presence of negative emotions, so Lenora thought quickly and called out to everyone, telling them to free their minds from anger. The demon let out a howl of rage at being thwarted and then bolted out into the night. Lenora tells the party that the experience was incredibly frightening but that she is not certain what would have happened had she not been there.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: Sunday at breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lenora approaches the party again. She tells them that, last night, she couldn't sleep, so she got up and pulled out her Ouija board again. Lenora says that she sat down at the board and as soon as she'd barely touched her fingertips to planchette, it started moving. It spelled out a message for her, Lenora tells the party, and... she has no idea what to think. Because the message is spelled out was "Daniel Merriweather is not dead."

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Danny Donovan -- Jeff Yaus

Age: 50

Usually found: in the Valerius house

A description of the Combat Teamwork Challenge appears on page 246.

Elsewhich

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the combat teamwork challenge

Info to give the party directly: Danny tells the party that he does indeed have the cup Kerrick Dealbinder gave him. There was some story about the cup being magical, but neither Dealbinder nor Danny himself thought that story was very likely. Danny doesn't really need the cup for anything and he's happy to let the party have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: crummy magic chalice

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Danny tells the party that he knows how lucky he was, back in the spring when Aria Morgan agreed to take him on as a handyman. She only did it because Baron Honoré asked her to, but still, it was a good job and he was real grateful. Danny tells the party that he liked working in the theater, and he'd thought that most of the time, Aria was pretty happy with the work he was doing. He explains that he must've overstepped on Thursday. He'd found some crumpled old papers stashed on a shelf and thrown them out before mice could nest in 'em. He understands now that he should've checked first, but they sure did look like garbage, them being probably twenty years old or more. Aria was furious with him and fired him on the spot, which was fair, given they were real important. Danny feels bad about that. And, of course, he feels far more awful about everything that happened later. Like everyone in town, he doesn't remember Thursday night. Solomon Stillwater lets him set up a cot in a back room of the tavern, so that's where Danny woke up on Friday morning. He tells the party that he smelled smoke even before opening his eyes, and when he did actually look, he saw that his cloak - which he'd slept in - was burned in spots as well as reeking of smoke. Danny's arms and face were dark with soot, and he'd stumbled out of the room wondering what had happened to him. Danny tells the party that he still wants to know what happened. He feels just awful, he says. It'd been 276 days since he'd last used. He still thinks about the Noise a lot, but he doesn't give in to the wanting. But on Thursday, Danny tells the party, he must've given in after all. He can still get his hands on some Noise if he needs to, and he must've gone into the theater and been careless and started the fire. He hates thinking he did that, but looking at his clothes, it's too big a coincidence to believe otherwise. The only other explanation is that he lit that fire on purpose, and that would make him worse than a fuck-up loser. That would make him a monster, someone who got angry and struck out at - yeah - the woman who fired him, but also at the woman who'd given him a job when no one else would. Danny tells the party that he really hopes that's not who he is, a monster. Maybe, he says, he doesn't want to know what happened after all. If and only if the party uses truth magic, Danny should remember that truth magic only makes you disclose the truths you remember. A spell like Interrogate will get three "I don't know"s in response. It's remotely possible the party might try something like Mighty Adjective o' Power with an awkward adjective of "remembering". If this happens, tell them the magic of their spell isn't strong enough to overcome the magic that took away the memories and that this doesn't use up their spell.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: at some point when Carmina Bordeaux is not nearby and this charge is NOT being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Danny tells the party that, in the four months since she came to World's Edge, he hasn't been around Lady Carmina Bordeaux much - they don't travel in the same social circles, go figure - but he's seen more of her in the past day or so. Danny says that he himself knows a thing or two about manipulating people. It comes with the territory, being an addict. You learn what you've got to do to get what you need. Danny tells the party that he is certainly not saying that Lady Bordeaux is an addict. But he's not sure he's ever seen anyone who's better than she is at getting what she wants. As near as he can tell, her preferred method is just to make demands. She does this with Isaiah, the Valerius family's scribe, and with the servants, especially that kid Frost. She does it with Pascal Valerius, because even though he's a genius, he doesn't know enough to tell Lady Bordeaux off. Danny says that if she wants something from someone she can't just make demands of, she'll find some other way. He tells the party that he saw Lady Bordeaux admiring some earrings Sylvie Valerius had. She'd gotten all quiet, touching her hand to her own earlobes and getting this wistful look like she might cry, and sure enough, about an hour later, he saw Lady Bordeaux wearing the earrings herself. Danny tells the party that he can't say that he likes the woman much, but some part of him has got to respect her abilities just a little.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Danny tells the party that Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater are the best. When Danny was short on cash, they found a little space in a back room for him to sleep rent-free. That's just the kind of thing they do for people. Danny tells the party that he hopes they stay in town a long time. He knows they've had offers to buy the tavern, most recently from Cal Coleman. Cal only got to town two weeks ago, Danny says, but he made an offer on the tavern almost immediately. That's probably not surprising, because the Stillwaters have really fixed the place up. It didn't used to be this nice, back when Scarlet owned it. Danny tells the party that Scarlet made offers to buy the tavern back, not too long after she'd sold it. And then just a few days ago, when Solomon was away, Cal had made yet another offer. Thankfully, the Stillwaters have turned all these offers down. With any luck, they're in World's Edge to stay.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Frost -- Levin Scassellati

Age: 13

Usually found: although Frost is theoretically at the Valerius house often, he doesn't happen to be present when any parties are there. Although some characters speak of him during Friday and Saturday, he actually appears in this adventure only on Sunday morning, when he will encounter the party from Glendeep in the Shrine of AllSeasons, and at the trial

Traveler Lore concerning the Valerius family appears on page 203.

Secret Info:

First he did some things he didn't know were bad. Then he did some bad things knowing they were bad. And now he's done enough bad things that he doesn't know how to stop. This is Frost's secret.

He's worked at the Valerius house for almost a year now, and it's been wonderful. He's making good money to help his family, and he's learning a lot. Lord Pascal gives him all sorts of books to read, math and philosophy and history, and after Frost has read them, Pascal will discuss them with him as though he's not a servant at all. It's a dream come true, being here.

Or, rather, it was, for a while.

But four months ago, Lady Carmina Bordeaux came to visit. Lady Bordeaux isn't like the Valerius family, all of whom know his name and smile when they see him. Lady Bordeaux just called him "boy" or "you", or simply gestured at the thing she wanted carried or fetched or cleaned. Frost didn't know it at the time, but he was better off when she didn't have any idea who he was.

After she'd been in town for a week or two, Lady Bordeaux announced she was going to become a famous artist. It's Frost's own fault for listening in on these conversations. He's certainly not being paid to eavesdrop, but he was so interested. He loves to sketch, times when he's not working, and he hadn't known Lady Bordeaux drew or painted.

It soon became apparent that Lady Bordeaux did not draw or paint, didn't make art of any type. Frost doesn't even feel guilty much for listening in, because she isn't quiet and he couldn't help hearing. He heard Lady Bordeaux's plan to visit Inspirations Unlimited, how they would make her an artist. Not just any artist, though. A *famous* artist. That's how she said it, every time. They would make her *a famous artist*.

Frost heard, too, her anger when she returned from Inspirations Unlimited. Nemaia had turned her away, and Lady Bordeaux had been plenty mad about it. But then her voice had turned triumphant, because she'd convinced Aesthetika to take her on as a client anyway. She'd told everyone at the Valerius house – well, everyone who mattered; not servants, obviously – that she'd soon be selling her paintings. Lady Bordeaux doesn't need money, of course, but that's the mark of a successful artist: they make art people will pay a lot for.

A week passed and then two, and Lady Bordeaux grew more annoyed and short-tempered with each day. From what Frost could gather, Aesthetika was not following Lady Bordeaux's plan. She gave Lady Bordeaux sketching exercises. She talked about light and shadow and value and hue. She took Lady Bordeaux all the way to Mystal, to an art museum. All that sounded wonderful to Frost, but Lady Bordeaux was outraged. She didn't want to work at art, she didn't want to talk about art, and she certainly didn't want to be shown a lot of art made by people who were already famous. In her mind, Aesthetika was stringing her along, needlessly drawing out the time until she performed her magic.

It took two weeks for Lady Bordeaux to understand that Aesthetika had no magic to work.

Frost doesn't know what was said when Lady Bordeaux parted company with Aesthetika, but by then, Lady Bordeaux had taken notice of him and his sketchbook. Soon after that, she approached him on an afternoon when none of the Valerius family was at home. Frost was supposed to be washing windows and then double-checking some accounting for Pascal. Lady Bordeaux told him to leave that work, that instead he was to help her create a picture.

Young as Frost is, he understood that he was "helping" in name only.

Lady Bordeaux gave him some paper – it was very thick and lovely – and told him to draw a portrait of Crabtree and Evelyn. Neither of those women were there, but that wasn't necessary. Frost has known them both for a long time and he could draw them from memory.

After he'd inked it and allowed it to dry, Lady Bordeaux gave him some paints and told him to add color to it. The paints were the most beautiful Frost had ever seen, much less ever used. There is pulverized mica mixed into the pigments, so the finished painting shimmered just slightly. It was a joy, using paints that fine.

After he was done, Lady Bordeaux told him that the painting had been sold to Crabtree and Evelyn themselves. He should deliver it to them – no need to bother them, she said; he should just go at a time when they weren't in the shop – and simply collect the 75 royal fee for it from their cashbox. 75 royals! This was a lot of money, and Frost hadn't known the picture would be sold at all, much less sold for so much. But he knew better than to question Lady Bordeaux, so he did as he was told.

Foolishly, he hadn't realized this would be the first of many assignments.

They are all sold to different customers, but each time, Lady Bordeaux wants them done in the same style as the one of Crabtree and Evelyn. If it had just been creating the pictures, this would have been a dream come true. But Frost doesn't feel entirely good about slipping into people's homes or shops or tents or bags, leaving the pictures and removing the fees. Obviously he doesn't want to bother the customers, but it leaves him on edge. He does it, though, dutifully returning with the money, all of which he gives to Lady Bordeaux.

It takes a lot of time, and he isn't to speak of this arrangement to anyone, not even Pascal or the other Valerius siblings. That means he must work later into the evenings to finish his other tasks.

The one time he attempted to voice these concerns to Lady Bordeaux, she was greatly disappointed in him. "But Frost," she said, her voice heavy with hurt. "You were so *quick* to accept my gift of those paints. Was that gift not *generous* enough?"

He acknowledged that it was very, very generous. The paints are so beautiful.

"Surely you weren't planning to take my *very* generous gift but fail to uphold our agreement, were you, Frost? I confess I hadn't thought you the treacherous sort..."

Frost had apologized then, and after that he didn't speak to Lady Bordeaux of his distress.

Although he knows the situation is legitimate – the customers are receiving their portraits and he never ever takes a single royal more than the agreed-upon price – there are people in town who mistakenly think that money is being stolen. They're blaming Aesthetika because apparently the pictures look like the type she'd draw. Frost can't tell anyone the truth because their arrangement is a secret between him and Lady Bordeaux. But he was feeling sorry about people thinking an untrue thing about Aesthetika.

It took him several days of hard thought, but he realized there was something he could do to help. After he delivers a painting to a customer and brings the fee back to Lady Bordeaux, he dips into his own savings, pulling out the same amount the customer paid. Then he secretly leaves that money for Aesthetika, in a drawer of her desk or somewhere she'll find it. He can do this, because by now he is an expert at getting into and out of places undetected. His savings, the money he'd planned to give to his family, is all gone. He's had to ask Baroness Adina for a loan so that he can leave more money for Aesthetika. It doesn't make up for people thinking something bad about her, but it's something.

But still, Frost has a bad feeling about all of this. There have been times when his work for the Valerius family isn't as good as it should be because he's had to rush to get it all done. His stomach hurts when he thinks about his arrangement with Lady Bordeaux, even though he shouldn't have accepted the beautiful paints if he didn't agree to the terms. Even painting the pictures gives him no pleasure.

He wishes he didn't have to keep this secret. But he has no other choice.

Glendeep

When to approach a party: Sunday around 9:45am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: The party will complete their party path in the Shrine of AllSeasons. After they have fully finished this scene, Saint Lorelei leaves the Shrine. Pansy Golden is still with the party and will stay with them throughout this scene to assist as needed. Once Lorelei has gone, Frost tentatively enters the Shrine. He doesn't tell the party his name (until/unless they ask) and he is hesitant and deferential with them. He apologizes for interrupting them, but he's wondering if anyone has seen Aesthetika?

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

Since Aesthetika will not be out Sunday until the trial, the party will theoretically tell Frost that they haven't seen her. When he hears this, he is clearly unsure what to do next. He's looked for her at Inspirations Unlimited and the tavern, but he can't find her anywhere. He really needs to speak to her, he says. He sits down on a pew, clearly upset.

Hopefully Frost's mention of Aesthetika and/or their vision and/or his distress will be enough for the party to question him. If it's not, however, then Pansy needs to step in and help move this scene forward, questioning Frost herself and/or prompting the party (e.g. "He seems really upset...")

Once asked, Frost tells the party that he can't tell them the story, but that he's done something very bad, and that he really needs to speak to Aesthetika.

Only after the party has made Frost feel safe will he gradually reveal the following information:

- Back in July, Lady Carmina Bordeaux instructed him to paint a picture of Crabtree and Evelyn, in a style like Aesthetika's own work. She gave him a very nice set of paints to use.
- After the painting was done, she told him to deliver it to Crabtree and Evelyn's shop and take the money they'd paid for the picture from their cashbox. He did this.
- Lady Bordeaux sold multiple additional pictures to people in town: Angelica Sprink, Ursula Smirch, Elliott Peacock and others. In each case, she instructed Frost to paint the picture, deliver it and collect the money from a cashbox or purse, always without letting the purchaser see him.
- Frost knows these are unusual instructions, but it's not his place to question the orders that are given to him. Lady Bordeaux made it clear these "sales" were to remain their little secret. She reminded him that he accepted the gift of the fancy paints from her, which was unethical unless he was prepared to uphold his end of the bargain.
- At some point, Frost realized these secret painting sales were making Aesthetika look bad. In an attempt to make things right, he started using his own money to "pay back" Aesthetika, secretly leaving her the same amount he'd collected. [This is of course making Aesthetika look more guilty, but that hasn't occurred to Frost and is absolutely not his intent.] Paying back this money has taken all his savings and required a loan from Baroness Adina.

Throughout this scene, Frost is focused on himself and his own guilt. The fact that Carmina Bordeaux is manipulating him has not fully occurred to him. He is a child and a servant and he was given orders. Note that although he realizes this is making Aesthetika look bad, he does NOT know that Carmina Bordeaux is doing this specifically *in order to* make Aesthetika look bad.

After the party knows all of the above, they'll again need to reassure Frost before he'll agree to testify at the trial. This is a very scary prospect for him. He should make it clear to the party that *they* need to tell most of the story and that then he'll confirm it.

Once the above has happened, Frost promises to meet the party at the trial. He and Pansy can then return to the Basement.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

the Combat Teamwork Challenge

Activity: Everyone at the Valerius house - family members, guests and staff - are sharing this challenge.

Baroness Adina mentions that she conducts a daily swordfighting practice with the family, and she invites the party to join the family and staff (or whatever combination of these people are currently at the Valerius house) for a bit of sparring with them. Although the party may have already done some sparring one-on-one, this activity should provide an opportunity to practice fighting in a real one-group-(the party)-against-another (the Valerii) combat scenario. If Adina is not out, any of the other staff present can fill this role.

To help the party understand how the sword-fighters and caster should work together, Poppy Golden tells the caster that they may, just for this sparring purpose, pretend to cast spells. To do this, the caster should blow their whistle and read the spell normally, but the spell is not actually used up. The spell's target should then pretend to be affected. In this way, the rest of the party can experiment with how to best make use of the caster's abilities.

Staff remind the caster that, were this a real battle, they would be using up spells for real. It doesn't give the caster any real battle practice if they pretend to use up all their spells in one combat.

Likewise, other jobs may use pretend versions of their own job-specific abilities in the mock combat without these abilities actually being used up.

After each of these mock combats, the Valerii can give the party pointers. These may be individual sword-fighting pointers (which should of course be given in a way that doesn't make the participant in question feel stupid or singled-out). Also, the party should be encouraged to work together and communicate as much as possible in combat...and if they're not, this should be pointed out with clear examples ("That guy was all alone over there! Maybe one of you two could've gone to help him, or maybe you could've called out that you needed help.") Staff should remember to mention things the party does well!

Santiago can provide the keeper with some tips on how to use the Sacred Shield to best advantage. He offers keeper-related pointers to the party. Two important ones: the keeper needs to watch the party carefully to see who needs healing and the party needs to call out if the keeper is needed. An additional point, and one which many keepers don't realize on their own, is this: assuming the keeper *has* been watching the party to see who needs healing, they should also be aware if anyone needs help of a non-healing variety. If the keeper sees, for instance, that the maker is getting attacked by two opponents, the keeper should yell to other party members to help out.

If there is another party around while this activity is going on, staff shouldn't encourage the two parties to spar unless a participant suggests it and both parties really want to. Even though it's just sparring, this can sometimes cause hostile feelings between parties (especially if it's early in the weekend.)

Educational Goal(s): to give the party practice in combat in a less-threatening situation. to encourage the party to function as a team during combat. to provide constructive feedback and encouragement about the party-member's combat skills.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: swords, Santiago's Sacred Shield and Poppy's spell book, whistle and dirk.

the Illiterate Letter Challenge (Version 1)

Activity: Isaiah has tried to make himself exemplary in terms of service to his barony. As such, he sometimes acts as a scribe for those who are not themselves literate. Yesterday, he visited the home of a young farmer who lives outside the village. The farmer explained that, although he cannot able to read or write, he wanted to send a message to his grandmother. Isaiah offered to write the letter for him. But then the young man told him that neither his grandmother nor any of her neighbors knew how to read or write either.

Isaiah feels it behooves him to assist the young man, but he confesses he's a bit at a loss how to go about it. He says he's very happy to help the party with their mission; could they, in return, "write" this letter for him? He reminds them that, of course, it needs to be written so that someone who can't read can "read" it.

To ensure that the letter is understandable, Isaiah stipulates that three members of the party must write the message without using any words or letters. When they have done so, they can show it to the remaining three party members. If those people can't understand the gist of the message's content, it will have to be re-done until it *is* comprehensible. (Isaiah should make sure the three "writers" know that they don't have to replicate every single word, just the ideas of the letter.)

Dear Nana Hart,

We are harvesting a huge crop of apples this year. Can you please come to World's Edge to bake some pie? If you will, my mother will not say anything nasty to you.

Love, Archer

Educational goal(s): to force the party to find alternative methods of communication. to encourage collaboration on a project.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a copy of the farmer's letter, multiple sheets of paper and a pencil

the Icky Liquor Challenge

Activity: Lenora tells the party that she's happy to give them the help they need. In return, she's hoping they can help her out with a small project.

Lenora explains that sometimes, other aristocratic families in Moreth will send the Valerius family gifts. One of those recent gifts was a type of cordial, a thick, extremely sweet liqueur. Lenora explains that the liqueur, in addition to being very, very sweet, also has an odd bitter aftertaste. It is also exceedingly sticky, and leaves a dark grey stain on everything it touches. It is, in short, quite disgusting.

The baron who sent it to them, Lenora says, sent two cases of it. Twenty-four bottles.

Lenora explains that Lord Pascal planned to dump the cordial out. It is, after all, very nasty. But Lenora remembers the proverb about wasting not in order to want not and she is quite certain that something terrible will befall the family if the cordial is thrown away. She says, "I told Lord Pascal I was sure we could find dozens of uses for even this dreadful cordial. It has become rather a matter of pride for me. But I fear I am struggling to come up with any."

Lenora takes a pen and paper and tells the party that she's happy to help them, but before that they've got to think of 20 things to put on her list. Hopefully the party will get into the spirit of brainstorming; they can call things out – use it to dye fabric grey! dip torches in it and set them on fire! use it to bait bug traps! serve it to guests you want to get rid of! – while Lenora writes them on the list.

Educational goal(s): to practice brainstorming and building on each other's ideas

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a piece of paper and pencil/pen (Lenora doesn't actually have the cordial with her; she just talks about it.)

Dimitri -- Cliff Young

Age: 55

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

A description of the Bullshit! Challenge appears on page 277.

Waylon

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the bullshit! challenge

Info to give the party directly: Dimitri tells the party that he has some elderberry wine that they're welcome to, but he can't give it to them right now. He explains that when Malachi woke up Friday morning with absolutely no memory of the night before, he was convinced he'd gotten blackout drunk. Worried about this, Malachi'd originally tried to dump out all the alcohol the Roamers had, and it was only good luck that Dimitri caught him before this actually happened. Instead, Dimitri convinced Malachi that it would be sufficient to stash all their booze out in the woods. Dimitri will go later and retrieve the wine for the party. He promises to meet the party in the tavern Sunday at 9:30am to give them the wine.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none (he'll meet them in the tavern Sunday at 9:30am with the elderberry wine)

Arden

When to approach a party: any time this charge is not being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dimitri tells the party that he heard a rumor that the Smirches had the Crown of St. Mora. Dimitri has no idea if this is true or not. He can't offhand think why the Smirches would *want* the Crown, since although it's incredibly valuable, it's well known enough that you couldn't actually fence it, not without finding a very specific buyer. Still, he tells the party, he could believe that the Smirches might well want a thing just for the pleasure of owning something no one else has. Of course, if the rumor *is* true, that doesn't explain how the Crown got left on the Valerius doorstep. Maybe, Dimitri says, the Smirches *did* have the stolen Crown and then suddenly developed consciences and returned it anonymously! And maybe Dimitri will sprout wings and learn to fly!

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dimitri tells the party that Solomon Stillwater is a good man but not someone whose bad side he recommends getting on. It's easy sometimes to see Solomon welcoming people and start thinking of him just as that person - accommodating and friendly - but if ever a fight breaks out in the tavern or even if there's a customer being rude with one of the servers, there is a different side of Solomon. At those times, Dimitri says, you remember that Solomon was a ship's captain, and on board the ship, his word is law. Solomon is a powerful man and not someone you'd want to cross.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dimitri is on the party's path and is their penultimate step. When talking with them on Saturday, he tells them where and when he'll meet them on Sunday. At this time, Dimitri decides he should write down the time and place for the party so they don't forget. He pulls a pen **PROP** from a pouch and then pats his pockets looking for a scrap of paper. When he finds one and pulls it out, the paper **PROP** turns out to be an autograph from Milton Peacock. Dimitri confesses that he was kind of joking when he'd asked Milton for the autograph, but it was clear Milton was excited to be asked so Dimitri just went with it. But he's fine giving the paper to the party. After Dimitri writes the time and place on the paper and hands it over, the party will see that it says "Dimitri - Thanks for being a terrific fan! Milton Peacock" The i's in the note are dotted with Milton's quick version of the "Peacock i" like on the poster. Note that Dimitri doesn't call attention to the handwriting at all.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Waylon, again

Time: 9:30am, Sunday (Dimitri is the penultimate step for this party; he just gives the party the item, not accompany them.)

Item(s) to give this party: elderberry wine

Mila -- Christine Reeves

Age: 49

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

A description of the Grab-bag Storytelling Challenge appears on page 280.

A description of the Soul Speaking Challenge appears on page 484.

(Mila will be shuttling parties to one of the Soul Speaking locations on Saturday night.)

Elsewhich

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Mila is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the grab-bag storytelling challenge

Info to give the party directly: Mila tells the party that she heard they were looking for a amethyst sphere. She has one, and she'd be happy to let the party have it.

Mila mentions that some people believe that amethyst clears the mind and helps with decision-making. She admit that she was vaguely tempted to slip the sphere into Cary Montalvo's pocket when he wasn't looking. Cary is going to marry Mila's dear friend Belle Bishop tomorrow, but as far as Mila knows, he hasn't yet decided which of his lieutenants should serve as his best man. Mila doesn't think this is a problem, but she knows Cary's deliberating is exasperating Belle. Mila tells the party that she herself will be one of Belle's bridesmaids, along with many other women in town. Unlike Cary, Belle has answered the question of who her attendants will be by asking all of her many friends. Belle and Cary are very, very different, but they really do seem happy together. And no doubt Cary will make his own decision soon enough. Letting the party have the amethyst sphere is, Mila says, a much better use of it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At the very end of the encounter, Mila asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Mila could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: amethyst sphere

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Mila tells the party that she was in the tavern when Vernon Gill arrived in town on Wednesday. Mr. Gill apparently used to be a soldier until 10 years ago, when he was badly injured and thus no longer able to use his sword-arm. Mila says Mr. Gill explained that it was Katherine Carmichael - the author who's been in town for several weeks now - who shot him, and he came to town after tracking her down because he's seeking damages for the debilitating injuries. Mila was surprised to hear that Katherine would shoot someone for no reason, but Mr. Gill said that he'd mouthed off to Katherine just before the shooting occurred. Regardless of how obnoxious his comments were, that doesn't warrant him getting shot, Mila says. Mila tells the party that she was feeling very sorry for Mr. Gill - how terrible it must be to permanently lose the use of your arm, especially when your whole livelihood depends upon it! - and she's not proud of the fact that after hearing him go on and on about the injuries, she was feeling just a *tiny* bit less sympathetic.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Mila tells the party that it's been just lovely getting to meet Quinoa. Quinoa's also a Roamer, but from the Stonefall Clan. Mila explains that she and Valentina were in the tavern yesterday morning when Quinoa and her boyfriend Huxley arrived in town. As soon as the couple walked in, she and Valentina saw Quinoa's beautiful tattoos and colorful clothing and knew she must be one of them. Mila admits she wanted to give the pair a few minutes to get settled, but that Valentina had marched right over. Hearing that the couple had come all the way from Elsewhich, Valentina said "Oh, are you from Stonefall Clan?" and sure enough, Quinoa is. Mila and Valentina insisted she and her boyfriend come back to the Wayfarer encampment with them. Mila tells the party that she wasn't initially sure that a Baron's son like Huxley would want to sleep in a tent, but he's been very down-to-earth, albeit mostly quiet.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Clairia

When to approach a party: Sunday at breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Mila "happens to walk by" the party, stops and then does a double-take. She tells the party that they are the people in the vision she had just this past night! Mila doesn't know exactly what the dream meant, but it was something about a message. Someone was trying to get a message to the party, she thinks. It was outside somewhere, but Mila isn't certain yet where. She plans to go now to ponder the dream more deeply. The party may in turn decide to share their keeper's dream; this is fine but not necessary. Either way, Mila shouldn't let the party get too invested in this idea - most of all, the party shouldn't go looking for the person the message is from - because this isn't resolvable yet.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Clairia, again

When to approach a party: Sunday around 10:15am, immediately after the party has fully resolved their party path ending

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Mila is coming up Gilded Way, away from the tavern. Mila says she realized more about the vision she had and now knows the location where it was set. She asks the party to come with her right then. She leads the party up Gilded Way, turning right on Knight's Walk until they end at the small horse ring at the end of Knight's Walk.

As Mila leads them to the Knight's Walk horse ring, the party encounters the Ghosts of Montgomery Morgan, Delia Morgan, Horatio Morgan and Veena Morgan. The ghosts are at the far side of the horse ring - if the party remembers the lore they read yesterday, this is the spot where the Morgans first staged their outdoor performances when they came to World's Edge - and they are engaged in a performance right now. Horatio and Veena look at the party and nod vigorously and then turn their attention back to the other ghosts.

Mila tells the party that yes, this is somehow what the dream was trying to show her. [Mila is going to give the party several pieces of info during this scene. She shouldn't get bogged down with how she knows these things; she just does. It's a mystical holy kind of knowing.] Mila tells the party that the ghosts must have a message for them. At this, Horatio and Veena again nod. Mila says that these ghosts are faded. They won't be in the living world for much longer. Mila tells the party that these ghosts aren't going to be able to speak to them, at least not in words. If the party asks, she clarifies that this is true even if the party has any ghosts among them or some magical means of speaking with ghosts. [This is important because we don't want the party wasting magic or killing anyone a la Dance of the Dead to try to talk to these ghosts! If this is unclear, Mila should talk to an EM before doing this scene.]

The way this interaction proceeds is as follows: Montgomery and Delia are serving as the principal actors, and they will act out the same scene repeatedly, on a sort of continuous loop. They don't interact with the party, because they're very faded. Horatio and Veena will provide a few "special effects" for the scene Montgomery and Delia are pantomiming, and they also serve as the audience for the other ghosts' show, reacting silently to the show's action. Horatio and Veena can also nod 'yes' or shake their

heads ‘no’ in response to partymembers’ questions. Other than that, they cannot answer. (They will not charade answers to non-yes/no questions.)

For this scene, the ghosts have a few items with them: a white paper crown, a candle in a candlestick, a bucket with blue ribbons attached inside it, and a red/orange scarf or fabric rectangle.

At the start of the scene, Delia steps to the center of the “stage”, with Horatio and Veena serving as the audience, sitting at her feet. Delia carefully places the candle near her feet and then dramatically places the crown on her head. Horatio and Veena clap silently but excitedly. Delia pantomimes singing, doing a few dainty dance steps. After a short bit of this, her “song” reaches its climax. She holds her hands out dramatically and then begins to spin in a circle. Horatio and Veena clap even more enthusiastically. But then Delia kicks over the candlestick. Horatio and Veena each hold one end of the red scarf, undulating it between the two of them so that it hopefully suggests fire at Delia’s feet. Delia sees the fire and silently screams, stamping in the direction of it, but to no avail. Horatio and Veena raise the scarf a little higher, showing the fire growing stronger. Delia silently screams for help.

Just then, Montgomery enters the show. He sees Delia and the fire and silently calls to her. Delia pantomimes coughing. She tries to call back to Montgomery, but she is getting weaker. She puts a hand to her forehead, swooning in the smoke and heat. Montgomery reaches behind him, grabbing up the bucket, and then runs toward Delia. Once he is within range of her, he pantomimes throwing water on her. (Hopefully the blue ribbons unfurl onto her, looking at least vaguely watery.) Horatio and Veena lower the scarf a little as the fire is temporarily driven back. Delia, though, is very weak. She collapses into Montgomery’s arms. He scoops her up, carrying her away to safety, at which point Horatio and Veena drop the scarf and applaud. And then the show starts all over again.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they’re not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party’s interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

If they ask yes/no questions, Horatio and Veena can answer them with nods or head-shakes as follows:

- Do you ghosts remember what happened on Thursday? YES
- Are you acting out the theater fire that happened on Thursday? YES
- Is Delia portraying Aria / is Montgomery portraying Danny? YES
- Did Danny start the fire? NO
- Did Aria dance in the theater on Thursday? YES
- Does Aria often dance in the theater? and/or Does Aria recreate the Spun Sugar dance from her youth? YES
- Did Aria accidentally start the fire? YES
- Did Danny carry Aria to safety? YES
- Can you come to the trial and say this? NO

Horatio and Veena answer any other yes/no answers as appropriate. If the party asks non-yes/no questions, Horatio and Veena simply look at them sadly. This is also their reaction if the party asks yes/no questions about anything other than what the ghosts saw in the theater on Thursday.

If the party watches the scene unfold all the way through at least one and a half times and doesn’t ask any yes/no questions, Mila asks, “Is this part of the message you needed to share?” at which case Horatio and Veena answer YES. If the party doesn’t ask a question after that, Mila asks “Are we able to ask you any questions?” which is, again, YES.

After that, Mila tells the party that they’ll have to think what to ask. Hopefully they’ll do all or most of this scene on their own. At the same time, the party needs to get most of the above information before they leave the horse-ring, because there’s no good way to fill them in later on, so Mila should not end this interaction end until the party has gotten the info they need!

Once the party does have all the above info, if they’re acting like they’re going to stick around making the ghosts replay the scene forever, Mila asks “Is there anything more you need to tell us?” To which the answer, mercifully, is NO.

After the scene with the ghosts, Mila walks with the party back toward the tavern. During this, she asks the party’s keeper about the vision they had. Hopefully, refreshing the party’s memory about the keeper’s vision (especially the part about the forgotten letter) will help the interaction that will happen later with Aria Morgan make sense.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan’s, see page 127 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: Mila is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. She will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. She should check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Sunday between 11am and noon*, Mila approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Milton Peacock. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Mila encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Milton Peacock lied about embezzling money; in truth, there never was any money to embezzle.
- He did so in the hopes that it would make the band seem successful and generate publicity so that the band - and, more importantly, the family - could stay together.
- Unbeknownst to Milton, Miscellania deposited 12,000 royals into the account from her own funds because she loves Milton and wants to save him.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Mila can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Mila can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Esmerelda -- Merri Rosen

Age: 48

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

A description of the Grab-bag Storytelling Challenge appears on page 280.

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: Friday (Esmerelda is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they *don't*, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the grab-bag storytelling challenge

Info to give the party directly: As soon as the party arrives in the Roamer camp, Esmerelda is waiting for them. She hopes they weren't injured in that Skeever attack on the walk to the camp! It was... Esmerelda stares off into the distance briefly... three Skeevens, correct? Just terrible! Was their trip from Uri-Kesh a pleasant one?

Esmerelda has the Sight, and because of this, she already knew the party was coming, and that they were coming with regard to the lamp. (Note that this is the only time all weekend when the Sight provides this caliber of information to Esmerelda, but it means she can have the list of items prepared before the party asks for it, which is very handy for us.)

Esmerelda explains that, several weeks ago, a man named Shade arrived in World's Edge. He stayed with the Roamers a few days, and during that time they purchased the lamp from him. When the Sight told Esmerelda the party had come to town asking about the lamp, Archon Tempest asked her to prepare a letter for them. This letter lists the items the Roamers would be willing to accept in trade:

Good people of Uri-Kesh,

We Roamers understand that you need to use our Lamp. At the request of Archon Mila Wayfarer, I have prepared this list of items – each highly-sought and valued by the Roamers – for which we are willing to make such a trade. As I'm sure you understand, the trade can occur only if all of the items are collected.

I wish you the best of luck, although I must warn you that we have sought many of these items ourselves, to no avail. Some are very costly, others extremely rare. You seem like a persistent bunch, however, and I See great things in store for all of you.

The items are as follows:

- a sterling silver heart box*
- a love potion in a fancy bottle*
- a magical Cryptstone brandy-cork (This remarkable item, when used to cork a flask of normal water, will turn the flask's contents to finest brandy in a fortnight. Dimitri's always wanted one.)*
- an aquamarine looking-glass*
- a favor from the Court of Mirrors (no idea how you'll get this one, but Natasha is insistent)*
- a gilded conchshell*
- a pendant set with a fire-gem*
- a silver shield pendant*
- a bottle of callibogus rum (Malachi wants this. It is nasty stuff, but rare. To each his own, I suppose.)*

Blessings upon all of you as the Rites of Remembrance is upon us,

Esmerelda

p.s. Does one of you have a lover with dark and sultry eyes? You had best not stray from home for too long. I am not certain this person is entirely faithful.

Note: When Esmerelda talks about making the trade, we want this to be kept ambiguous. That is, we want the party to think she means "trade these items for the lamp." What she actually means is "trade these items for the *temporary use* of the lamp." Our hope is that the party will approach the Roamer camp on Sunday morning planning to take the lamp and leave. Instead, they will then learn that the Roamers will let them summon the genie, but won't actually let them take the lamp away. This means the end of the party path will be different and more dramatic than the party expects. (We can explain this more in person if it's not clear.) To maintain this ambiguity, the list of items says that "we understand that you need to use the lamp."

Esmerelda tells the party that she has some suggestions about where they might acquire some of these items. She strongly encourages the party to write these names down upon the letter itself, so that they don't forget them.

- love potion in a fancy bottle – Phineas Smirch
- cryptstone brandy-cork – Katherine Carmichael
- aquamarine lookingglass – Celeste Wilde
- gilded conchshell – Kullis Toolforger
- pendant with a fire gem – Milton Peacock
- silver shield pendant – Lenora Graves
- callibogus rum – Diesel

Esmerelda tells the party that she's not sure where to acquire a sterling silver heart box.

As for the favor from the Court of Mirrors, she's not entirely certain what to tell them. The Court is some sort of parallel mirror dimension, very dark and deadly. There used to be a portal to the Court on the grounds of the Baron's home, but it was very dangerous and the Baron's family has someone perform the rituals needed to keep the portal closed. That's a good thing, because it was apparently a terrible place, but it does mean Esmerelda has no idea how they'll acquire a favor from the Court.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the letter listing the items they'll need to find

any parties encountered (ideally 3-5 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday 4pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Crabtree is giving out very similar information. It's awesome if they manage to connect with different parties but not at all a problem if they don't.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Esmerelda tells the party that she's so excited for Belle and Cary's wedding on Sunday. The two of them are so, so different, but they really are good together. Belle is nearly always happy, Esmerelda says, but but lately there's been a silver and white aura of joy all around her.

Of course, no relationship is without struggles. Esmerelda tells the party about an incident that happened several years ago. It was Cary's 50th birthday, and he was in World's Edge to celebrate with Belle. Belle had planned an elaborate birthday dinner, which Cary was presumably a fan of, but then she also surprised him by singing to him in the tavern.

Esmerelda explains that Cary is much more reserved than Belle - as, in fact, is almost everyone - and he's also a special-forces soldier. Suddenly becoming the focus of attention is *not* something he enjoyed. At *all*. Esmerelda tells the party that Belle learned her lesson from this, but because Belle is also the type of person who sometimes gets swept up in the moment and forgets important things, Esmerelda tries to remind her each year before Cary's birthday.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Big Musical Number

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Esmerelda tells the party that she will never understand rich people. She explains that, several months ago, Lady Carmina Bordeaux asked Esmerelda to read her fortune. Esmerelda tells the party that Lady Bordeaux told her she'd convinced Aesthetika to take her as a client, that Aesthetika was going to make her a famous artist. Esmerelda had innocently inquired about Inspirations Unlimited, but Lady Bordeaux had gotten angry and explained that Inspirations Unlimited was a scam, that Nemaia was unscrupulous and unfair. Lady Bordeaux went on to say that working with Aesthetika privately was a much better thing to do anyway. Esmerelda hadn't had any opinion about that; she'd just wanted to get on with the reading. She tells the party that she'd held Lady Bordeaux's hand and concentrated on her becoming an artist, but that she'd Seen... nothing. Esmerelda assures the party that she is usually honest with people about whatever she Sees for them, but that experience has taught her that people like Lady Bordeaux don't usually value too much truth. Esmerelda tells the party that first she'd started telling Lady Bordeaux that she'd Seen her with paint-stained hands, but it was clear from the way she'd wrinkled her nose that Lady Bordeaux didn't care for that image. Esmerelda then told her about Seeing her congratulated by lots

of powerful and important people about her wonderful paintings, and *that* seemed to please Lady Bordeaux much more. The last Esmerelda heard, Lady Bordeaux wasn't actually working with Aesthetika anymore and wasn't painting, so perhaps the nothingness she'd Seen had been accurate all along.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Esmerelda tells the party about an interaction she had several weeks ago with Dorito. It was in the tavern late one evening and she'd been sitting with Valentina. Esmerelda tells the party that she loves Valentina, but occasionally she's... a little much. Valentina was trying to convince Esmerelda to stay out later, but Esmerelda was ready to head back to the camp, so she'd just told Valentina her head hurt. Esmerelda tells the party she'd left the same time as Dorito had, so they'd walked back partway together. After a few minutes, Dorito'd asked why she'd fibbed to Valentina. Esmerelda was surprised by that; instead of answering, she'd asked Dorito how she'd known, and Dorito told Esmerelda that she touches her mouth if she's saying something that's not entirely true. It's funny, Esmerelda says. Valentina has known her nearly their whole lives and Valentina's never once noticed that. It's funny, what some people see.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Esmerelda tells the party that sometime this summer, she read Miscellania's palm for her. When she did, she told Miscellania that she saw a tall and mysterious stranger about to come into her life. At the time, Miscellania had laughed at that, but now here she is, spending all her spare time with this Milton Peacock. Esmerelda doesn't like to say "I told you so", but in this case she will anyway.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh, again

Time: 10:30 am Sunday (Esmerelda (along with the Genie) is the final step on Uri-Kesh's party path.)

Where: in the Roamer Camp

Activity/Direct info: When the party arrives at the Roamer camp, they will present Esmerelda (the only Roamer present at that time) with the items they've collected. They will hopefully assume that, having collected all the items the Roamers wanted, they will now be given the lamp. However, this was never the Roamers' intention. Esmerelda's note said "We understand that you need to use our Lamp..." The Roamers meant just that: the party has traded the items for the *use* of the lamp, not the lamp itself.

Esmerelda, all alone in the Roamer camp, is absolutely not about to disobey Mila's wishes and let the party take the lamp away. NO AMOUNT of cajoling or convincing will make them give the party the lamp. (If, heaven forbid, the party tries to use force or something to get the lamp, the Companion should be horrified by this. But if they're really set on doing that, let them. And then come tell the EMs.)

Hopefully, the party will finally decide that they themselves must summon the Genie of the Lamp. The letter from their Duchess tells how to do this by speaking magic words and rubbing the lamp and that Duchess Azalea's remaining wish is for her Genie love to come home to her.

Prior to the party's arrival, Esmerelda and the Genie should work out where the Genie will be hiding and where he will enter from.

Item(s) to give this party: none (although Esmerelda does need to be sure she has the lamp with her)

Valentina -- Chelsea Hadlock

Age: 36

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

A description of the Bullshit! Challenge appears on page 277.

Arden

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the bullshit! challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: citrine shards

P'loa

When to approach a party: sometime before Saturday at 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Valentina tells the party that before Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater came to World's Edge, the tavern was owned by a woman named Scarlet. Scarlet owned the bar for at least 4 years, Valentina thinks. Scarlet was *a lot*, Valentina says. Super hot, but also batshit crazy. One minute things would be fine and then the next, Scarlet would be losing her shit over nothing. Valentina tells the party that Scarlet was originally from Keer, from Windsor-by-the-Bay, she thinks. When Scarlet decided she wanted to sell the bar, she'd put out word in Keer and that was how Solomon heard of World's Edge in the first place. Valentina isn't entirely sure why Scarlet decided to leave. At the time, Scarlet said she wasn't happy in World's Edge anymore, which was only surprising because it was hard to imagine Scarlet being happy *anywhere*. Valentina tells the party that Scarlet used to yell at whoever was nearby when she got angry... and she was usually angry. Apparently, Scarlet had a change of heart after selling the tavern and she'd written repeatedly asking to buy it back. Valentina tells the party that she'd been kinda worried when she heard that, because she works as a server in the tavern, and she did *not* want to go back to working for Scarlet. But then Bonnie told Valentina that she and Solomon had turned down all of Scarlet's offers, even though it sounded like Scarlet was offering a whole bunch of money for the tavern. Valentina tells the party that she was really glad to hear that. Scarlet was a piece of work. Hot as she was, it didn't make up for her personality. And Valentina does not say that lightly.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Valentina tells the party that she's so glad Quinoa and that handsome boyfriend of hers have come to World's Edge. Valentina explains that she and Mila were in the tavern yesterday morning when Quinoa and Huxley arrived in town. As soon as the couple walked in, she and Mila saw Quinoa's beautiful tattoos and colorful clothing and knew she must be one of them. Valentina tells the party that when she heard that the couple had come all the way from Elsewhich, she'd asked Quinoa if she was from Stonefall Clan and sure enough, Quinoa is. Mila and Valentina insisted she and her boyfriend come back to the Wayfarer encampment with them. Valentina tells the party that the other Roamers weren't certain a nobleman like Huxley would be comfortable in the encampment, which she finds funny. She's brought *plenty* of noblemen back there and they've all been *very* comfortable.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Valentina tells the party that Dora Davies was a hell of a gal, and she's not sure how a woman like that ended up with a stick-up-his-ass son like Edwin. Actually, Valentina says, she *does* know: Dora's husband Harold was just like Edwin. The dreary apple doesn't fall far from the dreary tree. Harold liked having a hottie of a wife well enough, but he did *not* like people knowing that Dora had been a dancer. Well, it served him right, boring old Harold, because after he died, Dora went *back* to dancing professionally. Valentina tells the party that Dora made a bunch of money dancing. She was one of those women who just got better and hotter the older she got, and then she got rich as well. Not that you'd know it, because Dora and her sister Eugenie grew up without two royals to rub together, and even when Dora was making all sorts of cash, she wasn't spending any of it if she could help it. A year or two ago, though, Dora must've finally decided the money wasn't going to run out and she actually started spending some of it. She bought herself some nice clothes and whatnot, but most of it went to gifts for other people, and these all-day parties. Valentina *loves* a good party, and these that Dora threw, they were the best. Food and booze and dancing till all hours. There was one party where Valentina drank so much champagne she propositioned Edwin. *Edwin!* He'd looked at her like she was some sort of nasty stain on the upholstery. Your loss, Edwin. Valentina tells the party that she hopes she keeps dancing till the end, just like Dora did.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: Valentina is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. She will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. She should check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Sunday between 11am and noon*, Valentina approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Dorito. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Valentina encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Dorito didn't kill Professor Daniel Merriweather - the party knows this because they met him this morning - but she thinks Bane did, so she confessed to protect Bane, with whom she's in love.
- Dorito thinks this because she saw Bane accessing a hidden box of academic items, and because Lenora Graves' Ouija board began spelling "d - a - n", which dyslexic Dorito thought was the Professor's ghost accusing Bane.
- Bane is actually an undercover anthropologist named Lewis Bainbridge, which is why he has a hidden tweed jacket, glasses, and a copy of his colleague's book, and he's smart enough to love Dorito back.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Valentina can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Valentina can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Tinker Bill -- Dave Nadig

Age: 55

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

A description of the Grab-bag Storytelling Challenge appears on page 280.

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: Friday night (Tinker Bill is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: Tinker Bill is happy to take the party to see Esmerelda.

Before leaving, Tinker Bill needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at the Roamer camp. If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should probably do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Uri-Kesh. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Tinker Bill should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once Tinker Bill has escorted the party to the Roamer camp and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, he returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Tinker Bill tells the party that, as they may have already heard, a strange and unprecedented thing occurred last night, in that no one who was in town - or, at least, no one who has been brought to Tinker Bill's attention - can remember anything that happened between the hours of 6pm and 6am. In addition to this phenomenon, there are many things happening in town this weekend in addition to the party's visit. Saturday is the last day of the Rites of Remembrance, which means that Soul Speaking will be held tomorrow night. Then, on Sunday, visiting Justice Orion Wilde will conduct a trial, hearing all the charges that have been levied within World's Edge over the past year. After the conclusion of the trial, a wedding will be held! This is a lot of events! No doubt there will be numerous other things happening - Tinker Bill himself plans to eat breakfast tomorrow, and lunch and dinner as well, for instance - but he's neglecting to mention those since they are not open to the general public.

Item(s) to give this party: none

Sythwan

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the grab-bag storytelling challenge challenge

Info to give the party directly: Tinker Bill tells the party that he does have a bejeweled chalice and he's happy for the party to have it... but he can't give it to them right now. He explains that the chalice used to belong to a friend of his, a Roamer from Riverside clan named Jeanette. Jeanette passed away this past spring and, since tonight is the last night of the Rites, he'd like to drink a special toast in her honor, and it seems like he should use the cup that was once hers. After tonight, though, he can give the cup away; he will remember Jeanette just fine without it. He promises to meet the party in the tavern at 10am tomorrow with the chalice.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none (he'll meet them in the tavern at 10am Sunday to give them the bejeweled chalice)

Arden

When to approach a party: Saturday at lunchtime

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Tinker Bill serves lunch to the party. While doing so, he places a coaster next to each person's place. The coasters are visually distinctive, with glossy black printing on a matte black circle. In the center is a graphic of a lantern. Around the outside of the circle are the words "Ever Vigilant * Ever Fabulous". Tinker Bill doesn't say anything about the design, but he tells the party that he found a stack of the coasters propping up a table leg in the tavern. He says he tried to return them to Solomon and Bonnie, but the Stillwaters say that they didn't buy the coasters and don't have any idea where they came from. Tinker Bill tells the party they're welcome to keep the coasters. They're very useful if anyone needs to protect a table or prop up a table leg. If the party gets up to leave and doesn't take any coasters with them, their Companion should save a couple if possible "just because they're kind of cool."

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Tinker Bill tells the party about an unprecedented incident that happened 63 days ago. He explains that he was eating dinner in the tavern and that when he returned to his tent, he could tell immediately that someone - that is, someone besides him - had been in there. The tent flap was left completely differently than he himself had left it. Tinker Bill tells the party that he soon learned that whoever had entered his tent had taken two actions while there: Action 1 was to remove 50 royals from his pouch. Action 2 was depositing a painting showing either Tinker Bill himself or else someone who looks and dresses very much like him. Tinker Bill tells the party that he is not actually sure which of these actions transpired first as he was not in the tent at the time. Tinker Bill explains that the painting is similar in style to many that Aesthetika makes, but since the painting is not signed, it is impossible to say for certain who it is that created it.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Tinker Bill tells the party that he finds it confusing when people refuse to believe information that's been clearly explained to them. For instance, Solomon Stillwater has - and has had since before arriving in World's Edge - a tattoo on his forearm. The tattoo is of the letters "JB." Tinker Bill explains to the party that Solomon told him the initials are a reference to a woman Solomon dated before he met and married Bonnie. Tinker Bill is not aware of the woman's real name, but since it is irrelevant to this story, it doesn't matter. Solomon's nickname for this girlfriend was JuneBug, and these are thus the initials depicted in the tattoo. Tinker Bill tells the party that he isn't certain that "girlfriend" is the accurate term for the relationship between Solomon and JuneBug, since it doesn't appear that they knew each other very long, but it is the only term Tinker Bill can think to use. Regardless, just over the past 9 days, Tinker Bill has been hearing people saying the JB tattoo is actually a reference to Solomon being Jack Brigham, a man who also has the JB initials. Even after Tinker Bill has explained about JuneBug, some people have persisted believing the incorrect story. This is very frustrating to Tinker Bill.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: Tinker Bill is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. He will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. He should check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Sunday between 11am and noon*, Tinker Bill approaches the party. He tells the party he heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Kerrick Dealbinder. He reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Tinker Bill encourages them to present the info they've learned to him as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- The crown Kerrick Dealbinder found isn't Tanya Peacock's, which is merely delayed in shipping, but rather is actually the crown jewels of Lyria, worth a lot more than 8 royals.
- It was stolen from the royal vault in Dolorón by a ring of thieves helmed by mastermind Karla Smirch, who hid it in the woods to keep her family from finding it.
- The man World's Edge knows as Jack Johnson is actually an inept palace guard who's trying to recover this valuable item before anyone there learns it's missing.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Tinker Bill can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Tinker Bill can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) He can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Sythwan, again

Time: 10am, Sunday (Tinker Bill is the penultimate step for this party. He doesn't accompany them to the ritual, just gives them the item.)

Item(s) to give this party: jeweled chalice

Aleeya Witchborn -- Deb Lack

Age: 49

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

Traveler Lore concerning Aleeya Witchborn appears on page 205.

A description of the Managers & Peons Challenge appears on page 278.

Noctara

Approximately when: Friday (Aleeya is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they don't, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the managers & peons challenge

Info to give the party directly: Aleeya takes Bonnie's note from Natasha and reads it. She then asks the party to wait a moment while she retrieves the note she'd already written to Bonnie. Aleeya tells them that there are some items that she's confident Bonnie would be willing to trade for the Crystal Chalice. Aleeya is not at liberty to explain why Bonnie wants these items, but, after double-checking the note from Bonnie and then (pretending that she's) writing a short note to the party across the bottom, she gives the party this letter:

Dear Bonnie,

I have looked into that matter you asked me about, and I believe I've found something. It's not going to be easy, but then, whatever is? You'll need to assemble a rather strange collection of items, as follows:

a small amount of mortality dust

an azure riverstone

a limelight

an amethyst obelisk

a heart of darkness

an emerald star

aventurine shards

a copperstone crown

a jester's egg

I have a few ideas about where you might find some of these, although not all of them, alas. Wishing you much luck,

Aleeya

[written across the bottom: Friends from Noctara – According to Bonnie, if you're able to find the above and are still interested in claiming the Chalice, you should meet her at Serenity Point on Sunday morning at half past nine. She asks that you please be on time. – A.W.]

Aleeya tells the party that, as she was prepared to tell Bonnie, she has ideas about where to find some of these items:

- mortality dust – Cary Montalvo
- azure riverstone – Tanya Peacock
- amethyst obelisk – Kyli Talespinner
- heart of darkness – Dorito
- emerald star – Samuelson
- aventurine shards – Pearl Bryce
- copperstone crown – Santiago West Valerius

Aleeya tells the party that she doesn't know what a jester's egg is or who might have one.

As for a limelight, Aleeya confesses that she is at a loss as to what to tell them. A limelight provides illumination in a theater. There was a theater in World's Edge which Aria Morgan was in the process of restoring, but it tragically burned to the ground just last night. Aleeya can't think of anywhere else that a limelight might be attained.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the letter listing the items they'll need to find

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aleeya tells the party that when the Sprinks first arrived in World's Edge, she was honestly nervous that Angelica Sprink might get herself lost and perish within sight of the tavern. Or, rather, that's that what would have happened if the girl had ever gone anywhere alone. Angelica never did, Aleeya says, and a good thing, too, because Aleeya had never met anyone with less sense of direction than Angelica. Maybe that's not even right. Maybe it's that Angelica didn't seem to understand that she *could* find her way anywhere. She didn't try, so of course she couldn't do it, even if the place she was headed was visible from the place she was currently standing. Aleeya confides that she'd thought that that sort of helplessness was unlikely to ever go away, but this is a case where she's happy to be proven wrong. Bracken - he's a friend of Angelica's - has seemingly been teaching Angelica a thing or two on the subject. Basic things, like the sun setting in the west, or simple strategies like repeating directions aloud to help remember them. You wouldn't think those would be new ideas to a near-adult like Angelica, but apparently no one had ever told her before. Amazingly, this teaching seems to be helping. Aleeya tells the party she's pleased to see that. You don't need to be an expert at everything, but basic competence? Aleeya is a fan.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aleeya tells the party that she was scheduled to serve breakfast in the tavern on Friday morning. She'd gotten there a little bit early and it was still dark enough out that she didn't see how the theater had burned. She smelled all the smoke, she tells the party, but she assumed that maybe there was a bonfire or something at Cary's bachelor party the night before. Aleeya explains that she couldn't remember what had happened Thursday night, but to be honest, she'd just assumed that she'd had a really good time at the party the night before. She came inside and was starting to wipe down the bar when Danny Donovan had come into the main room. Aleeya tells the party that Danny sleeps in a back room of the tavern and has for months now. She turned to say hello to him, but he was all wide-eyed. He was wearing a cloak with burn marks all over it and his arms were all sooty. Danny kept saying "What happened to me?" over and over. She tells the party she felt bad for him, he looked so confused and afraid.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aleeya tells the party that she wishes she had been more like Ember when she was Ember's age. Actually, she kind of wants to be more like Ember right now. Ember practices aspirational self-care, Aleeya says. Ember has clearly defined boundaries and a really healthy sense of self.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Kazmira -- Ariel Jaffee

Age: 46

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

A description of the Managers & Peons Challenge appears on page 278.

Glendeep

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the managers & peons challenge

Info to give the party directly: Kazmira tells the party that it's so funny they're asking her for a rose quartz orb. Just the other night, she had a dream where a handsome man was singing her a song, and in the song, he talked about just such an orb. Kazmira liked the dream and the song enough that when she woke up in the morning, she wrote the song down. Kazmira will soon be embarking on a kingdom-wide tour where she will perform the song before standing-room-only crowds! Would the party like her to autograph the song for them? How lucky they are to meet her now, before she becomes a huge pop star!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the rose quartz orb

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kazmira tells the party that she was there in the tavern on Monday when Lenora Graves used a Ouija board to contact the spirit of poor dead Professor Merriweather. Kazmira tells the party that Lenora had just started using the board when suddenly Dorito started shouting that she'd killed the professor! Dorito said she'd stabbed the professor and to prove it, she'd pulled out a huge knife, still dripping with the professor's blood! Kazmira herself had wrestled the knife away from Dorito. Kazmira tells the party that she sustained multiple lacerations in the process, but thankfully she's a very fast healer.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kazmira tells the party that she herself has had several crowns and tragically, they have all been stolen away from her. One of them was crusted all over with sapphires; it was stolen by a highwayman who wanted to present it to his own lady-love. Another of her crowns - plucked straight off her head by a bald eagle! - was made of silver set with a thousand diamonds. Kazmira's personal favorite was a crown made of crystalline laughter and the sound of singing. That one was not technically stolen; the moon himself asked her for it so pleasantly that she gave it as a gift, although she later regretted doing so. Kazmira tells the party that this story Kerrick Dealbinder is telling, where he just happened to be walking through the woods and found a box with a tiara in it? Obviously untrue. Kazmira does not believe it for a minute.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

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Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kazmira tells the party that she was in the tavern yesterday morning when Quinoa and her boyfriend Huxley arrived in town. Bartleby Sprink was going on about them coming all the way from Elsewhich, which Kazmira doesn't think is a very big deal at all. She herself walks back and forth to Elsewhich sometimes just to get a glass of wine! It was evident Quinoa was a Roamer right away, what with her tattoos **PROP** and her nice clothes, and when Valentina heard about Elsewhich, she'd asked if Quinoa was from Stonefall Clan. It turns out Quinoa is, and it's been really nice to have her staying with them at the Wayfarer encampment. Kazmira tells the party that she's less keen on this Huxley fellow. He's some important Baron's son but he looks lost. At one point Kazmira tried to make conversation with him and he said "I am from Center City!" Kazmira doesn't like to call anyone out, but that's obviously a fake place name. Kazmira tells the party that she knows an obvious lie when she hears one.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Malachi -- Justin Hart

Age: 43

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

A description of the Managers & Peons Challenge appears on page 278.

Dolorón

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the managers & peons challenge

Info to give the party directly: Malachi tells the party that he has some merula-fruit cordial and he's happy to give it to them. He doesn't have it available right now, though. He explains that when he woke up on Friday morning with absolutely no memory of the night before, he worried he must've gotten blackout drunk the night before. He didn't want that to happen again, so he hid all his good booze far out in the woods. Now he understands that nobody remembers the events of Thursday night, so he feels a lot better. He promises the party he'll retrieve the cordial for them and meet them in the tavern with it at 9:45am on Sunday.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none (he'll give them the merula-fruit cordial at 9:45am Sunday in the tavern)

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Malachi tells the party that here's the story as he understands it: Tanya Peacock, one of those Peacock Family Singers that are currently in town, ordered a crown from a mail order catalog. Malachi had no idea you could just order a crown if you wanted one! Crazy, right? Malachi tells the party that, sadly, Tanya's crown was never delivered, even though she got a notice from the company saying that it had been. Tanya was real mad about that, and who could blame her? Malachi tells the party that on Friday, a bunch of Makai arrived in World's Edge, which is something that happens every once in a while. One of them is a friend of Malachi's, a man named Kerrick Dealbinder. He's a good guy. Malachi tells the party that he was in the tavern when the Makai came in to get some lunch, and his friend Dealbinder came in wearing a fancy tiara! The Makai have some different traditions and whatnot, but as far as Malachi knows, wearing tiaras isn't one of them. Tanya Peacock was there and she got all upset, accusing Dealbinder of stealing her crown. Dealbinder had explained that no, he'd found his crown in a box out in the woods, which Malachi agrees means this crown belongs to Dealbinder fair and square. Tanya hadn't seen it that way, or maybe she didn't believe Dealbinder's story. Malachi wishes he had another crown sitting around so he could give it to Tanya and everyone would be happy, but he doesn't.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Malachi tells the party that he's heard Milton Peacock stole money to cover his gambling debts. Malachi says that he doesn't like to trash talk anyone, but it doesn't surprise him that Milton is losing money gambling. He explains that he played poker with Milton several weeks ago. During that game, Malachi says, he had to keep reminding Milton of the ranking of the different hands. Milton was all set to give the pot to Malachi because Malachi had a pair of kings and Malachi had to explain that Milton's full house was a bunch better than a pair.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Clairia

When to approach a party: Saturday at 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Malachi approaches the party. He needs to talk to them about something private, he says. Can they go someplace quiet? Once they have, Malachi admits that he needs to tell them something that's... pretty solidly illegal. He heard they were looking into the charge against Danny Donovan. Danny is a friend of his, Malachi says. And the party seems like good people, and Malachi doesn't know what else to do, so... here he is. Malachi says that, back last winter, Danny told him that he didn't want to keep using White Noise. It was going to kill him and Danny knew that, and so he'd worked really hard to give it up. Malachi says that Danny told him that he thought he needed what he'd called an "escape hatch." What Danny meant by that, Malachi says, is that he wanted to know that if he got too desperate, that he could get some more Noise. Not a lot. Just a little, just in case. Malachi tells the party that Danny'd asked Malachi to hold onto the drugs for him, and that he'd agreed he would. Malachi himself has no interest in using. It's bad news, he says. And obviously he didn't want any kids finding the drugs, nor did he want to get in trouble for having them, so he'd hidden them out in the woods, in a hollow tree, reasoning that if Danny came to him, desperate, he could take Danny to the tree in question. Malachi tells the party that he hadn't had time to check the tree until just now. At first he was overjoyed, because when he got there, the White Noise - there were three lumps of it, just like Danny'd given to him - was all there. Malachi was so happy that his friend hadn't taken any of the drugs! But then, he tells the party, he realized that this isn't good news at all. If Danny hadn't gotten high on Thursday night, that means the fire didn't start with sparks from a pipe. That means it was set on purpose. Malachi tells the party that he doesn't know what to do. It's possible that Danny got more Noise somewhere else. Maybe he has another secret escape hatch somewhere. Malachi can't believe that he's actually hoping his friend found drugs someplace else. But if Danny really got angry enough that he burned that building down... that's not good. That's not good at all.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Dolorón, again

Time: 9:45am, Sunday (Malachi is the penultimate step for this party. He doesn't accompany them to the ritual, just gives them the item.)

Item(s) to give this party: merula-fruit cordial

Natasha -- Katie Paugh

Age: 30

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

A description of the Bullshit! Challenge appears on page 277.

Noctara

Approximately when: Friday night (Natasha is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: Natasha is happy - well, not *happy*. But willing - to take the party to meet Aleeya Witchborn.

Before leaving, Natasha needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at the Roamer camp. If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should probably do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Noctara. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Natasha should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once Natasha has escorted the party to the Roamer camp and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, she returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Natasha tells the party that they've come to World's Edge at a busier than usual time. There'll be a trial held on Sunday; Justice Orion Wilde is an itinerant prosecutor and he and his staff got into town just that morning. And then after that, there's going to be a wedding.

Natasha tells the party that she's not usually much for weddings - give her a nice funeral any day - but this one should be okay. Belle Bishop is getting married. Natasha isn't sure if the party knows about Bellaphones, the newish invention that lets you talk to someone who's in a totally different place, but Belle's the one who invented them. Belle's fiancé is a retired captain in the King's special army, the ones they call the Phantoms. Natasha tells the party that she doesn't buy into that whole men-in-uniform thing, but if she *were* going to? The Phantoms are the way to go. Dressing in all black? Yes, please, says Natasha.

Item(s) to give this party: none (but Natasha should give Aleeya the note from Bonnie before she leaves.)

Clairia

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the bullshit! challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: winterheart gem

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Natasha tells the party that apparently, Evelyn has been leaving animal corpses outside Ursula Smirch's front door as some sort insane business rivalry. If this is true, Natasha says, the joke is on Evelyn.

Natasha tells the party that she personally is much more likely to shop at the Smirches if there'll be any sort of dead bodies outside the door. Natasha intends to find out Evelyn's body-drop schedule so she can plan her shopping accordingly.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Natasha tells the party that the séance Eugenie Bright held was amazing. She had been hoping Eugenie's sister Theodora would actually manifest, but you can't have everything. Natasha tells the party that Eugenie had a table set with a black velvet tablecloth sewn all around the edges with tiny bells. There was a picture of Theodora in the center of the table, and silver candles circling it. Not gonna lie, Natasha was loving the look of it all. Once everybody was there, Eugenie instructed them to hold hands and close their eyes. Eugenie called on the denizens of the spirit realm to guide them, when the air was suddenly all smoky. Natasha tells the party she opened her eyes to see a really tall figure with greasy green skin, and she knew right away it was a demon. It slammed a hand down on the table. Lenora Graves was there, and she started yelling at everybody to think happy thoughts, which Natasha already was, because hello? Séance and a demonic sighting? Best day ever, basically. The demon ambled away then. Natasha tells the party that everything about the experience was great except for the demon returning to smash up some wayshrines. So not cool. But otherwise: 5 skulls, would attend again.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: Natasha is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. She will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. She should check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Sunday between 11am and noon*, Natasha approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Solomon Stillwater. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Natasha encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Cal Coleman and his (now very ex-)girlfriend Scarlet Billows tried to make it look like Solomon is secretly the famous pirate Jack Brigham because they hope Solomon's arrest will allow them to buy the tavern.
- Cal and Scarlet want the tavern because there's a fortune in pirate gold underneath it, buried there by the real Jack Brigham, another of Scarlet's exes.
- Solomon cannot possibly be Jack Brigham because the real Jack Brigham is right here.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Natasha can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Natasha can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Huxley -- Edgar Fisher

Age: 49

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

Secret Info:

He cannot believe he let his girlfriend talk him into this. Can. Not. Believe.

This isn't really Huxley's secret. The woman he's supposed to call Quinoa – it was all her idea. Here it is:

His name isn't Huxley, obviously. It's Damian. Damian Stormbane. He's a StormSpeaker, which – if you're not up on the latest methods – means he does a lot of scrying, a lot of reading portents in entrails, that kind of thing. And, of course, then he listens to the voices of the storm and learns its secrets so that the harbormaster can plan accordingly. Very standard stuff, obviously. He's just your standard boring StormSpeaker.

But Topaz – his girlfriend, Lady Topaz of the Forsaken – she's always going on about how they should *try something new* and *get out more* and all that. Damian pointed out that he *gets out* multiple times a day when he goes out onto the Balcony of Embers to whisper with the winds. But Topaz was having none of it. That didn't count, she said. Something *interesting*.

And then she found out about this weekend-thing. You go away for the weekend, dress up, all kinds of crazy stuff. It's called Anotherworld.

No thank you, said Damian.

But Topaz would not let up. Two or three times a day, coming up to his turret, bothering him when he's supposed to be StormSpeaking.

Finally, he'd agreed to go, just to shut her up.

So, okay. They got packets in the mail, and Damian had to admit he was a little impressed. The letter that came with it, they'd made it look like it had been printed out on a dot-matrix printer and everything, just like in the books. So that was kind of cool.

There was also a handbook he was supposed to read, but after a long day of scrying, he's not in the mood for that kind of thing. He figured he'd do it later. Not Topaz, though. She read it cover to cover, made herself a costume, made up a name, everything.

And then it was time for them to actually go do this thing. Don't tell Topaz – or, excuse him, he's supposed to be calling her Quinoa this weekend, because that's her Anotherworld name – but he brought a handful of squallstones and a bunch of pigeon entrails along with him. Look, he can't just take off from work and not be reachable for three days!

They arrived and met the rest of their group. There were all the people you'd expect: the guy who was way too into it, the woman who had to complain about everything. But still, they were all right.

"Were" being the operative word.

Because no sooner had the actual event started than he turned around and... they'd wandered off. Or maybe he and Top... sorry Quinoa were the ones who wandered off. He's not sure.

He hadn't even made up his damn Anotherworld name yet and already they'd lost their group. Great. He knew this was a mistake!

Anyway, they wandered in to the first building they found, and some guy asks him what his name is. Damian had looked frantically around and then spied a banner that said "Huxley" written on it. That sounded like it could be a name, so he'd said "Uh, I'm Huxley." Maybe that was a dumb choice, but the guy totally went with it. "Ah, Huxley! Welcome! We've been expecting you!" Damian has to say this much, they're really good, these people.

Even though he and Quinoa couldn't find the rest of their group, nobody seemed to find that strange. In the bar they'd wandered into, people said they had plenty for a Tender and a Server to do there. Damian still hadn't read the handbook, but Quinoa hissed "A Tender is your job for the weekend." So... okay, fine. He played along with it.

He's a little miffed that Quinoa made him borrow one of the Anotherworld loaner costumes, because most people here aren't dressed up at all, just wearing normal clothes, so he and Quinoa, with that costume she spent all that time making, look pretty silly. But go it goes. And he has to admit that, once he let himself get into it, it actually was pretty fun.

When he and Quinoa aren't able to use their Tender and Server skills, they've spent the rest of their time working on their mission, like the dot-matrix letter talked about. They've collected a whole bunch of the items on their list, talking to one person after another. There have been times, in fact, where he's actually started to feel like he's really from Center City, like it's really real.

He and Quinoa have even been accused of a crime! Again, he's got to admit, that's impressive. A separate story line just for them!

On Saturday night, he and Quinoa spent a bunch of time out searching, trying to solve a crazy riddle. He's not sure what'll happen next, especially with that whole charged-with-a-crime thing. He hopes he doesn't have to talk in front of everybody. Yikes.

And seriously *what* has happened to the rest of the group? If he can't stop worrying about this soon, he's so totally taking them up on that Double-Your-Money-Back Guarantee.

A description of the Managers & Peons Challenge appears on page 278.

Keer

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the managers & peons challenge

Info to give the party directly: Huxley tells the party that it's so funny, them asking him for a perfect sphere of earth. He doesn't have one, but several days ago, he had a dream of one. It was a giant stone ball at least 15 feet in diameter and it was rolling straight toward him! There were voices chanting in the background of the dream, although Huxley wasn't paying much attention because he was running and running to stay in front of the ball. Now that Huxley is awake, he understands that the huge stone sphere was probably a metaphor for the futility of the human condition, and also that he probably should've just run to the side, but in the dream that hadn't occurred to him. Anyway, he says, when he woke up he couldn't get back to sleep, so he wrote down the words the voices were chanting. He has no idea what they mean, but the party's welcome to them.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the perfect sphere of earth

any parties encountered (ideally 3-4 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Jpeg, Kira and Lenora Graves are all giving out similar information from different perspectives. It's awesome if they manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if they don't.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Huxley tells the party that he and his girlfriend Quinoa haven't been in town for long, having only arrived Friday morning, so he was a little surprised when Belle Bishop invited them to come to her wedding on Sunday. Belle's really great. And her fiancé Cary is... well, Belle seems happy with him.

Huxley tells the party that this is really none of his business, but he couldn't help noticing the tattoo Belle's got. It was pretty clearly half of a set, and when Quinoa asked about it, Belle shared that she'd gotten it hoping Cary would get a matching one, which he declined to do. Huxley tells the party that in any relationship, you sometimes need to compromise. He does a lot of things that he might not necessarily be excited to do, just because they're important to Quinoa. That's how it is, in a relationship.

Huxley tells the party that he has gone to not one but *three* poetry slams with Quinoa. Did he want to? No. But it was important to her and so he went. Huxley tells the party that yes, getting a tattoo is painful, but honestly less so than a poetry slam. And a tattoo lasts forever while a poetry slam only *feels like* it lasts forever. Look, Huxley's only point is that you have to be willing to compromise, in a relationship. He's just saying. Not that it's any of his business.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Big Musical Number and scene that follows it

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Huxley tells the party that he's heard that big fire that happened was Danny Donovan's fault. Huxley reminds the party that he himself has only just arrived in town and that Danny seems like a nice-enough guy. Some of the other servers in the tavern have warned Huxley, though, that if he needs someone to cover one of his shifts, Danny isn't a great person to ask, because he might show up and he might not. Huxley tells the party that it seems like Danny's a pretty hard worker when he does show up, but even if he's not using, apparently there's not always a guarantee Danny will show.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: at any point when he can encounter them without Quinoa being present and not immediately before or after Quinoa's similar encounter

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Huxley approaches the party. He's sorry to bother them, he says, but do any of them know where he can find a limelight? At some point during the interaction, Huxley looks around curiously and says, mostly to himself, "Huh, I figured I'd have encountered my Companion by now."

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: if and only if the party questions one or both of them

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Huxley and/or Quinoa tells the party that "this whole thing is turning out to be way more elaborate than expected!" They don't comment further on that. If the party asks "Are you really Lord Huxley?" Huxley answers "Yes, I'm Huxley." If they say "Are you really Lord Percy Huxley, son of Baron Alfred Huxley?", Huxley says "I guess this is all part of it..." to Quinoa (or to himself, if she's not there) and then says "Yeah, sure. That's who I am." *If and only if the party uses truth magic*, Huxley says "For this weekend, I'm Huxley." The answers to any other questions will depend on the spell and the question, but Huxley and Quinoa should try to avoid being totally misleading while also avoiding giving away the whole thing if possible.

If and only if the party specifically asks 'Are you participants?', Huxley and/or Quinoa will look flustered and give some variant on "Dude, I don't think you're supposed to be asking that! I'm trying to stay in the story!"

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Huxley tells the party that he's been listening to the Peacock Family Singers for years. He liked them long before they got so popular, and now that the band is in the news because of their manager embezzling all that money, they're probably going to sell out and become completely mainstream. Ugh.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Quinoa -- Janet Potter

Age: 40

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

Secret Info:

This isn't really Quinoa's *secret*. But the handbook *did* imply that she shouldn't walk around talking about it, so she might as well just treat it as a secret. Here it is:

If you encountered her most days, she wouldn't look like this or be acting this way. In real life, her name is Topaz. Lady Topaz of the Forsaken, Sister of Shadows, if you want the whole thing.

Like most people, she gets up in the morning, drinks her coffee, throws on whatever gilded raiment is cleanest and then heads off to the citadel. All day long, it's one thing after another: One of the dragon whelps has bitten another; what does Lady Topaz want them to do about it? An eternity pit has opened up just beyond the staircase; might Lady Topaz know another way out? There's a young boy at the portcullis and he bears the mark of the Chosen One; can Lady Topaz spare a few minutes to talk to him? All day long!

Which is why, when she heard about Anotherworld, it sounded like the best thing ever: a weekend away, having adventures! Sign her up!

Damian was a harder sell, of course.

She's always telling him that they need to do more fun stuff, and he's always, all, "Let's just sit on the couch and watch the chimera hatchling chase its tails..." as if that's not what they do every single night.

So, it took a lot of pushing. "Trust me, Damian," she'd said. And finally he'd given in.

Everything about it has been SO exciting! First, they got a packet in the mail. Apparently, they are from the land of Center City, and there was a letter from the mayor explaining their very important mission! They found out their jobs – she is the Server, which was totally her first choice! – and what their special abilities are and all of that. She made a costume. She read the handbook.

Damian didn't get nearly so into it, but she knew he would once they were there.

They arrived and met the rest of their group – Go, Center City! Not that it's a competition, but... -- and everyone was super great. Damian was still being a little pissy. He still hadn't picked an Anotherworld name; he kept saying "What's wrong with Damian Stormbane?", as if that wasn't going to sound completely stupid. It didn't matter. She was having so much fun, really getting into the fantasy of being from Center City and all that.

But, very soon after everything started... she's not really sure what went wrong. Maybe she and Damian wandered off, or maybe the others did, but regardless, suddenly they weren't together any more.

They'd looked and looked, but after a while, she'd said "Let's just go start our adventure and they'll find us eventually." And that's what they did. They'd gone into a building and Damian saw a banner with "Huxley" painted on it, so he'd decided that that was his name. In the bar they'd found, people were totally in need of a Server and a Tender (that's what Huxley's job is, a Tender) and that was awesome.

And they made some new friends! These two sweet women approached her and complimented her costume and asked if she was part of Stonefall clan. Clearly she was supposed to play along, and when she said she was, they invited her to stay with them in the Roamer camp. (That part was a little confusing. Is she a Server or a Roamer? She might need to send the organizers a little constructive criticism about that later.)

But still, it's been great. When they weren't busy with their jobs, they had the letter about their mission. Sure, they couldn't find the rest of their group, but the mayor of Center City was counting on them! They had to collect all kinds of things to do their ritual: ingredients for some magical drink called kombucha, a FitBit™, yoga pants and more. They were able to find people in town who had all those things, and even though nobody knew them, they were all happy to just give the things away!

She and Huxley were even – get this – charged with a crime! A custom storyline, just for them! Even Damian had to admit that that was pretty great.

So... she can't wait to see how this all ends. But she has to admit, she's worried about the rest of their group. Where in the world could they be?

A description of the Grab-bag Storytelling Challenge appears on page 280.

P'loa

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the grab-bag storytelling challenge

Info to give the party directly: Quinoa does have a seekingstone, and what's more, it's an organic one. She hopes the party is using only ethically-sourced components in their ritual.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: seekingstone

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Quinoa tells the party that she hasn't worked in the tavern for long, but she can already tell that Ember is extremely high-maintenance. The other servers have mentioned that sometimes Ember arrives before the tavern is even open, and will sit there crying until they serve her. One time, Pansy told Quinoa, the servers were fed up and not in the mood to make up an early plate, and Ember yelled "food! Food! Food!" at them until they couldn't take it anymore. Quinoa tells the party that some people might find that sort of behavior whimsical or whatever, but she personally does not.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time this charge is not being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Quinoa tells the party that she hates to criticize, but Karla Smirch is maybe not the ripest avocado in the bowl, if you know what she means. Just that morning, she says, she encountered Karla in front of the Roamer camp and Karla was concerned because she wasn't sure how to find her way home. Quinoa thought she'd misunderstood at first, because... you could see the Smirches shop from where they were standing. So it really, really wasn't complicated. She tells the party that she pointed that out to Karla, but after Karla'd taken three or four steps, she turned around and said, "Um, there's a lake in the way?" In the end, Quinoa just walked Karla home. It was easier than trying to explain.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: at any point when she can encounter them without Huxley being present and not immediately before or after Huxley's similar encounter

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Quinoa approaches the party. She's sorry to bother them, she says, but do any of them know where she can find a favor from the Court of Mirrors? At some point during the interaction, Quinoa looks around curiously and says, mostly to herself, "Huh, I figured I'd have encountered my Companion by now."

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: if and only if the party questions one or both of them

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Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Huxley and/or Quinoa tells the party that “this whole thing is turning out to be way more elaborate than expected!” They don’t comment further on that. If the party asks “Are you really Lord Huxley?” Huxley answers “Yes, I’m Huxley.” If they say “Are you really Lord Percy Huxley, son of Baron Alfred Huxley?”, Huxley says “I guess this is all part of it...” to Quinoa (or to himself, if she’s not there) and then says “Yeah, sure. That’s who I am.” *If and only if the party uses truth magic*, Huxley says “For this weekend, I’m Huxley.” The answers to any other questions will depend on the spell and the question, but Huxley and Quinoa should try to avoid being totally misleading while also avoiding giving away the whole thing if possible.

If and only if the party specifically asks ‘Are you participants?’, Huxley and/or Quinoa will look flustered and give some variant on “Dude, I don’t think you’re supposed to be asking that! I’m trying to stay in the story!”

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa’s, see page 136 for the whole story

The "Bullshit!" Challenge

Activity: A few of the Roamers – Dimitri, Valentina and Natasha -- are sharing this challenge. This challenge works especially nicely if more than one of them are present when doing the activity, but this is not at all necessary.

Dimitri (or whoever) mentions that he's been trying to teach Natasha to be a better liar. As things currently stand, Natasha often responds to invitations with "I regret that I cannot attend as I have recently perished." While Dimitri understands that Natasha simply likes talking about her own grisly demise, he feels that she needs to be a little more discriminating when it comes to truths and falsehoods.

To help educate Natasha on this subject, Dimitri's been playing an educational game with her; the name of this game is Bullshit. Dimitri is pleased to report that Natasha has made great strides thanks to this game and will soon be able to lie virtually undetectably. Dimitri suggests that the party play the game with the Roamers now.

He explains the rules of the game: the contestants (a.k.a. the party) tell three short stories about themselves. Two of the stories must be true; the other one should be completely fictitious. After each story, the guessers (that is, the Roamers) are allowed to ask a few questions about it. (i.e. "Did the Worlogs come running up to you, or did they jump out from behind a tree?") After the three stories have been told and the questions asked and answered, the guessers must then determine which story is the made-up one. The guessers announce which story they believe is false and then shout "Bullshit!" If the guessers are correct, they win. If the contestants have fooled the guessers, then the contestants are victorious.

The Roamers play just one 'round' of this game with the party. The point here is just to play the game; the staff aren't requiring the party to win in order for them to give up the item.

The Roamers can encourage the party to take a minute to confer amongst themselves before starting to decide what stories they want to tell. The party can either do the storytelling *en masse* or one person can do most of the talking, but if the latter occurs, the staff should ask their questions of some of the other partymembers to ensure that everyone is involved. Although this rule doesn't have to be announced at the start of the game, we want the party to tell stories about their *recent* exploits, i.e. those things that happened since arriving in World's Edge, not random stories they're making up about their home duchy.

Note: many contestants, when playing this game, will tell their two true stories first and then their false story last. If appropriate, the performers may want to choose one of the first two stories as made-up. If this story is true, it will hopefully give the party a fun feeling of 'not only did we win, but the story of our exploits was really incredible!'

Educational goal(s): to give the party a chance to recount their successes, where success is defined as anything that makes an exciting story. to have the party practice creativity.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none

the Managers & Peons Challenge

Activity: Malachi, Aleepa Witchborn, Kazmira and Huxley will be sharing this challenge activity. It works fine if all or most of them are there for it, but it's also fine with just one staffperson presenting it.

The Roamers explain that Malachi has made up a game. They'd really like to watch as some people play it briefly. They're happy to give the party the item they need, but in return, would the party be willing to play the game first?

The Roamers tell the party that the game is called Managers and Peons. (Malachi says he's not sure why he called it this; the name just came to him.) They break the party down into three Managers and three Peons. (If it's a 5-person party, it's okay for there to be only two Managers. This is an activity where having the Companion fill in the missing space doesn't work terribly well, because once you know what's going on, the activity is very different.)

The Roamers tell the party that, together, the Managers and Peons make up an entity called the Corporation. The Corporation has a job to do, but only the Managers know what that job is. The Peons are the ones who will actually be performing the job; therein lies the game.

The Roamers have the three Peons sit on the ground cross-legged so that they form a triangle with everyone facing inward. They should be close enough together so that each Peon's knees are touching those of the other two Peons. The Managers can stand or sit wherever they wish.

The Roamers explain the rules which govern the Corporation's actions:

- Peons must keep their eyes closed during the entire activity.
- Managers may not touch any physical objects.
- Physical contact between Managers and Peons is strictly prohibited. Peons may touch other Peons if they wish.
- As already mentioned, only Managers know the objective of the Corporation.
- And lastly, no one may say any real words.

This last rule is likely to cause some confusion among the party, so the Roamers should take a minute to answer any questions the party may have. In the interest of not overwhelming the party, it's probably best if the staff take questions about this rule rather than just announcing every possible permutation of what it might mean.

Any word in any language (including Pig Latin, should this get suggested) is prohibited. Slang is prohibited. Sounds such as uh-huh *are* allowable, although the Roamers don't need to suggest this. Clapping, whistling, and any assorted other sounds are allowed. Nonsense words like 'blorg' or whatever are allowed. Spelling letter-by-letter is not allowed, mostly because it defeats the purpose of the challenge *and* makes the activity very tedious.

After the Roamers have answered the party's questions, they inform the group that, if any disallowed words are used, they will notify the party. Once everyone understands the rules, the Peons must close their eyes. A Roamer hands each Peon a cloth bag; one is red, one yellow and one green. Inside each bag are three blocks, a random assortment of red, yellow and green. (There are three blocks of each color total.)

While one staffperson is distributing the materials, another takes the Managers aside and inform them that the Corporation's objective is to place all the green blocks in the green bag, all the red blocks in the red bag, etc.

The Peons and Managers can now begin whenever they are ready. There are a number of different ways to approach this problem and, in playtesting it, we were a little surprised how easy the task was for some groups and how difficult for others. Although it may be hard to refrain from doing so, the staff should attempt to observe the action without interjecting 'helpful suggestions'.

The Roamers should allow the activity to proceed for 5-7 minutes without interrupting. If the group does not appear to be getting close to their objective, or if they appear truly frustrated, the staff call a temporary halt to the actions.

After telling the Peons that they should continue to keep their eyes closed, the Roamers announce that they are going to separate the two groups momentarily. While they are separated, each group will be allowed to have a conference using real words. (i.e., during this time, Managers will be talking to Managers and Peons to Peons.) Each group has 2-3 minutes to choose a word. When the two groups reconvene, they will again be working toward their objective, but both Managers and Peons will be able to use the two words chosen.

Once the blocks are in the right bags, the Roamers cheer and announce that the Corporation has been successful. The Roamers want to know about the participants' experiences playing the game. What things made it hard(er)? What tactics helped? As much as possible, the staff should attempt to focus this short discussion on the choices the participants made, rather than merely having them critique the game itself. If the staff noticed anything particularly interesting, they should feel free to point this out to the party, provided they can do so without making any individuals feel criticized, etc.

As the party is leaving, the Roamers ask them not to share the details of this game with anyone else yet. They want to have other people play it later, and if everyone knows what is going on, this spoils the game!

Note: after the party is gone, the staff shouldn't forget to rearrange the blocks in the bags again! In distributing the colors, it's fine to occasionally have a block which is already in the correct bag (e.g. a yellow block in the yellow bag) or to have two matching blocks in the same bag (e.g. two yellow blocks in the red bag.) Starting out with all three of the same color blocks in the same bag doesn't work as well, as it often ends up making the challenge too easy for that Peon.

Educational goal(s): to force the party to develop and use alternative methods of communication. to allow the party to practice teamwork and cooperation

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the three cloth sacks, each with three blocks inside

the Grab-Bag Storytelling Challenge

Activity: A number of the Roamers – Esmerelda, Tinker Bill, Mila and Quinoa – will be sharing this challenge; they don't all need to be present to do the activity.

Tinker Bill keeps a bag of his very special treasures that he's collected. (If Tinker Bill isn't in the camp at that time, he should make sure he leaves his box of items somewhere where the others can find it!) The Roamers encourage one of the participants to reach into the box and pull out three items. That person then must tell a story that features the three things in some way. (Many of the items in the bag have many different possibilities for stories. For instance, there is a brass bell shaped like an old woman. The participant could tell a story about a bell, or a story about an old woman, or a story about an old woman who was turned into brass, etc. There is a mirror in the bag, so a participant could tell a story about a mirror, or about anything they see reflected in the mirror, etc.)

The point is not to have the participants tell an elaborate or wonderful story, but merely to have fun with inventing a story that combines disparate elements.

After 2-3 minutes of the story (which the Roamers should enjoy very much, no matter how good it is) the Roamers will have a different participant reach into the bag and pull out a fourth item. That participant needs to then continue the original story, adding their own element into it somehow. (i.e. "...and then one day, the old woman went out for a walk. In the woods, she came upon a beautiful lake, so clear and pure that it reflected the sky just like a mirror. While she was looking into it...etc. etc. etc.)

If other participants want to draw an item from the bag and join it, the Roamers should let them, although they should be careful to stop this activity before it becomes tiresome for the party.

Educational Goal(s): to allow the party practice being creative within given constraints. To exercise the party's ability at working collaboratively and building on another person's foundation.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: Tinker Bill's box of treasures

Kemma Runereader -- Eileen Christiansen

Age: 50

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

A description of the Rune-reading Challenge appears on page 304.

Glendeep

Approximately when: Friday (Kemma Runereader is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they don't, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: Kemma Runereader tells the party that it's so funny that they ask about a Ritual of Reclamation.

She'd never heard of one until this morning, but she was talking with her old friend Obsidian and he happened to mention one. Obsidian also didn't know terribly much about the ritual, but he wrote down what he does know. The party is welcome to take Obsidian's note, which reads as follows:

K.R. – Here's that rite we were talking about. Can't think what you'd actually use it for, but of course there's plenty I don't know about. Best of luck to any poor sap who actually decides to try it, since the list of ritual components is a mile long.

Ritual of Reclamation (Seasons forbid anyone name these damn things something monosyllabic.)

Gather together:

- a rose-quartz orb*
- a revels cup*
- a brimstone egg*
- a viper's-eye pendant*
- a ghost key (whatever the hell that is)*
- a quantity of folly dust*
- devil's-fire whiskey (these old school ritual-writers were soused half the time, I think)*
- a spring tambourine*
- a shadow ward*

As if acquiring all that wasn't already a big enough pain in the ass, the first step of the ritual is "place the shadow ward on someone and wait at least one year, and preferably five years or longer." So I hope the sap doing the ritual isn't in any sort of hurry.

Once you're ready to begin (if you haven't already died of old age) gather together seven people: the one who's got the shadow ward on, plus six others. None of them need to be keepers, though it doesn't hurt if they are.

Pour the devil's-fire into your revel's cup; have one person carry the cup. Have another one hold the rose-quartz, another the brimstone egg, another the ghost key, another the folly dust. Put the viper's-eye pendant on another. Give the tambourine to the person with the shadow ward.

Start your ritual in holy ground BUT (more pain in the ass) NOT the holy ground where you'll complete the ritual. Here in World's Edge, I'd choose Fern Grotto, for reasons that'll be clear in a minute.

All together, the seven people speak these words: "The bound shall be free. The weak shall be strong. The lost shall be found." Then they form a line with the ward-wearer first. She shakes the tambourine while the whole group walks to holy ground. (See, if you took my advice and started in the Grotto, you only have to listen to the damn tambourine while you walk to the Shrine of AllSeasons. You're welcome.)

No one but the ward-wearer may speak. As they enter the holy ground, she alone repeats the words: "The bound shall be free. The weak shall be strong. The lost shall be found."

And then presto, I guess, the ward-wearer can do... something? Find a lost thing, presumably? It better be something really great, if you've spent "preferably five years or longer" getting ready for the ritual. But hey, what do I know?

Anyway, good seeing you again. Tell Wayseeker that if he leads you off any cliffs, he'll have me to answer to. – O.

Runereader tells the party that she has a few ideas of where they might get some of the ritual components mentioned in Obsidian's note. She encourages the party to write these people's names directly on the note, so that they can remember later. She knows she never remembers *anything* unless she writes it down!

- rose-quartz orb – Kazmira
- revels cup – Poppy Golden
- brimstone egg – Karla Smirch
- viper’s-eye pendant – Edwin Davies
- devil’s-fire whiskey – Bane
- spring tambourine – Mick Peacock
- shadow ward – Pansy Golden

Runereader apologizes, but she’s never heard of a ghost key and she doesn’t have any idea who might have one.

As for folly dust, Runereader says she’s not really sure what to tell them about that. There’s a very old expression; probably no one ever says it anymore. But people used to say “Scarce as folly dust in the mind of a madman.” It meant something that you had much too much of, something that wasn’t scarce at all. Runereader hasn’t heard anyone say it in years, and it never occurred to her that folly dust might be a real substance. She’s not sure what to suggest to the party about getting any.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the note from Obsidian listing the items they’ll need to find

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kemma Runereader tells the party about an interaction she just had with Dorito. Runereader tells the party that she’s a bit concerned about Kira, hoping she’s truly opening herself to the message of Walking the Path. She’s a bit concerned and, if she’s truly honest, she’s frustrated a little about it. She’d thought she was doing a good job of hiding the frustration, letting the rest of the Makai see her concern but hiding the more negative part of it. Runereader tells the party that Dorito had stopped up to see the Makai just briefly but after she’d been around for just a few minutes, she’d said something about Runereader being pissed off. Runereader had contradicted her, which had only made Dorito laugh. Dorito told her “You’re pissed off, at least a little, at that kid. And you’re pissed off at yourself about it. And now you’re pissed off at me for noticing.” Runereader tells the party that she had to laugh, because that was about the truest assessment she’d ever heard, and it had taken this odd little woman dressed in black leather to say it.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito’s, see page 105 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Runereader tells the party that she makes a practice of reading the runes more often when they are in an unfamiliar place, such as this visit to World’s Edge. She tells the party that, strangely, she has repeatedly pulled the same runes from her bag: first the dragon rune, then the jewel, and then, surprisingly, the dragon again. It is unusual to receive the same rune twice in a reading, and yet this has happened three times now. Runereader tells the party that the dragon often signifies danger or a threat of some sort, so it was worrisome to see it appear doubled. Each time this has happened, she says, she has responded the same way: by spreading all the runes out on the ground, waving her hands and chanting a series of nonsense syllables. Runereader explains that the Makai have no hex - what the Lyrians call magic - among them, but not everyone knows that. Maybe if there is danger threatening them, she thinks, perhaps it will be scared away by the idea that she is going to use some powerful hex. Runereader has no idea if this might work or not, but it was all she could think to try.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder’s, see page 76 for the whole story

Kira -- Kelsey Schultz

Age: 21

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Elsewhich

Approximately when: Friday night (Kira is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: Kira is delighted to bring the party out to Kerrick Dealbinder.

Before leaving, Kira needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at the Makai camp, although there is one not too far away if needed. If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should probably do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Elsewhich. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Kira should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Unlike the other 3rd Friday encounters, this is a case where Kira should stay at the set location after delivering the party, to ensure that they'll remember her when they need her on Sunday morning.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Although there's no specific information Kira needs to convey, we do want the party to like her, since the emotional bond they make with her will really sell their party-path ending. Kira doesn't mention anything about this, of course, but she should be friendly and interested in them.

Item(s) to give this party: none

P'loa

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: ashes of a lightning-struck oak

Glendeep

When to approach a party: at some point when Carmina Bordeaux is not nearby and this charge is NOT being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kira tells the party that most of the people she's met since coming to World's Edge have been so nice! She confesses that he wasn't sure it would be this way, because the very first person the Makai encountered when they came down to the tavern was Carmina Bordeaux. Kira tells the party that she and her grandmother were just outside the tavern. Her grandmother was checking to make certain the tavern was open - Kira admits that this meant they

were standing blocking the door, although it was only for a minute - when Carmina Bordeaux arrived. Her grandmother turned to say hello, but Carmina took one look at them and said "Move!" Kira tells the party that she was very surprised by this, because among the Makai no one would say this without saying "please" or "excuse me" unless it was a true emergency. It did not appear to be an emergency with Carmina Bordeaux. Kira tells the party that she and Woundtender jumped out of the way, but that she was left worrying that all Lyrians spoke like this. That does not appear to be the case, Kira says. No doubt Carmina Bordeaux is a very important person, but she still thinks that perhaps she could say "please" instead of simply giving orders.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kira tells the party that she has known Kerrick Dealbinder her entire life and knows him to be a good person. Once, back when Kira was a little kid, she had a squirrel named Smoky she thought was a pet. She now understands that the squirrel was actually probably a collection of squirrels, all of whom would eat nuts out of the hands of a dumb little kid, but at the time she was very attached to Smoky. Kira tells the party she was heartbroken when she saw a coyote with a squirrel in its mouth and she'd gone crying to the nearest grownup, who happened to be Dealbinder. Dealbinder could have just laughed at her, but he hadn't. Instead he'd taken Kira into a clearing and sat real quiet with her until a squirrel happened by. Kira had been so relieved to see that Smoky was all right! She tells the party that, again, she now knows most squirrels look a lot alike, but it was a kind thing that Dealbinder had done, giving up his morning to make a little kid feel better about her non-pet. Kira then tells the party that this story Dealbinder has, of finding a crown in a box out in the woods? Sounds super fake. Kira is sure it's probably real, because Dealbinder is a very good guy. But it sounds really fake.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Elsewhich, again

Time: 10am Sunday (Kira is the final step on the party's party path / Teknos is present for this scene as well)

Where: Kira will be hanging out in/near the tavern so that she's findable when the party (hopefully) comes looking for her. (She can't be in the Makai Camp because that'll put her in the way of several other parties.) Kira will accompany them to Winterhill Clearing (led by Teknos) to perform the ritual there.

Signal to appear: According to the letter Dealbinder gave them, the party's ritual must be performed by somebody who "has magic within, but who knows it not." Hopefully the party remembers this fact! If they don't, their Companion and/or Teknos can nudge them mentally until they do.

Assuming the party does remember they need this person, they will hopefully interpret their keeper's Sunday morning vision correctly and will know that Kira is the person they need. When the party tells Kira about this, she laughs. There are no Makai casters, she says. She is going to be a Cliffscaler, so they must be mistaken about their vision. Hopefully the party will keep insisting that they are right!

Kira finally decides that it is polite to at least try to help with the ritual. She is clearly nervous about this. She has no experience with 'hex' of any kind, and taking part in this strange Lyrian ritual is frightening to her. Ultimately, though, she does it.

Activity/Info: To perform the ritual, the party needs to put the golden laceleaf pendant on Kira. Other ritual items are placed gently into the large container of Elsewhichian wine. Everyone present must then gather round, as the magical heliotrope candle is lit, and the Ritual Words spoken three times.

If the party suggests that they take the bucket elsewhere, Teknos discourages this. The ritual must be done right now, in Winterhill Clearing. (In reality, this is because the bucket is really heavy, and carrying it around will make it totally evident that there's something else in it besides "wine".)

Just before the party begins speaking the ritual words, Kira takes the dented old cup from them. She is still very nervous. At best, she says, the ritual will fail and the Lyrians will be disappointed. At worst, something will go horribly wrong.

Frightened though she is, Kira submerges the dingy old cup in the wine and scrubs it well with her hands. When the party finishes reciting the ritual words, Kira hesitantly pulls out... the other chalice that has been hidden at the bottom of the bucket. This chalice is a thing of beauty – shining silver with grapes carved into the sides. When she removes it from the bucket, Kira stares dumbfounded at what she has done.

After the above scene is completed, the party will (hopefully) spend a little bit of time being impressed by the "magically transformed" chalice and congratulating Kira on the good job she did, etc. The party may talk about taking her back to Elsewhich to study magic or whatever; Kira can just play along with this. She is still in awe and still frightened of the mysterious force of magic, but she is clearly also starting to get excited and intrigued. If she can manage to draw the party into supporting her – convincing her that becoming a Cliffscaler merely because she is not afraid of it is perhaps not the best path for her, that becoming a caster may be much scarier but also much more rewarding, etc. – that's great!

Kira tells the party that she'd really like to share this amazing news with her grandmother Kovi Woundtender who Kira thinks is probably back near the tavern. She asks the party to please come with her to help explain this remarkable thing that's happened.

Teknos tells Kira and the party that they should go. He's very excited for Kira and he's happy to clean up the wine, etc. (We don't want the party to try to do this because the old chalice is of course still in the bucket. Once the party has gone, Teknos can dump out the wine and then please bring the bucket et al back to the Basement.)

Kovi Woundtender will be back by the tavern. Hopefully this will be another satisfying scene for the party, when they get to be present when Woundtender learns this unexpected and wonderful new thing about Kira!

Teknos has another scene to do with the party after they talk to Woundtender, but once the party and Kira leaves, it shouldn't take him long to dump the wine and then bring the now-much-lighter bucket back. Once he's brought this to the Basement, he can rejoin the party out in front of the tavern to do his charge revelation scene with them

Item(s) to give the party: the magically transformed chalice (already in the bucket; Kira doesn't need to carry it anywhere)

any parties encountered (ideally 3-4 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Jpeg, Lenora Graves and Huxley are all giving out similar information from different perspectives. It's awesome if they manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if they don't.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kira tells the party that she and the rest of the Makai met Belle and Cary on Friday, shortly after the Makai set up camp in World's Edge. The couple joined them in their Cup of Insight ritual, and after that, Belle invited all the Makai to attend their wedding on Sunday. This is pretty exciting, Kira says. She's never seen a Lyrian wedding before!

Kira tells the party that she noticed the tattoo Belle has on her wrist. It says "...and ever", which didn't make all that much sense to her, honestly. Shouldn't there be... something else before that? Belle told her that she'd hoped Cary would get a "forever..." one so that they'd have complementary tattoos, but he hadn't wanted to. Kira tells the party that she doesn't understand that. She explains that, after Walking the Path of Epiphany with the rest of the Makai, she'll get her surname - Kira Cliffscaler - and take the ink. She's so excited for that, Kira tells the party, and she has a hard time understanding why Cary isn't equally excited to get a tattoo to match Belle's. There are some things about Lyrians she still doesn't understand, she says.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Big Musical Number and scene that follows it

Kovi Woundtender -- Jodi Riley

Age: 63

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Keer

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: perfect sphere of fire candle

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kovi Woundtender tells the party that illicit drugs are harder to come by among the Makai but still not unheard of. She tells them that she was talking to Danny Donovan about the subject. Danny is very open, Woundtender says, about his past drug use. White Noise is awful, she tells them. It looks so innocuous, like globs of white gum. It's highly addictive, though. Woundtender tells the party that she's not sure Danny has given himself enough credit. Using it consistently and then giving it up is very, very hard to do, and he did that. He has made some bad choices in the past and no doubt will again, just like everyone. But Danny has accomplished something very difficult. Woundtender hopes he realizes that.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kovi Woundtender tells the party that she was approached by that nice couple Huxley and Quinoa. Apparently the pair was in need of some herbs: turmeric and ginkgo biloba. Woundtender tells the party that she did in fact have the very herbs the pair were looking for, and that she was happy to share them. She tells the party that Quinoa told her they'd mix the herbs with bacteria to make something called kombucha, which they will then drink. That sounds rather awful to Woundtender, but she doesn't like to judge.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: On Sunday morning after the party has completes their party path ending (10am in Winter Hill Clearing)

Info to give the party: After Elsewhich completes their party path ending (see page 597), the party will (hopefully) spend a little bit of time being impressed by the "magically transformed" chalice and congratulating Kira on the good job she did, etc. The party may talk about taking her back to Elsewhich to study magic or whatever; Kira can just play along with this.

She is still in awe and still frightened of the mysterious force of magic, but she is clearly also starting to get excited and intrigued. If she can manage to draw the party into supporting her – convincing her that becoming a Cliffscaler merely because she is not afraid of it is perhaps not the best path for her, that becoming a caster may be much scarier but also much more rewarding, etc. – that's great!

Kira tells the party that she'd really like to share this amazing news with her grandmother Kovi Woundtender, who Kira thinks is probably back near the tavern. She asks the party to please come with her to help explain this remarkable thing that's happened.

Woundtender is indeed in front of the tavern. (She is not at the Makai camp because this would put her in the way other other parties.) Hopefully this will be another satisfying scene for the party, when they get to be present when Woundtender learns this unexpected and wonderful new thing about Kira!

Note that Teknos is cleaning up from the party path ending/returning the empty bucket to the Basement and will then rejoin the party in front of the tavern. Woundtender and Kira should try to draw out their touching scene with the party so the party doesn't wander off before Teknos is there!

Item(s) to give the party: none

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: Kovi Woundtender is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. She will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. She should check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Sunday between 11am and noon*, Woundtender approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Eugenie Bright. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Woundtender encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- There is no demon, but there *is* Edwin Davies in a demon costume.
- Edwin poisoned his mother to hasten his inheritance, and - fearful a séance would allow her to accuse him from beyond the grave - dressed up as a demon to disrupt it.
- When the wayshrines were erected, Edwin learned his aunt still had the poisoned bottle of his mother's sherry and donned his costume again in an attempt to destroy the evidence.

Above and beyond the challenges all parties face in presenting their information, Woundtender points out an unfortunate fact to the party: there isn't any actual proof against Edwin. The bag with the demon 'costume' proves *someone* impersonated a demon, but not that it was Edwin. The poisoned sherry proves someone killed Dora Davies, but again, not that it was her son. If the party wants to see Edwin punished for his crimes - and hopefully they do! - they need not just to show that he had motive and means to do this, but to actually prove it.

Probably the easiest way to do this - and clearly, we want the party to come up with an idea, not for Woundtender to suggest one! - is for the party to suggest to Edwin, during the trial, that they all drink a toast to Dora from her sherry bottle, since there isn't a reason for him to refuse this unless he knows the bottle is poisoned. (Let us ignore all the other valid reasons someone might not want sherry at 12:25pm) The party may well be able to think of another method. Regardless, what matters is that they will hopefully enter the trial with a plan to actually (more or less) prove Edwin's guilt.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Woundtender can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Woundtender can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Kyson Wayseeker -- Rich Longmore

Age: 65

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Clairia

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: featherflame herb

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kyson Wayseeker tells the party that although not all Makai adults carry weapons or achieve great proficiency in combat, all Makai children are taught basic survival skills such as how to recognize toxic plants and how to defend themselves from attacks. He confesses that he'd assumed this was true of Lyrian children as well, but that he was speaking with Angelica Sprink - who is nearly an adult, at least by Makai standards - and she'd told him she'd never learned any such thing, at least not until very recently. Wayseeker says that when he replied that he was glad her parents were now teaching her these things, Angelica had laughed. It is a friend of hers who's doing the teaching, she'd said, not her parents at all. This is not really any of Wayseeker's business, but still, better late than never, he supposes.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Wayseeker tells the party that this is not his first trip to World's Edge, but that it is the most unsettling of the visits. He explains that he routinely scouts the perimeter of the encampment, just as he does anywhere. Multiple times since arriving in town, he has found boot prints outside the clearing. There are always two distinctly different sets of prints. Wayseeker tells the party that this is strange and worrisome. Why would anyone be watching the Makai? He tells the party that he has set multiple snares which will rain down stones or branches on anyone approaching the clearing but not on the path. Several of the snares have tripped already. Wayseeker is hoping this is enough to deter whoever is watching them.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Kerrick Dealbinder -- Greg Rothauser

Age: 51

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Elsewhich

Approximately when: Friday (Dealbinder is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they don't, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: As a matter of fact, Dealbinder does know a story about a magical healing cup.

Dealbinder says that, several months ago, a peddler came traveling through the Makai homeground. This is an unusual event, and Dealbinder spoke at length with the man. The peddler ended up staying with the Makai for several days. At the end of the visit, the peddler said that he wanted to give them a present in appreciation for their hospitality, and gave them a not-very-impressive gift, a cup from Elsewhich that he claimed had tremendous healing powers. The cup was old and tarnished and dented. The Makai do not have any casters among their number, Dealbinder says, and he understands little about hex, as the Makai call magic. Even so, he was pretty certain that this cup was just an old piece of trash.

The peddler also gave Dealbinder a letter explaining how to use the cup; he gives the letter to the party now:

Honored Mr. Dealbinder and other Makai friends:

As I said, this remarkable cup confers the most wondrous of healing powers. Remember, however, that the astounding potency of its magic cannot be made manifest without a specific collection of components and a carefully-conducted ritual. As I give you this cup in repayment for your unsurpassed hospitality (and that delicious cider!) I will include that list of components, along with the concise directions for the ritual, herewith:

- a golden laceleaf pendant*
- fine Elsewhichian wine (a great quantity thereof!)*
- a heliotrope candle*
- a small quantity of folly dust*
- the Magic Cup itself (of course!)*
- doveroot seeds*
- an amethyst sphere*
- cat's-eye jewelbox*
- gospel weed*

Lastly but perhaps most important, you must find someone who has magic within, but knows it not. The pendant is worn by that individual.

The doveroot seeds, amethyst sphere, cat's-eye jewelbox, gospel weed, and the folly dust are placed gently (no splashing!) in a large container of Elsewhichian wine. Everyone present must then gather round, as the heliotrope candle is lit, and the Ritual Words spoken three times. The Ritual Words are as follows:

Let us now this magic do. Let these words be spoken true. When this cleansing rite is through, let this Cup be made anew.

While everyone is speaking the person wearing the pendant must then wash the Cup in the enchanted wine. This ritual will release the healing magic in the Cup. The next person to drink from the Cup will be healed of all illness!

Mark my words: this is a splendidly robust enchantment, and one that you should be loathe to forget. Commit the list to memory, or else be sure to keep this written account safe! You shall forevermore be glad you did.

In your lifelong service,

Dartmoor, Wandering Merchandiser

Dealbinder says that, when they started their journey back toward World's Edge, he brought the letter and the cup with him, in hopes that perhaps someone in the town would want it. He says that most people here didn't believe the old cup could have much value, but he did locate a gentleman by the name of Danny who seemed delighted to take the cup off Dealbinder's hands.

Dealbinder tells the party that he has some idea where they might acquire some of the items they need. He strongly advises the party to write the names down directly on the letter; he personally finds that he can no longer remember anything if he doesn't write it down.

- Elsewhichian wine – Teknos
- heliotrope candle – Pearl Bryce
- magic cup – Danny Donovan (as previously mentioned)
- doveroot seeds – Samuelson
- amethyst sphere – Mila
- cat's-eye jewelbox – Donna Peacock
- gospel weed – Fenwick Michaels

Dealbinder tells the party that he has no idea what a golden laceleaf pendant is or where they might acquire such a thing.

As for folly dust, Dealbinder says he's not really sure what to tell them about that. There's a very old expression; probably no one ever says it anymore. But people used to say "Scarce as folly dust in the mind of a madman." It meant something that you had much too much of, something that wasn't scarce at all. Dealbinder hasn't heard anyone say it in years, and it never occurred to him that folly dust might be a real substance. He's not sure what to suggest to the party about getting any.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the letter listing the items they'll need to find

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kerrick Dealbinder tells the party that he is not one to pass along gossip, but apparently Ursula Smirch - whom Dealbinder has met on previous trading visits - is claiming some woman in town has a vendetta against her and is trying to ruin her business! The story - which sounds rather far-fetched, but who can say for sure? - is that this woman is sabotaging Ursula's business by damaging merchandise and making the Smirches' shop a generally unpleasant place. Dealbinder tells the party that he has already paid the shop a visit since arriving in town, and... Dealbinder is reluctant to mention such an unsavory detail, but... there was a pervasive odor of urine around the shop. Surely this local woman wouldn't actually resort to...? No. Dealbinder does not believe it!

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: on Sunday after their party path is complete, around 9:30am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: This scene includes a lot of staff, not all of whom are present the whole time. Explaining the sequencing is easiest if it's presented as one big encounter, so please read the whole thing to find your name. This sort of encounter will henceforth be known as a Noctaran Clusterfuck.

On Sunday after their party path is complete (around 9:30), Tanya Peacock brings the party to the Makai camp. There, they find an agitated Kerrick Dealbinder. He has captured an intruder! This intruder is currently trapped inside a *very* large cloth sack. Dealbinder is periodically poking the sack and demanding that the intruder confess, which the intruder has thus far refused to do.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

After the party presumably removes the intruder from the sack, they learn that it's Jack Johnson. This revelation should have a sort of zany, madcap feel to it in keeping with this charge, and in the beginning, all the staff present are talking at once.

Dealbinder is trying to interrogate Jack, Jack is outraged that Dealbinder captured him but is otherwise proclaiming his unwillingness to talk, and Tanya is loudly insisting that Dealbinder give her the tiara. Ideally the party will have at least some ideas about what has gone on here, but even if they understand little, we hope they will take control of the scene and restore some semblance of order! Eventually, lead as much by the party as possible, the staff can reveal the following information:

- “Jack Johnson” isn’t really a talent scout. His real name is Ethan Frank, and he’s a palace guard in Dolorón, a job he hates (and is frankly terrible at.) He has his employee ID badge with him.
- The crown Dealbinder has isn’t Tanya’s missing tiara. It’s part of the crown jewels of Lyria, and it was stolen on Ethan’s watch. He’s trying to return it before anyone else at the palace learns it’s missing.
- The crown was stolen by a ring of jewel thieves people are calling the Gilt Crew. Surprisingly, Ethan was able to track some of them down. (Ethan is, in fact, a pretty smart guy. He just can’t see well.) He knows there is a mastermind behind this heist, but not who it is. (As far as he’s concerned, that doesn’t matter; he just wants to return the crown.)
- Ethan heard rumors that the crown had been taken to World’s Edge, so he came here looking for it. He hadn’t been able to locate it... until Kerrick Dealbinder walked into the tavern wearing it.
- Ethan has been trying to steal the crown back from Dealbinder for the past several days, but every time he’s tried, he’s been thwarted. By the Makai.
- Ethan has a note in his possession and eventually shows it to the party. It was sent to one of the members of the Gilt Crew by the person who masterminded the heist. It says: *“Leave the crown in the pre-arranged drop location. Once its authenticity has been verified, your share of the proceeds will be sent to you.”* It’s signed not with a name but with a sabertooth symbol.
- It’s likely the party won’t learn all this information before being interrupted again (see below), which is fine. Still, the staff do ultimately need to convey the above info.

After the party has been interacting with Tanya Peacock/Kerrick Dealbinder/Jack Johnson for 5-10 minutes, Phineas Smirch enters the Makai camp. Phineas is oblivious to whatever drama is currently unfolding and he makes an announcement to Dealbinder: this is Dealbinder’s lucky day, because Phineas is prepared to buy the crown from him for 10 royals! That’s (Phineas thinks) 2 royals more than the crown is worth, and given that (Phineas thinks) Dealbinder stole the crown in the first place, this is pure profit for him! 30 seconds later, the KPS (Kingdom Postal Service) Guy arrives and announces he has a delivery for Tanya Peacock. Sorry he’s running late! Hopefully these additional intrusions plunge the scene back into chaos and the party can again gain control! Once they do, additional info is revealed:

- When Phineas went to bring Karla her breakfast tray, she was talking in her sleep, saying something about needing the crown. Obviously Phineas wants his little girl to be happy, which is why he’s here with this extremely generous offer for Dealbinder.
- Tanya’s package obviously contains the tiara she ordered from Tirothian Trading Company. 8 royals was probably overpaying for it. Tanya, however, is DELIGHTED by it. Once she realizes he didn’t steal her crown, Kerrick Dealbinder is her new best friend. TWINNING!
- Phineas has no idea that Karla is the mastermind behind this heist or anything else. If the party seems to have no idea about this, Phineas can casually refer to her as Fang once. Hopefully this won’t be necessary. If the party tells him about her involvement, he is proud but extremely surprised.

There are so many people involved in this scene that it’s challenging to say exactly how it will go. The staff should convey their info as best they can and be ready for whatever. If something unexpected happens, we’ll fix it afterwards.

Ultimately, Ethan won’t leave the Makai camp without the crown. He and Tanya leave the camp with the party; the remaining staff should play this by ear. Because the party is about to get attacked, it is much easier if staff are at the rear of the party or at least the middle, rather than being out in front!

As the party is leaving the Makai camp, they encounter the Hired Wolven Hit Squad. Although there aren’t terribly many Wolven in this squad, they are imposing foes. When they see the party, one of them says “They have it! Move in!” and then they engage. The Wolven put up a very good fight but are eventually killed. If the party doesn’t think to search their bodies, Tanya says “Ooh, I wonder if they have any TREASURE?” They don’t, but they do have a note, which reads: *“Half the payment is enclosed; the remainder will be placed in the usual location upon completion of the job. On Sunday morning, retrieve the crown from Starwatcher’s Hill and leave it in the drop spot. Kill anyone who stands in your way.”* It, too, is signed with the sabertooth symbol.

If the party captures and/or magically questions any member of the hit squad, the Wolven reveal that they were paid 800 royals down with the promise of 800 more upon completion. They don’t know who hired them. Their “drop spot” is a random obscure spot far out in the woods.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder’s, see page 76 for the whole story

Kora Peacekeeper -- Lynn Chiavacci

Age: 44

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Glendeep

Approximately when: Friday night (Kora Peacekeeper is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: none

Before leaving, Peacekeeper needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at the Makai camp or anywhere nearby. If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Glendeep. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Peacekeeper should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once Peacekeeper has escorted the party to the Makai camp and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, he returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: It's possible that the party may ask to stop in the Shrine of AllSeasons to see the statue of Lorelei. This is fine, although if they don't ask, Peacekeeper doesn't need to mention it.

Item(s) to give this party: none

Dolorón

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: whiteleaf sage

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kora Peacekeeper tells the party that Bracken asked her at one point if dragons were real. This surprised Peacekeeper. Dragons are only in stories, of course, and that's what she told Bracken. The boy hadn't seemed surprised by this, but he was a bit disappointed.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kora Peacekeeper tells the party that she met that nice man Milton Peacock. He was writing out a list of things he needed to do, and Peacekeeper couldn't help but noticing how fancy Milton's handwriting is. She tells the party that she'd asked him if all Lyrians had such elaborate penmanship and he'd laughed and told her no. Apparently Milton taught himself to write in a fancy way because it has more of something he called "PIAZZ." Peacekeeper tells the party that she's not sure she knows what that means, but that Lyrians are very interesting to her.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Saturday 6-8pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At 6pm, Kora Peacekeeper, Kyli Talespinner and Kullis Toolforger begin circulating among the parties. It is clear, they say, that something strange has happened in town. They speculate that the Cup of Insight ritual which they and the participants performed earlier in the day has granted them all perception enough to stay outside of whatever has happened. They tell the parties that they will hold a council in the tavern at 8pm, in hopes that something may be done to put things back as they were before.

Reason this info matters: this sets the stage for the 8pm meeting (and makes sure participants are at it!)

Kullis Toolforger -- Erhard Konerding

Age: 70

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Noctara

When to approach a party: on Friday night

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Toolforger should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Toolforger needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Toolforger doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party!

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: Kullis Toolforger is assigning this party's charge. He is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Kerrick Dealbinder. Toolforger tells the party that when the Makai arrived in town on Friday morning, they began setting up their camp site. He himself was making some repairs to their canopy, which had been ripped on their journey. Dealbinder had no specific responsibilities around the camp and had gone for a short walk. Toolforger explains that, when his friend returned, Dealbinder was sporting surprising headgear: a crown! He told the other Makai that he had found the crown in a chest hidden in the woods nearby and that he intended to wear this item from now on. Toolforger acknowledges that this seemed a rather incredible story. The Makai have heard stories that the strong magical energy in Moreth sometimes manifests treasure out of thin air, but Toolforger confesses that he never believed such things were possible... and yet it now seems these tales are true after all. Not everyone is a believer, however. A woman from town named Tanya Peacock claimed that the crown was actually hers and that, rather than finding this item in the woods, Dealbinder had stolen it from her! Toolforger tells the party that this accusation is both upsetting and worrisome. Although the Makai are not Lyrian citizens, they have always had a good relationship with the people of World's Edge. He tells the party that he is very concerned for his good friend Kerrick Dealbinder, who he knows is not a thief. What's more, he is afraid that if this accusation is not shown to be false, it will damage the trust the townspeople have in the Makai. Toolforger tells the party he wishes Dealbinder would simply give the crown to this woman, but that his friend can be stubborn at times and has refused to do so. Toolforger says that he would greatly appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against Dealbinder.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: gilded conchshell

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kullis Toolforger tells the party that it's very exciting to be here in World's Edge! He's hoping to learn as much about Lyrian culture as he can while here! Toolforger says that he heard that Milton Peacock was a real gambler and he asked Milton to teach him to play cards. He tells the party that Milton attempted to do this but that nothing Milton said made much sense to him. Toolforger thought he simply wasn't following, and Milton appeared to want to cut the lesson quite short, so he dropped the matter. He tells the party that he has since heard that Milton has very significant gambling debts. Toolforger wonders if perhaps Milton isn't a very good card player and this is why he has lost so much money?

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Saturday 6-8pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At 6pm, Kora Peacekeeper, Kyli Talespinner and Kullis Toolforger begin circulating among the parties. It is clear, they say, that something strange has happened in town. They speculate that the Cup of Insight ritual which they and the participants performed earlier in the day has granted them all perception enough to stay outside of whatever has happened. They tell the parties that they will hold a council in the tavern at 8pm, in hopes that something may be done to put things back as they were before.

Reason this info matters: this sets the stage for the 8pm meeting (and makes sure participants are at it!)

Kyli Talespinner -- Marsha Gershon

Age: 33

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Keer

Approximately when: Friday night (Kyli Talespinner is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Talespinner tells the party that it's fascinating them asking her about the Knights of the Golden Circle. Talespinner herself had never heard of them until a few days ago. Many Lyrian stories circulate among the Makai, but of course there is never an end to stories, and that isn't one Talespinner has heard before. Shaun Peacock, one of the men who sings with the Peacock Family Singers, was telling her all about them!

Shaun doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Talespinner says. She herself cannot leave at the moment, but she brings the party over to Elly Peacock and asks Elly if he would be willing to walk the party to the Peacock camp site.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Noctara

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: Talespinner tells the party that it's funny they should ask her for an amethyst obelisk. She doesn't have one... but she maybe has a reference to one.

She explains that one of the other Makai found a discarded piece of paper with a lovely poem written on it. Knowing her love of poems, they passed it on to her. The part of this that's relevant to them is that the word "amethyst" was scrawled on the paper, and there's an odd little doodle that... sort of looks like an obelisk. Talespinner tells the party that they're welcome to take the poem. She hopes it's helpful to them!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the amethyst obelisk

Arden

When to approach a party: Saturday after 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kyli Talespinner approaches the party. She tells them that she saw that young man, Bracken, drop a piece of paper. Normally she'd just have handed it right back to him, but she confesses that the paper was very strange - all black! - and that she's heard some people saying that Bracken can't be trusted. He's even been accused of a crime! Talespinner tells the party that she held onto the paper for a few minutes, working up her courage to return it to Bracken, but that by the time she was ready, she couldn't find him anywhere. She's heard that the party was looking into that crime Bracken's been charged with, and so she thought she'd give them the paper. Surely they'll know what it all means.

The paper is well-worn, and a portion of it is ripped away. It is black-on-black. At the top is the same lantern that appears on the coasters the party got at lunchtime, although without the words. Printed on the paper is the following:

To gain entry, complete the quests.

Do so and then we shall find you.

- *restore a holy relic*
- *give to those poorer than yourself*
- *rescue a damsel in distress*
- *slay*

The paper is torn away on a diagonal such that the remainder of the 4th quest line is missing.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kyli Talespinner tells the party that she's heard the story of Katherine Carmichael's attack on Vernon Gill a decade ago, and it's a sordid one. As Vernon told it to her, the attack took place in a little village in Arden. He'd been having a few drinks in a tavern there when Katherine came in. She tells the party that Vernon made a few comments to Katherine of an insulting nature. He couldn't remember the specifics; Talespinner guesses that his "few drinks" were rather more numerous than he was suggesting. From the sound of it, Katherine took great offense at the comments, and when Vernon left the tavern, she was waiting for him outside. Vernon says that Katherine called his name and when he turned to see what she wanted, she shot him, first in the forearm and then, when he was reeling in shock from the pain, shot him again just below his shoulder. The second shot knocked Vernon to the ground. Talespinner tells the party that Katherine then walked over to where Vernon lay. He told everyone he was terrified she'd shoot him again, this time fatally, but instead she brutally yanked both crossbow bolts from his body. Vernon explained that the bolts Katherine carries have her initials etched into the shafts, and that she didn't want to leave him with proof of her attack. He passed out from pain and blood loss at that time and when he regained consciousness, she was gone. Vernon Gill had been a soldier prior to the attack, but - as he told everyone in the tavern - he was no longer able to hold a sword, much less serve as a soldier. The whole thing is very upsetting, says Talespinner.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Saturday 6-8pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At 6pm, Kora Peacekeeper, Kyli Talespinner and Kullis Toolforger begin circulating among the parties. It is clear, they say, that something strange has happened in town. They speculate that the Cup of Insight ritual which they and the participants performed earlier in the day has granted them all perception enough to stay outside of whatever has happened. They tell the parties that they will hold a council in the tavern at 8pm, in hopes that something may be done to put things back as they were before.

Reason this info matters: this sets the stage for the 8pm meeting (and makes sure participants are at it!)

Kazim Firestarter -- John Nann

Age: 55

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Sythwan

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: ashes from an ancient fire

any parties encountered (ideally 2-3 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday at 4pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Kiko Truthspeaker and Kira are both giving similar info.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Firestarter tells the party that he and the rest of the Makai met Belle and Cary on Friday, shortly after the Makai set up camp in World's Edge. The couple joined them in their Cup of Insight ritual, and after that, Belle invited all the Makai to attend their wedding on Sunday. This is pretty exciting, Firestarter says. He's never seen a Lyrian wedding before!

Reason this info matters: this explains Belle & Cary's ability to know what's happened during the 4pm world change

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time on Saturday

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Firestarter tells the party that he never sleeps well in an unfamiliar place. This is mostly because he is always so excited to make breakfast that he has a hard time falling back to sleep. He explains that, twice last night, he experienced troubling dreams where someone had snuck into the encampment. Firestarter tells the party that of course this is very unlikely. The Makai have traveled to World's Edge before and have always been perfectly safe there. Still, the dreams seemed so real that when Firestarter awoke, he wasn't sure if they were dreams or reality. In fact, the first time he woke, he threw his heaviest frying pan at what was either an intruder... or possibly a shrub. Firestarter confesses that the second nightmare that woke him seemed even more real, and he flung a handful of his spiciest pepper flakes in the direction of the imaginary attacker. Firestarter admits that he should probably stop eating honeycake right before bedtime. Honestly, he is relieved that none of his fellow Makai were hit with flying cookware or spices in the middle of the night!

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Kiko Truthspeaker -- Gretchen Albright

Age: 49

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Arden

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Kiko Truthspeaker is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: Truthspeaker tells the party that she heard they were looking for locus root. She has some, and she'd be happy to let the party have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At the very end of the encounter, Truthspeaker asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Truthspeaker could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: locus root

any parties encountered (ideally 2-3 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday at 4pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Kazim Firestarter and Kira are both giving similar info.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Truthspeaker tells the party that she and the rest of the Makai met Belle and Cary on Friday, shortly after the Makai set up camp in World's Edge. The couple joined them in their Cup of Insight ritual, and after that, Belle invited all the Makai to attend their wedding on Sunday. This is pretty exciting, Truthspeaker says. She's never seen a Lyrian wedding before!

Reason this info matters: this explains Belle & Cary's ability to know what's happened during the 4pm world change

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kiko Truthspeaker tells the party that it is almost always a pleasure, having the chance to interact with Lyrians. Most people are welcoming and kind, she says. Of course, there are exceptions that prove this rule. Edwin Davies is one of those, alas. Truthspeaker says that perhaps Mr. Davies believes he is being helpful, speaking to the Makai slowly and slightly louder than he does to other Lyrians. Maybe Mr. Davies struggles to remember that they are Makai, not idiots.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Kable Worldwatcher -- Matthew Scott

Age: 49

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Makai appears on page 203.

A description of the Cup of Insight Challenge appears on page 302.

Waylon

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cup of insight challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: bloodroot essence

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kable Worldwatcher tells the party that he has heard all sorts of confusing rumors about the man who owns the Inn at World's Edge. Worldwatcher says that he understood that this man's name was Solomon Stillwater, but that some people were claiming the man was actually a notorious pirate named Jack Brigham. Worldwatcher tells the party that he was in the tavern on Friday for lunch, just after the Makai arrived in town and seemingly after Solomon himself returned from a trip. Solomon handed him a bowl of soup and Worldwatcher couldn't help but notice the tattoo on the tavernkeeper's forearm, a tattoo that clearly says "JB." Solomon noticed that Worldwatcher had seen the tattoo and had found the situation funny. Solomon told him that the JB tattoo was a reference to a former girlfriend, that these were her initials. Then, Worldwatcher tells the party, Solomon had laughed and said "Or maybe I really am Jack Brigham. Honestly, I'm starting to wonder myself."

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: Saturday after 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kable Worldwatcher approaches the party. He was helping tidy up after the ritual in Windvale, he tells the party, and while moving some unused firewood, he found something very strange. He shows it to the party: It's a canvas bag, and inside it is a small jar of green greasepaint, a few smokebombs, a ragged black tunic and a pair of platform boots. Worldwatcher tells the party that it was wedged in a hollow spot under the stage, very well-hidden. He only saw it because the fire was so bright. What could it mean?

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

the Cup of Insight Challenge

Activity: All the Makai will be sharing this challenge; all of them (or, at least, all of them who are currently in the camp and unoccupied) will be engaging in the activity with each party, regardless of who specifically the party needs an item from.

This activity works best if no other parties are standing around watching, because participants are most likely to give thoughtful answers if there isn't an audience. If another party arrives while this activity is in progress, there are several possibilities: Half of the Makai can leave the first group and do the same challenge with the second party simultaneously (after moving a little distance away so that the two groups aren't right on top of each other). Kemma Runereader can leave this activity, take the second party aside, and perform her Rune-reading Challenge with them while the first party completes this activity. Or 1 or 2 of the Makai can leave the ritual and talk quietly with the party, sharing charge information or whatever, until the ritual is done.

One of the Makai tells the party that Kira and her grandmother Kovi Woundtender are Walking the Path of Epiphany, and explain that this is a Makai rite of passage observed twice during each person's life, first when she becomes an adult and again when she becomes an elder. It is customary for two people at different junctures of life to Walk together.

During this time, the two people leave the Makai homeground, usually accompanied by a small group of other Makai, and set out on a journey. They spend some time in prayer and contemplation, asking that their future paths be shown to them. They are also expected to speak with and learn from other people, both fellow Makai and Lyrian.

For the younger person, this is often their first time seeing or speaking with Lyrians. It is important that each young Makai have a chance to see what (a small corner of) the Lyrian world is like. Then, if they so choose, they will return to the Makai homeground and "take the ink", receiving the facial tattoos that mark all adult Makai. It is also at this time that they choose the role they will play in the sect, earning their surname.

For the older person, it is an opportunity to reflect on how that role has shaped their existence, to consider what further gifts Nature intends to bestow, and what new ways they may grow and change to further serve the sect.

The Makai are a practical people and the Path of Epiphany isn't intended to be an endurance test or dangerous mission.

For this reason, the Walkers are accompanied by several other members of the sect who help ensure that they are kept safe, fed and content during their journey.

The Makai tell the party that, as part of Kira and Woundtender's Walk, they are expected to let the accumulated wisdom of those they meet make them stronger and better able to examine their own thoughts. The Makai ask if the party would be willing to help them with one such ritual, the passing of the Cup of Insight. (Theoretically, the party will say yes!)

For this ritual, everyone sits in a circle. One of the Makai asks one of the following questions, asking that all those assembled look deep into themselves and answer as truthfully as possible. They then pass around a waterskin. As each person takes hold of the waterskin, they answer the question. (When taking their seats, it's helpful if there are several Makai sitting next to each other. This way, the participants have a chance to hear other people answer before it is their turn to speak.) It doesn't matter what answers the Makai give, so long as they set a tone of respectful self-examination.

After the waterskin is passed, another of the Makai asks a different question and passes around a cup. When this too has made a circuit of the group, water from the skin is poured into the cup and this is given to Kira so that she may drink.

The ritual is then repeated for Woundtender. In total, 3 or 4 questions should be asked. (The Makai can use their judgment on this. If it seems like four questions will be too much and cause the party to lose interest, then only three need to be asked. In this case, the waterskin doesn't need to be passed a second time, just the cup.)

Different Makai can take turns "running" this ritual. It's probably best to use some of the following questions, since they're enlightening but not too intrusive. If new ones *are* made up, please be sure that they focus on personal attributes, rather than questions about a person's history (since we want this activity to focus on personalities, not on the made-up histories participants have created) and on self-examination rather than questions about partymates (since we don't want this challenge to duplicate Soul Speaking.)

- Which one of your attributes, if it were taken away from you, would mean that you weren't you any more?
- What attribute or skill that you don't currently have do you wish you could develop?
- How would your worst enemy describe you?
- What is the thing you most need to be happy? (It would be nice if at least some of the Makai answered with things like "respect" or "acknowledgement of my successes" or something, rather than just "beer!" or whatever.)
- Which of your negative attributes do you least want to pass on to your children?
- What is the attribute that you most value in the people around you?

- What attribute in someone else makes it hardest for you to get along with him or her?

We're hoping that, as in the past, some of the participants will learn a little bit more about themselves and their partymates from this activity. To help further that end, the Makai don't need to (and, in fact, probably shouldn't) go out of their way to "answer as their characters". In other words, to answer "what skill would you like to develop", the Makai doesn't need to answer "I'd like to be able to shoot a Worlog with an arrow from 200 yards away" (although he can if he wants to.) He probably shouldn't answer with "I'd like to learn more Java-based programming commands", but instead give an answer like "I'd like to get better at managing my temper", which could apply to either the character or the staffer playing it.

Note: In the past, Companions sometimes participated in this ritual, as did other staff. To work with the plot-device in which this ritual is the thing which makes people cognizant of the change in the world, all Companions MUST participate in this ritual but other staff characters MUST NOT. (Other staff can visit the Makai camp, but not do the ritual.)

Educational goal(s): to let participants learn more about their partymates. to encourage self-reflection among the party

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the waterskin full of water and the cup

the Rune-reading Challenge

Activity: Although Kemma Runereader will be participating in the Cup of Insight challenge along with the rest of the Makai, she also has her own challenge. She can do this challenge with any parties that visit the Makai campsite, assuming there is time and interest. In particular, this activity may prove useful if a second party arrives while the first is still doing the Insight challenge. It's not critical that this challenge be done with all parties, and it's certainly not worth making the parties feel rushed or anything.

Assuming there *is* time for this activity, Runereader instructs the party to 'ask the runes' a question on which they need guidance. (Most parties ask either about their party's overall mission. Whatever they ask is okay, although open-ended questions work better than yes-no questions.)

Runereader repeats the question aloud while she lays the runes out, face down, on the earth in front of her. She then asks two participants to each choose one rune; she then turns these over to reveal the pictures on them.

The runes that Kemma Runereader has are as follows: dragon, falcon, sun, star, snowflake, moon, jewel, lightning, acorn, mountain, road, bridge, swan, rain, candle-flame, house, owl, and rainbow.

Runereader stares thoughtfully at the uncovered runes and asks the party what they think these might mean with regard to their question. With every answer they give, she nods her head cryptically and says "yes, yes, perhaps." She keeps pushing them to consider other meanings of the runes, supplying potential meanings herself if the party cannot think of any. For instance, the rainbow might refer to joy that comes after sorrow, or something that is multi-colored, or something ephemeral, or something shaped like a rainbow, such as an arch or a bow-and-arrows, etc. When these possible meanings are combined in different ways with the meanings of the other rune, the possibilities are endless.

Runereader encourages the party to remember the runes. She cannot tell them what the runes' answer is, but she assures them that, if they remember the runes' message, the answer will be revealed to them soon enough.

If she is able, it would be great if Runereader could record the party's question and the two runes they drew. If she can, we will try to have the question answered in some cool way later in the weekend!

Educational goal(s): to ponder an open-ended question.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the runes

Phineas Smirch -- Bob Coury

Age: 55

Usually found: in the Smirches' shop

A description of the Smirch & Smirch Jingle Challenge appears on page 316.

any parties encountered (as many as possible)

When to approach a party: Friday in the tavern, ideally when the party isn't directly engaged / not immediately after they arrive

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: Phineas tells the party that Smirch & Smirch (Purveyors of Goods Diverse & Marvelous!) is open tomorrow to fulfill all their adventure merchandising needs! He gives them a card listing the hours and info.

Item(s) to give this party: the card listing the hours/info about Smirch & Smirch

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the Smirch & Smirch jingle-writing challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: love potion in a fancy bottle

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Phineas tells the party that it's patently obvious why Bracken has been sniffing around Angelica Sprink. Phineas says Bracken is a thug and a menace, and the sooner he's locked up for harassing that girl, the better. Some people are just born bad, Phineas says. Born. Bad.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Phineas tells the party that the Smirches are being harassed by Evelyn, with the obvious goal of destroying their business. Evelyn is threatened by Ursula's beauty and keen mind, Phineas tells the party, and her jealous rivalry with Ursula is costing his family a great deal of money... money Evelyn will soon be made to reimburse! One of Evelyn's actions has been to crush several shipping containers that have been delivered to the Smirches. Much of the merchandise inside has been crumpled and ruined, and since the Smirches obviously only sell merchandise of the highest quality, all of these goods have needed to be discarded. Phineas tells the party that the shipping company assured him that these containers were delivered in pristine condition - Phineas has never known a shipping company to be less than truthful in matters of this sort! - but that several boxes were so collapsed and buckled that Evelyn must have climbed atop them. This is a very disturbing image, Phineas says. Evelyn has a real problem and the sooner she is made to pay up, the better! *If and only if the party asks if there is*

any witness or proof that Evelyn did this, Phineas says that there is not, but that Evelyn has a vendetta against Ursula and that this is obviously Evelyn's work.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Phineas tells the party that that girl Quinoa, Lord Huxley's girlfriend, came looking for him a little while earlier. Apparently Quinoa was looking for something she called yo-gah pants. Phineas says that Smirch & Smirch doesn't normally stock any merchandise that sounds Tirothi, which yo-gah certainly does, but that in this case, the shop did actually carry the pants. Phineas points out that the pants were very luxurious and finely-woven, and thus obviously extremely costly. And yet, just thinking about how Baron Albert Huxley is such a powerful man, he was only too happy to give the yo-gah pants to an enterprising young person like Quinoa free of charge.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: if he's able to find the party again later on Saturday

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Phineas tells the party that he recently heard that apparently the people passing themselves off as "Huxley" and "Quinoa" are actually thieves who steal the identities of reputable citizens! This is outrageous! He graciously provided them with assistance, only now to learn that they have misrepresented themselves to him. Scandalous!

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: on Sunday after their party path is complete, around 9:30am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: This scene includes a lot of staff, not all of whom are present the whole time. Explaining the sequencing is easiest if it's presented as one big encounter, so please read the whole thing to find your name. This sort of encounter will henceforth be known as a Noctaran Clusterfuck.

On Sunday after their party path is complete (around 9:30), Tanya Peacock brings the party to the Makai camp. There, they find an agitated Kerrick Dealbinder. He has captured an intruder! This intruder is currently trapped inside a *very* large cloth sack. Dealbinder is periodically poking the sack and demanding that the intruder confess, which the intruder has thus far refused to do.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

After the party presumably removes the intruder from the sack, they learn that it's Jack Johnson. This revelation should have a sort of zany, madcap feel to it in keeping with this charge, and in the beginning, all the staff present are talking at once. Dealbinder is trying to interrogate Jack, Jack is outraged that Dealbinder captured him but is otherwise proclaiming his unwillingness to talk, and Tanya is loudly insisting that Dealbinder give her the tiara. Ideally the party will have at least some ideas about what has gone on here, but even if they understand little, we hope they will take control of the scene and restore some semblance of order! Eventually, lead as much by the party as possible, the staff can reveal the following information:

- "Jack Johnson" isn't really a talent scout. His real name is Ethan Frank, and he's a palace guard in Dolorón, a job he hates (and is frankly terrible at.) He has his employee ID badge with him.

- The crown Dealbinder has isn't Tanya's missing tiara. It's part of the crown jewels of Lyria, and it was stolen on Ethan's watch. He's trying to return it before anyone else at the palace learns it's missing.
- The crown was stolen by a ring of jewel thieves people are calling the Gilt Crew. Surprisingly, Ethan was able to track some of them down. (Ethan is, in fact, a pretty smart guy. He just can't see well.) He knows there is a mastermind behind this heist, but not who it is. (As far as he's concerned, that doesn't matter; he just wants to return the crown.)
- Ethan heard rumors that the crown had been taken to World's Edge, so he came here looking for it. He hadn't been able to locate it... until Kerrick Dealbinder walked into the tavern wearing it.
- Ethan has been trying to steal the crown back from Dealbinder for the past several days, but every time he's tried, he's been thwarted. By the Makai.
- Ethan has a note in his possession and eventually shows it to the party. It was sent to one of the members of the Gilt Crew by the person who masterminded the heist. It says: "*Leave the crown in the pre-arranged drop location. Once its authenticity has been verified, your share of the proceeds will be sent to you.*" It's signed not with a name but with a sabertooth symbol.
- It's likely the party won't learn all this information before being interrupted again (see below), which is fine. Still, the staff do ultimately need to convey the above info.

After the party has been interacting with Tanya Peacock/Kerrick Dealbinder/Jack Johnson for 5-10 minutes, Phineas Smirch enters the Makai camp. Phineas is oblivious to whatever drama is currently unfolding and he makes an announcement to Dealbinder: this is Dealbinder's lucky day, because Phineas is prepared to buy the crown from him for 10 royals! That's (Phineas thinks) 2 royals more than the crown is worth, and given that (Phineas thinks) Dealbinder stole the crown in the first place, this is pure profit for him! 30 seconds later, the KPS (Kingdom Postal Service) Guy arrives and announces he has a delivery for Tanya Peacock. Sorry he's running late! Hopefully these additional intrusions plunge the scene back into chaos and the party can again gain control! Once they do, additional info is revealed:

- When Phineas went to bring Karla her breakfast tray, she was talking in her sleep, saying something about needing the crown. Obviously Phineas wants his little girl to be happy, which is why he's here with this extremely generous offer for Dealbinder.
- Tanya's package obviously contains the tiara she ordered from Tirothian Trading Company. 8 royals was probably overpaying for it. Tanya, however, is DELIGHTED by it. Once she realizes he didn't steal her crown, Kerrick Dealbinder is her new best friend. TWINNING!
- Phineas has no idea that Karla is the mastermind behind this heist or anything else. If the party seems to have no idea about this, Phineas can casually refer to her as Fang once. Hopefully this won't be necessary. If the party tells him about her involvement, he is proud but extremely surprised.

There are so many people involved in this scene that it's challenging to say exactly how it will go. The staff should convey their info as best they can and be ready for whatever. If something unexpected happens, we'll fix it afterwards.

Ultimately, Ethan won't leave the Makai camp without the crown. He and Tanya leave the camp with the party; the remaining staff should play this by ear. Because the party is about to get attacked, it is much easier if staff are at the rear of the party or at least the middle, rather than being out in front!

As the party is leaving the Makai camp, they encounter the Hired Wolven Hit Squad. Although there aren't terribly many Wolven in this squad, they are imposing foes. When they see the party, one of them says "They have it! Move in!" and then they engage. The Wolven put up a very good fight but are eventually killed. If the party doesn't think to search their bodies, Tanya says "Ooh, I wonder if they have any TREASURE?" They don't, but they *do* have a note, which reads: "*Half the payment is enclosed; the remainder will be placed in the usual location upon completion of the job. On Sunday morning, retrieve the crown from Starwatcher's Hill and leave it in the drop spot. Kill anyone who stands in your way.*" It, too, is signed with the sabertooth symbol.

If the party captures and/or magically questions any member of the hit squad, the Wolven reveal that they were paid 800 royals down with the promise of 800 more upon completion. They don't know who hired them. Their "drop spot" is a random obscure spot far out in the woods.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Ursula Smirch -- Ana Quintana

Age: 54

Usually found: in the Smirches' shop

Secret Info:

(No one but Ursula knows this, including her husband and children.) Ursula has a magic pendant she wears under her blouse that renders her invulnerable to any truth spell or prayer. This item – combined with her strong business sense and complete lack of conscience – is responsible for all of Ursula's success and power. Being able to lie with impunity, knowing she will not be caught, means that Ursula can spy, blackmail... virtually every unscrupulous scheme imaginable has been executed by her at some point or another.

While living in Waylon, she sold secret plans to a gang of outlaw casters. (Duke Orion's letter on page 626 explains this situation completely accurately.)

There are hundreds of other nefarious deeds that could be listed here. One worth noting is that, several years ago, she purchased a stolen item: the Crown of St. Mora, a holy relic that was stolen from the cathedral in Mystal. The Crown doesn't confer any sort of power or prestige on Ursula; she purchased it just because she could. Maddeningly, two weeks ago, it was stolen from her. Later that day, it was left anonymously at the door to the Valerius house, where Santiago Valerius, a keeper of Summer, announced his plan to return it to the cathedral once the Rites are over.

Ursula has no idea who was responsible for this heinous crime. It is outrageous and galling that she is unable to press charges in this matter solely because the Crown was already technically stolen property. The injustice of this is adding one more irritant to Ursula's robust collection of grievances.

A description of the Smirch & Smirch Jingle Challenge appears on page 316.

Arden

Approximately when: Friday night (Ursula Smirch is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Ursula asks the party all about their mission. She's never heard of a Sconce of the Wood but she assures the party that if she acquires one, she will let them know immediately. The party won't find higher quality merchandise at more reasonable prices anywhere else in town than at Smirch & Smirch!

When Ursula gets the party to mention a Ritual of Location, she tells them *that* is something she has indeed heard of! Ursula's not actually familiar with it herself, but Isaiah Cooke, that man who works in the Baron's house - said something to Ursula about it just the other day. Ursula confesses that she wasn't actually listening terribly hard because Isaiah is tedious and self-important, but still, she's quite certain he mentioned something about the ritual.

Isaiah doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Ursula says. She herself cannot leave at the moment because she has a great deal of extremely important business to attend to, but she brings the party over to Nix Valerius, and asks her if she would be willing to walk the party to the Valerius house. Ursula wishes the party much luck in World's Edge and reminds them that Smirch & Smirch will be open tomorrow for all their adventuring needs.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Sythwan

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the Smirch & Smirch jingle-writing challenge

Info to give the party directly: Ursula tells the party that yes, she has a filigree'd mule pendant. Phineas gave it to her for their anniversary. And sure enough, every time she looks at it, the ass reminds her of Phineas.

The party is welcome to it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: filigree'd mule pendant

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Ursula tells the party that she is being harassed by Evelyn, with the obvious goal of destroying Ursula's business. This will be unsuccessful, Ursula assures the party, but it is still costing her a great deal of money... money Evelyn will soon be made to reimburse! So desperate is Evelyn to damage Ursula that Evelyn has resorted to *leaving bloody animal carcasses outside Ursula's door!* Ursula tells the party that there was some sort of revolting mess there a few days ago, some sort of possum or mole or whatever. Nauseating! And last week, Evelyn left some other dismembered creature - Ursula has no idea what it was; she made Phineas remove it immediately - directly in the pathway. This is truly appalling, Ursula says. Evelyn is a deeply disturbed individual, and in addition to compensating Ursula for all this lost revenue, she needs to be locked away for everyone's safety. Mostly Ursula's. *If and only if the party asks if there is any witness or proof that Evelyn did this,* Ursula says that there is not, but that Evelyn has a vendetta against Ursula and that this is obviously Evelyn's work.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Ursula tells the party about an outrageous crime that was perpetrated against her one month ago. She'd left Phineas in the shop, but at some point the nincompoop had gone to use the bathroom without bothering to stow the cashbox safely away. According to him, when he returned, 150 royals had been stolen! In the cashbox, there was a painting of Ursula herself. Ursula tells the party that as soon as she saw that painting, she knew that the theft was Aesthetika's doing. The picture was clearly her way of thumbing her nose at Ursula, showing off that she could take whatever she wanted from the shop with impunity. The cheek! The sheer brazen nerve of that woman! The painting itself is attractive enough - Ursula acknowledges that she is a fine-looking woman - but art is no substitute for money, especially not money that is rightfully Ursula's. Ursula tells the party that she intends to see Aesthetika prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time this charge is not being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Ursula tells the party a little bit about her beautiful daughter Karla. Ursula gushes about her perfect little princess and at some point in this, she casually refers to Karla as Fang. This, she explains off-handedly to the party, was Karla's childhood nickname among their family members. "She was a biter," says Ursula affectionately, by way of explanation.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Waylon

Time: 9:45 am Sunday (Ursula is the final step on Waylon's party path.)

Where: in the Smirches' shop

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Activity/Direct info: By the time the party approaches Ursula in her shop, they will already have performed a ritual of Testimony on a bottle of elderberry wine they have. The ritual works as follows: the intended target must be the first person to drink the magic wine from the special magical skull cup. Once she does, she is magically compelled to speak the complete and whole truth at all times for the rest of her life.

The party must find some way to get Ursula to drink the wine from the magic cup. Although Ursula has no idea that the ritual of Testimony has taken place, she is of course a naturally suspicious and distrusting person. She should only drink the wine after the party has figured out some clever way to make her do so!

If the party does a very bad job the first time they try this (i.e. if they just walk into the shop and say "Hey, we want you to drink this special wine from this special cup but we won't tell you why", Ursula should refuse and should busy herself attending to other matters in the shop. If she pays too much attention to this bizarre (and clearly suspicious) request, then there's going to be no way the party will ever be able to eventually trick her.

Once the party does manage to trick Ursula into drinking the enchanted wine, she is compelled to speak the complete truth (i.e. not only can she not lie, but she must speak all the truth she knows.) Ursula confesses that she was indeed responsible for the treachery with the Waylonian Casters' Guild, that she has a magic pendant which allowed her to lie even under the Waylonian court's truth spells. And she's been overcharging several people in town on their mortgage payments. And when people sell potion bottles back to the shop, she refills them without washing them first. Etc. Etc.

(Ursula may want to prepare a list of things to confess in advance so that she doesn't have to make everything up on the spot.)

Note: Now that we have moved this penultimate step/party path ending earlier, it is entirely possible that Ursula may have two hours or more with the party, which is a long time to spew information at them. If Ursula needs a break from this, she should give the party's Companion a sign to suggest the party drop Ursula off with the bailiff or some other authority figure. If Ursula elects to stay with the party the whole time, this is fine, but in this case Ursula should use her judgment with when and how loudly she is revealing truths. She is certainly quiet during any charge Revelation scenes that follow, as well as during the trial.

Karmin Smirch -- Dave Kamin

Age: 30

Usually found: in the Smirches' shop

A description of the Smirch & Smirch Jingle Challenge appears on page 316.

Arden

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the Smirch & Smirch jingle challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riverglass jewelbox

Dolorón

When to approach a party:

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Karmin tells the party that he's obviously never read any of those Kit Carnage books. His sister Karla did, when she was very young. How stupid does a person have to be, Karmin asks the party rhetorically, to write a series of books where she shoots people with a crossbow and then to act surprised when she gets arrested for *shooting someone with a crossbow*? At the same time, he says, he supposes any person with half a brain would be writing books for *adults*. Or would, better yet, have a real job.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Karmin tells the party that the Smirches are being harassed by Evelyn, with the obvious goal of destroying their business. This will be unsuccessful, Karmin assures the party, but it is still costing his family a great deal of money... money Evelyn will soon be made to reimburse! One of Evelyn's actions has been to knock merchandise - the more fragile and costly the better! - from the Smirches outdoor shelving units. Many of these items have become dirty or have broken, and since the Smirches obviously only sell merchandise of the highest quality, all of these goods have needed to be discarded. Karmin tells the party that he himself found multiple items that had been knocked to the ground - clearly deliberately! - and had to have his father fetch a broom to clean up the mess. Karmin is a very busy person and doesn't have time for this nonsense! Evelyn is a monster and the sooner she is made to pay up, the better! *If and only if the party asks if there is any witness or proof that Evelyn did this*, Karmin says that there is not, but that Evelyn has a vendetta against Ursula and that this is obviously Evelyn's work.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Karmin tells the party that he sees those cultists Dorito and Bane together a lot.

It's the same as water seeking its own level: a person will just naturally gravitate to others of their own caliber. Karmin explains that he himself is naturally drawn to those who share his intellectual stature and superior aptitudes, whereas... well, it's convenient that Dorito and Bane have found each other. Of course, Karmin tells the party, it's unfortunate the cultists' squalid little *affaire du coeur* wasn't enough for Bane to stop Dorito from killing that professor. The day it happened, Karmin says, he actually saw Bane out walking significantly far from the camp. Karmin tells the party he'd asked Bane what time it was and instead of simply answering the way a rational person would, Bane responded with an unwarranted outburst about how late it was and et cetera. Karmin tells the party that generalizations are one sign of a lazy intellect but in this case, it's true that all those cultists are deranged. Most aren't as deranged as Dorito, obviously. But still, deranged, every last one of them.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Karmin doesn't need to approach parties, but he'll be in the tavern (or directly out front) Sunday morning selling merchandise. We don't want him disturbing revelation scenes or whatever, but we do want him to be noticeable enough that parties notice he's there! [Please be aware of what's going on in the tavern. If they're trying to set up for the trial, help us get parties out of the building as needed.]

Activity: capitalism!

Info to give the party directly: none

Reason this encounter matters: There are always some parties with money to burn on Sunday. We don't want them hiking to the shop, where they'll get in the way, but we *do* want to let them get as much more fun adventuring as they can before things end.

Item(s) to have on hand: a selection of merchandise and a small cashbox to make change (which should please not be left unattended!)

Arden

When to approach a party: Sunday morning after Bracken and the party return from the Wild Lands

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At some point before the trial, if the party hasn't suggested that he could use a nicer outfit, Bracken can bemoan that he is so disheveled. Karmin Smirch will be in (or near) the tavern at this time selling items, and will have a set of clothing for sale that is, remarkably, just Bracken's size. Hopefully the party will offer to buy it for him or to help him acquire it in some way.

Hopefully the party has fun teaching Bracken to slay. If so, they may well be expecting other Knights to show up to induct Bracken right then. If so, Bracken tells the party that - just as Reynaldo told him - he feels like his time is getting closer, but that it's not quite there yet. (This, of course, is because Bracken doesn't actually have his scene with the other Knights until during the trial. We don't want the party worrying too much that they need to keep doing more, because nothing will make this scene happen until then.)

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Karla Smirch -- Kayla Smirch

Age: 26

Usually found: in the Smirches' shop

Traveler Lore concerning the Gilt Crew appears on page 210.

Secret Info:

One thing is certain: she hasn't come this far to be thwarted by idiots. This is Karla's secret.

Everyone in World's Edge believes she's stupid because that's what she wants them to think. Even her mother - whose sun rises and sets like a giant valuable gold ball upon her daughter - would not list intelligence among Karla's assets.

But she is more than intelligent. Karla Smirch is a genius.

She'd realized this around age 3 or 4, and she'd also realized people underestimated her. At the time, of course, it had been because she was a tiny child, but by feigning a pronounced lack of cognitive ability, Karla managed to keep everyone underestimating her, and to keep benefitting from this.

This is useful enough in her dealings with the citizens of World's Edge, but unlike her mother, Karla was after bigger rewards than can be earned here in town. She wanted money and she wanted jewels, and she set about getting them.

She assembled a crew of thieves. All of this was done remotely and all of was done anonymously, at least in the sense that none of them knew who she was. If any of them were captured - and some of them surely would be, because even her brilliant plans are only as good as the people executing them - they could rat out each other, but not her.

To be clear, it is harder to work this way. She was devising plans of attack on mansions in Uri-Kesh and Clairia, places she'd never been or seen, all from the comfort of her stool behind the counter at Smirch & Smirch. The entrance schemes - get inside a locked fortress without alerting guards or security systems - and the exit strategies - get out with only that loot that could be safely fenced or which Karla wished to keep personally - would be challenging for even a skilled and experienced thief to craft... and Karla was devising them sight unseen. Then again, she is a genius, so there's that.

All communication with her team of thieves was done in writing. Her messages were never signed with her name, only with a symbol, in honor of her childhood nickname, Fang:



Her team continued to hit targets all over Lyria. Some reporters started calling them the Gilt Crew, and some even speculated that there was a criminal mastermind behind these heists. There was... and she sitting in the Inn at World's Edge, asking Bonnie why the rainy days were so much *wetter* than the drier ones.

But even as she accumulated greater wealth, there was a prize Karla dreamed of above all others: a crown.

NOT a crown like the ugly old Crown of St. Mora her mother had purchased after it was stolen from the cathedral in Mystal, the one Ursula doesn't know Karla knows about. No, Karla wanted a *real* crown.

To be clear, she had tiaras and circlets - fantastical jeweled concoctions worn by the wealthiest women in Lyria at parties and balls - and she loved them all. But she wanted something more than that. Something not just valuable but invaluable. Something weighty not just with jewels, but with power.

She wanted the crown jewels of Lyria.

And she is smart enough to get them.

It required more planning than other heists, of course, but it was a pleasure to stretch her mind a little. Her crew was given instructions and the crown was successfully acquired and then delivered to the pre-arranged drop location, and then it was in her hands at last.

She would never be able to wear it publicly, but that didn't matter. It was *hers*.

Of course, there was still the need to store it. She needed somewhere conveniently located but where her dimwitted brother Karmin wouldn't happen upon it accidentally. She found a box, sturdy and weathertight, and placed the crown within it in a concealed location atop Starwatcher's Hill, a spot no one in town uses for anything.

And then those damn Makai arrived. What's more, one of them - an ignoramus named Kerrick Dealbinder - discovered the box and the crown inside it. He showed up in the tavern, the simpleton, wearing *her* crown.

What's more, one of those idiotic Peacock women started yelling about how the crown didn't belong to Dealbinder (very true) because it was *hers* (completely false.)

This was midday on Friday. Since that time, Karla has tried twice to steal the crown back from the damn Makai. This is proving absurdly difficult. Karla is a mastermind, not an implementation expert. And she needs her crown *back* before Sunday, when it will be entered into evidence in this wretched *trial*.

Not to worry. Karla has made a plan, because that is what she does. She has contracted with a small squad of Wolveen, working anonymously, as she always does. They were given 800 royals, and, as her note expressed: "Half the payment is enclosed; the remainder will be placed in the usual location upon completion of the job. On Sunday morning, retrieve the crown from Starwatcher's Hill and leave it in the drop spot. Kill anyone who stands in your way."

Before this moronic trial begins, her crown will again be in her possession, and she will not lose it again.

A description of the Smirch & Smirch Jingle Challenge appears on page 316.

Glendeep

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Karla is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the Smirch & Smirch jingle challenge

Info to give the party directly: Karla tells the party that she heard they were looking for a brimstone egg. She has one, and she's only too happy to unload it on the party. She used to like it, she tells them, but now it makes her think of that nasty little imp Brimstone. Yuck.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Karla tells the party that she will be happier when this weekend and its ridiculous wedding is over. She finds those soldiers, the ones people call Phantoms, to be very confusing. Are they soldiers or phantoms? Why are they all dressed alike? Why is one of them so old? Karla doesn't like the idea of old people getting married. Yuck.

At the very end of the encounter, Karla asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Karla could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: brimstone egg

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Karla tells the party that she doesn't understand why anyone chooses to be poor instead of rich. Rich is much nicer, Karla says. That boy Bracken had only two shirts when he arrived in World's Edge, an old one and a very old one. One day, Karla tells the party, she saw Bracken giving his less-old shirt to a beggar. If Bracken were smarter, he would've given away his very old shirt, and if he were smarter than *that*, he'd have given away nothing at all. Duh, says Karla.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Karla tells the party that Evelyn is a very bad lady and not nice at all. Evelyn wants the Smirches' shop to be ruined and make no money at all, even though having money is important and nice! Evelyn is

doing lots of very mean things to try to make this happen, and Karla thinks Evelyn should stop. Karla tells the party that the meanest thing so far is that Evelyn collected up all of the icky hair from her drain, all wet and smelly and awful, and left it in a nasty pile on the Smirches' floor. This was yucky and made Karla's stomach hurt because of so much grossness. Karla tells the party that she cried the whole time her father was cleaning it up. Evelyn is a bad person, which is illegal. *If and only if the party asks if there is any witness or proof that Evelyn did this,* Karla says that there is not, but that Evelyn hates Ursula and also has a whole lot of hair. This is obviously Evelyn's work.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

the Smirch & Smirch Jingle Challenge

Activity: Recently, the Smirches (that is to say, Ursula) decided that they weren't receiving as much business as they might be. Some shopkeepers, having so determined, might lower their prices or improve their customer service, which is exactly the sort of loser mentality you won't find at Smirch & Smirch.

Instead, the Smirches are holding a jingle-writing contest. The citizens of World's Edge have been encouraged to write – and, if desired, perform – a short, catchy song or slogan to be used for advertising purposes. The jingle can highlight various aspects of "the Smirch & Smirch experience" – the convenient location, the wide array of products and services, etc. The winner is to receive 100 royals worth of credit to be used at Smirch & Smirch.

Unfortunately, there haven't been terribly many contest submissions. For this reason, the Smirches will be *requiring* a contest entry from any party who needs an item from any of them. The contest winner will be chosen late on Saturday afternoon and will be expected to perform their winning jingle in the tavern at Saturday dinner.

The Smirches should also strongly encourage parties who aren't scheduled to see them to enter the contest.

All entries become the exclusive property of Smirch & Smirch. Contest void where prohibited by law.

Educational goal(s): to encourage the party to work collaboratively. to provide an opportunity for creativity.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the official Smirch & Smirch Jingle Contest entry blanks, pencils or pens

Koreos -- Greg Reid

Age: 49

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

A description of Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution appears on page 345.

A description of the Marble Maze Challenge appears on page 346.

A description of the Hivemind Challenge appears on page 347.

P'loa

Approximately when: Friday night (Koreos is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Koreos asks the party to tell him all about their mission.

Koreos tells the party that, sadly, he doesn't know anything about Elani Edgewater or the Jewel of the Waves. He suggests the party talk to Obsidian. There's not much that happens in World's Edge that Obsidian doesn't know about. Koreos points Obsidian out to the party.

Sometime during the conversation, Koreos introduces them to their Companion. Koreos says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Polo, who has been sitting at the same table.

Koreos quietly lets the party know not to expect too much in the way of brains or fighting skills from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Koreos tells the party that it's the strangest thing, the way no one who was in town last night can remember anything from that night. Koreos explains that he'd planned on attending Cary Montalvo's bachelor party - Koreos *loves* parties - and... maybe he did? He is well aware that it sounds as though perhaps he had a drink too many at the party, but the bizarre fact is that no one in town - even people who hadn't planned on going to Cary's party, or to the party for Belle, Cary's fiancée - *no one* can remember anything from around 6 o'clock last night onward, right through until this morning.

From what Koreos heard, Pascal Valerius and his husband Santiago were out of town last night, and they remember everything. But no one who was actually in World's Edge has the slightest idea what went on. Weird.

Item(s) to give this party: none

any parties encountered (ideally 3-4 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday 4pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Lexia is giving out similar information, so it's ideal if they don't hit all the same parties

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Koreos tells the party that there aren't many rules for the muses. Nemaia trusts them to support their creators in whatever way works best. About the only thing Nemaia insists on is that no one but her touch her golden book. Koreos explains that Nemaia says the difficult matters people share with her belong to them alone and this is her way of keeping those matters private and secure.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for Floria's guilt when Cal burns the golden book

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the*

party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Koreos tells the party that some people around town are claiming that Aesthetika has stolen money from them, leaving a piece of her artwork behind as a sort of calling card. This is ridiculous, Koreos says. Aesthetika is a very ethical person and would never do such a thing. The only thing that's a little bit odd, Koreos says, is that... about a month ago, Ursula Smirch was telling everyone who'd listen that Aesthetika had stolen 150 royals from the cashbox in the shop. Koreos hasn't listened to that because it was obviously untrue. But the next day, he'd needed some ink to mark his name in a new pair of shoes. He'd gone rummaging through Aesthetika's desk and there inside the top drawer was a pile of money... and Koreos couldn't help noticing that it was 150 royals. Koreos tells the party that it was almost certainly some money Aesthetika had raised for the art school she's hoping to open. But it was a tiny bit odd.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Koreos tells the party that Dora Bright - well, her married name was Dora Davies, but she danced as "Diamond Dora Bright", and that's how he always thought of her - came to him for inspiration about a year after her husband Harold died. She was in her 40s then, he tells the party, and she'd danced professionally when she was younger, before she was married. The thing is, she really didn't need Koreos. Or, rather, she didn't need his help with dancing. She was astonishing to watch, graceful and strong, yes, but the thing that really set her apart was that it was like she glowed from inside. You just couldn't help smiling, watching her. Koreos tells the party that honestly, the help she'd really needed from him was simply permission to dance again. Dora had worried about what people would say, her going back to dancing professionally. She was a widow and a mother, and she wasn't a young woman any more. Koreos tells the party that he'd looked into her face - she had these beautiful expressive eyes; you could always tell what she was thinking and feeling, and he'd seen just how much she wanted to be back on a stage - and he'd said, "Well, Dora. There are certainly people who won't appreciate you dancing and who won't want to watch you. And those people should go to hell." Koreos tells the party that Dora had laughed and told him that this was excellent advice, and truly, that was seemingly all she'd needed. He tells the party that of course he himself was a much younger man back when he and Dora had that conversation. He hadn't understood, maybe, how much pressure there was on her not to get back on stage again. He understands, maybe, a little bit more now. And he is very glad that he told Dora what he did, and very glad that she listened, because she did go back to dancing and everyone who saw her was happy they had.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Koreos tells the party how much he enjoys working with Miscellania. He's not sure he's ever known anyone who's good at so many things! She's great at interior design and winemaking! She's done a little investing here and there, and dabbled in cartography. She's really good at kickboxing! Oh, and masonry!

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Koreos and Miscellania don't need to approach parties, but they'll be near the tavern (or inside it) Saturday 6-8pm with the Marble Maze and some technomagical wand components. Ideally, they'll be noticeable enough that parties that haven't yet had a chance to do the maze and/or hivemind challenges can see that they're there! If the party has already done both challenges, it's up to the discretion of the muses and the Companion whether or not they are allowed to do it again to get another component or two.

Activity: the marble maze challenge and/or hivemind challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Reason this encounter matters: Not all parties will manage two visits to Inspirations Unlimited before it closes at 4pm. We wanted those parties to have a chance to do these cool activities and to get wand components. Also, we ask Koreos and Miscellania for their help in monitoring the participants' emotional well-being at what is sometimes a low point in the weekend. Please notify the EMs of anything concerning!

Item(s) to have on hand: marble maze, marbles, wand components

Dramina -- Bri Taborn

Age: 34

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

A description of Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution appears on page 345.

A description of the Marble Maze Challenge appears on page 346.

A description of the Hivemind Challenge appears on page 347.

A description of the Soul Speaking Challenge appears on page 484.

(Dramina will be shuttling parties to one of the Soul Speaking locations on Saturday night.)

Clairia

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Dramina is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the marble maze challenge

Info to give the party directly: Dramina tells the party that she heard they were looking for a dragon's-egg ring. She has one, and she'd be happy to let the party have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At the very end of the encounter, Dramina asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Dramina could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: dragon's-egg ring

any parties encountered (ideally 4-6 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Irena Montalvo is giving out similar information from a different perspective. It's awesome if you manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if you don't, and it's fine too if you overlap!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dramina tells the party she is so excited for the wedding on Sunday. She loves weddings so much, and Belle and Cary are delightful, separately and together.

Dramina says she's also happy Cary and Nemaia have become good friends. She tells the party she has an admittedly simplistic theory that there are two kinds of people in the world: droppers and holders. Imagine if someone handed you a whole lot of pebbles. Like, a *lot* of pebbles. Some of the pebbles would be pretty and shiny, but a lot of them would just be boring rock-colored rocks, and all together they'd weigh a lot. Some people would drop them, while other people would stash them all in a pack, holding onto them and keeping them forever..

That first group wouldn't have anything to carry, but they also wouldn't have the shiny stones to admire later on. Those people are the droppers. The second group would have access to the pretty pebbles when they wanted them, but they'd also be weighed down by all the not-so-pretty rocks. Those are the holders.

Dramina thinks that she and Belle, they're droppers. They notice the shiny rocks in passing and then they let them go and move on. But Cary and Nemaia? Cary and Nemaia are holders. Actually, Cary and Nemaia both are *quintessential* holders. Dramina tells the party that Nemaia's memory is the stuff of legends. Nemaia remembers pretty much everything. On Friday morning, when Nemaia said she didn't remember what happened the night before, that's when Dramina knew that something really big had

happened. Because Nemaia remembers *everything*.

Dramina tells the party that the other person she's met - the *only* other person - who approaches Nemaia's level of remembering? Is Cary. It's true what people say about him: he remembers the name of every soldier who's served under him. Especially the ones who died. Not just their names, but their personalities. Who their families were. How afraid they were, or how much pain they were in, when they died. That, Dramina says, is a whole lot of heavy rocks to hold.

Anyway, she says, it's an overly simple theory. But she does think that it's been good, Cary and Nemaia becoming friends. Cary tells Nemaia his stories, and now she's remembering them, too. They're both still carrying around all those rocks, but at least they're doing it together.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for and adds emotional impact to the post-Big Musical Number scene

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dramina tells the party that it's heartbreaking to see the wreckage of the Morg. That's what everyone has always called the theater in town. Its official name is the Montgomery Morgan Theater, named after Aria's great-grandfather, who built it. Montgomery was one of the premier actors of his generation. He was very charismatic, very influential. He married another very talented actor, a woman named Delia. Dramina tells the party that the Morg hosted some of the biggest names in theater history during its heyday. She explains that its popularity started to wind down probably about 30 years or so ago, and then 24 years ago it closed down. The building sat vacant for more than two decades, but perhaps a year and a half ago, Aria decided she wanted to see it restored to its former glory. Raising funds for a project like that is always difficult, but Aria has been tireless, Dramina says. Aria has done a lot of the work herself, and then in the spring she took Danny Donovan on as an employee. The work was really coming along, Dramina says. This fire is such a terrible shame.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dramina tells the party that she recently ordered a collection of theatrical masks from the Smirches. These items needed to be shipped to the store, but when she went to pick them up, they were all quite bent and rumpled. Dramina tells the party that Phineas told her Evelyn climbed onto the boxes in question in order to ruin the masks. Dramina knows Evelyn and while this is an amusing image, it seems a highly unlikely thing for Evelyn - or really anyone, for that matter - to do.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: Sunday at breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dramina approaches the party. She apologizes for bothering them so early, but tells them that a strange thing has happened. She tells them that they seem like kind people and that she's not sure where else to turn. She explains that she's just heartbroken about the loss of the theater in town. It was being restored, but it burned on Thursday and no one knows why. Regardless, it's a huge loss for the community. Dramina tells the party that late yesterday, she had an idea: this probably isn't something she should really be talking about much, but her dear friend Miscellania is really well-off, financially speaking. Actually, better than well-off. Rich, as Dramina understands it. It's not surprising, probably; Miscellania is good at everything and she invested some money and turned it into a lot. Anyway, Dramina says, she went to Miscellania late yesterday, with the idea that Miscellania could loan some of that money to the theater, so it could be rebuilt. Dramina knows this is a very big request, but she also knows that Miscellania loved the theater. Miscellania cried with her over the loss of the theater,

but then she told Dramina that unfortunately, she couldn't help because... her money was gone. Dramina tells the party that Miscellania absolutely refused to say anything more on the subject. She explains that she's now very worried about her friend. Could Miscellania be in trouble of some sort? Dramina doesn't know what to do. It's not her place to pry into Miscellania's private affairs, of course. Truly, she shouldn't even be telling the party about this. But... Miscellania is her good friend, and if she's in trouble, Dramina really wants to help. She's just not sure what to do.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Melados -- Dorian Hart

Age: 55

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

A description of Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution appears on page 345.

A description of the Marble Maze Challenge appears on page 346.

A description of the Hivemind Challenge appears on page 347.

Sythwan

Approximately when: Friday (Melados is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they don't, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the marble maze challenge

Info to give the party directly: When Melados hears about the party's mission – finding a man named Golden whose song will hopefully remove the cursed blight that is killing crops and causing a strange magical sadness in Sythwan, he confirms what Poppy has told them, that the man is Jon Golden, a songwriter who sadly died just a few months ago. Melados also says that yes, he was talking to Poppy about a ritual that allows you to talk to someone who has died. He explains that he keeps a pile of scrap paper beside his bed so he has a place to make notes in case music comes to him in the middle of the night. People in town know this and often drop off old papers for him to use the blank side of, and sometimes when he should be sleeping, he finds himself reading the flip sides of this scrap paper. A terrible habit, Melados admits, but so it goes. Regardless, one of the pieces of scrap paper appears to be a page of a caster's school paper. The paper talks about what it calls an Oraculos Ritual, a rite that theoretically lets you talk to someone who has died "as long as half a year" ago. Melados thought it was interesting and mentioned it to Poppy, who unlike him is actually a caster. He himself knows nothing more about the ritual than what he's read in the found paper, but he's happy to give the letter to the party.

Oraculos Ritual:

An investigation into its components and properties

Prepared by Cyn Standish

for Professor DeMeo's MAG671 Course

Abstract:

In this paper, the author will consider the little-used but extremely powerful Oraculos Ritual, a rite which might, if performed correctly, allow the practitioners to communicate with an individual who had been deceased as long as half a year. Oraculos was first researched as a rite at the Crystal Spire Academy by the esteemed magic partnership of Stonem and Willoughby (Higgenson, Toward Elemental Understanding) and is seldom used because of the cost and difficulty of locating the required components and the high possibility that the ritual will fail. (Op cit.) However, the author will herein attempt to demonstrate that the difficulty in performing the rite is offset by its tremendous power and will then move forward to consider new research which suggests that the effects of the Ritual may in fact be even more significant than previously believed. (Lyrian Magical Coalition, unpublished thesis #764)

Introduction:

The Oraculos Ritual, as it is currently conceived, has a number of required components:

- a cloudite ring*
- ashes from an ancient fire*
- a riddlestone ring*
- an eternity pendant*
- a bejeweled chalice*
- a celadon egg*
- a filigree'd mule pendant*
- moonstone shards*
- a quantity of folly dust*

At least six people are required for the performing of the rite, although none need be trained in the magical arts. (See Berenstein's influential work Magery for an interesting discussion of other spells which share this unusual property.) Once the items are attained, those performing the

ritual must proceed to the location of the deceased's body, or as close to it as is possible. Along the way, they must stop at a water source rich in occult energy. (The author is perhaps biased in considering this step to be a rather simple one, having grown up near just such a water course. So brimming with occult energy was this "Sheldon's Pond" that many who were not casters could feel it rising off of the water.)

The tallest of the six holds the jeweled chalice; it is filled with water from the previously described source and is then carried full the rest of the way. Once they have arrived at the body of the deceased (or at the deceased's grave, should burial have already occurred) the group is arrayed smallest to tallest. The first dons the filigree'd mule pendant and holds the container with the moonstone shards. The next wears the riddlestone ring and the cloudite ring. The next holds the celadon egg. The next holds the folly dust. The next holds the ashes and wears the eternity pendant. And the tallest holds the chalice. (Higgenson, ibid.)

The group walks in a circle, with the smallest leading, around the body or grave. The rest all follow. The one holding the chalice pours a small amount of water out while walking. The group moves once around the circle. They then turn inwards to face the body (or, again, the grave) and together recite the words "Speak to us, o fallen friend!"

If the ritual is done correctly and the request is made with pure hearts, the ritual should work.

For several years now, it has been the belief of the academy that... [Here the paper trails onto another page.]

Melados tells the party that he has a few ideas about where they might get some of the items mentioned in the letter. Melados encourages the party to write these things down right on the paper. He knows he always forgets things if he doesn't write them down. Hence the need of the scrap pile!

- cloudite ring – Honoré Valerius
- ashes from an ancient fire – Kazim Firestarter
- riddlestone ring – Bonnie Stillwater
- eternity pendant -- Aria Morgan
- jeweled chalice -- Tinker Bill
- celadon egg – Elliot Peacock
- filigree'd mule pendant – Ursula Smirch

Melados tells the party that sadly, he has never heard of moonstone shards and he's not sure who might have any.

As for folly dust, Melados says he's not really sure what to tell them about that. There's a very old expression; probably no one ever says it anymore. But people used to say "Scarce as folly dust in the mind of a madman." It meant something that you had much too much of, something that wasn't scarce at all. Melados hasn't heard anyone say it in years, and it never occurred to him that folly dust might be a real substance. He's not sure what to suggest to the party about getting any.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the letter listing the items they'll need to find

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Melados tells the party that he was in the tavern when Vernon Gill arrived in town on Wednesday. Vernon apparently came to World's Edge because he'd heard Katherine Carmichael was there, seeking restitution for injuries that occurred more than a decade before. Apparently, Vernon had been a soldier until Katherine Carmichael - the well-known author, who's been in town for several weeks now - shot him. Melados tells the party that he has found Katherine to be a pleasant individual, and that this story was thus surprising to him, but that Katherine herself has confirmed it to be true, which just goes to show that we are all complicated creatures. Melados says that this shooting apparently happened after Vernon mouthed off to Katherine in some tavern in Arden. Melados tells the party that he doesn't excuse shooting someone regardless of their comments, but that he confesses he finds Vernon Gill a somewhat challenging person to be around. Probably that is uncharitable of him, Melados acknowledges. It must be terrible to permanently lose the use of your arm, as Vernon has. Still, it is wearisome to listen to Vernon complain about the service in the tavern and the weather in World's Edge and everything else.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Melados tells the party that some people around town are claiming that Aesthetika has stolen money from them, leaving a piece of her artwork behind as a sort of calling card. This is ridiculous, Melados says. Aesthetika is a very ethical person and would never do such a thing. The only thing that's a little bit odd, Melados says, is that... a week ago, he was talking to Elliott Peacock, who showed him a portrait of himself he'd found left among his belongings. Elliot later noticed that 55 royals were missing from his travel trunk. Melados hadn't thought terribly much about it at the time, even though the painting did look at least a little bit like some other paintings Aesthetika does. Melados was sure this was just an odd coincidence, but later that day, he'd needed some large paper to use for sheet music. He'd gone rummaging through Aesthetika's desk and there inside the top drawer was a pile of money... and Melados couldn't help noticing that it was 55 royals. Melados tells the party that it was almost certainly some money Aesthetika had raised for the art school she's hoping to open. But it was a tiny bit odd.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Melados tells the party that he's met several talent scouts in his day and that Jack Johnson is a breath of fresh air. Although Melados doesn't like to speak badly about any group of people, he has not, as a whole, found this profession to be one that encourages its practitioners to treat musical artists with much care or respect. Melados tells the party that this just serves to remind him why stereotypes are such a dangerous idea.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Melados doesn't need to approach parties, but he'll be in the tavern (or directly out front) Sunday morning with the Marble Maze and some technomagical wand components. We don't want him disturbing revelation scenes or whatever, but we do want him to be noticeable enough that parties that haven't yet had a chance to do the maze and/or hivemind challenges can see that he's there! If the party has already done both challenges, it's up to the discretion of Melados and the Companion whether or not they are allowed to do it again to get another component or two. [Please be aware of what's going on in the tavern. If they're trying to set up for the trial, help us get parties out of the building as needed.]

Activity: the marble maze challenge and/or hivemind challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Reason this encounter matters: There are always some parties with money to burn on Sunday. We don't want them hiking to IU, which is closed AND which will put them too near other parties' path endings. But we *do* want to let them get as much more fun adventuring as they can before things end.

Item(s) to have on hand: marble maze, marbles, wand components

Lexia -- Margot Holmes

Age: 42

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

A description of Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution appears on page 345.

A description of the Marble Maze Challenge appears on page 346.

A description of the Hivemind Challenge appears on page 347.

Dolorón

Approximately when: Friday night (Lexia is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Lexia asks the party to tell her about their mission. She is horrified to hear about a curse on the Great Library, which is one of the jewels of the Lyrian kingdom. Lexia tells the party that she doesn't have any pixie dust, but that somewhat surprisingly, someone mentioned it to her recently: Phyllis Fieri.

Phyllis doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Lexia says. Probably she's at the rental property she owns in Rosedale.

Lexia apologizes to the party that she herself cannot leave at the moment, but she brings the party over to Jpeg, and asks him if he would be willing to walk the party out to Phyllis' rental. Lexia wishes the party much luck in World's Edge.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

any parties encountered (ideally 3-4 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday 4pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Koreos is giving out similar information, so it's ideal if they don't hit all the same parties

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lexia tells the party that there aren't many rules for the muses. Nemaia trusts them to support their creators in whatever way works best. About the only thing Nemaia insists on is that no one but her touch her golden book. Lexia explains that Nemaia says the difficult matters people share with her belong to them alone and this is her way of keeping those matters private and secure.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for Floria's guilt when Cal burns the golden book

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lexia tells the party that it has been a real pleasure meeting Katherine Carmichael, author of the Kit Carnage books. She says that she loves all the books and that she is an especial fan of *Wide as the Sky*, the latest book. One of the astonishing things, Lexia tells the party, is that Kit actually ages in the books. Perhaps this isn't really surprising, given that Kit is Katherine and obviously Katherine herself has aged in the twenty-five years since *Resolute: The Kit Carnage Story* came out. But the fact that the books continue to be devoured by young readers when the protagonist is significantly older than they are is a remarkable feat. It's also one reason Katherine - or, rather, Kit - is such an inspiration to lots of women: she continues to be powerful and respected even though she is no longer a young woman. Lexia would like to see more books like this.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lexia tells the party that she was terribly disappointed last Sunday when Professor Daniel Merriweather's lecture was cancelled. She tells the party she's read the professor's book, *Signs & Wonders*, and thought he made a number of very interesting points, especially about good and bad omens as both effect and cause of what he calls "nihilistic worldview." She has a number of questions she was looking forward to posing to him, but then he'd never arrived and the talk was obviously cancelled. Ultimately it was somewhat of a blessing in disguise because she had a great deal of daydreaming she needed to do - this is a critical part of her process - and with Dr. Merriweather's talk scheduled for 3pm, it was going to completely bisect the afternoon. Still, it was a real shame about him not showing up.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lexia tells the party she's so glad she's friends with Miscellania. Miscellania is so friendly and down-to-earth despite being good at so many things! She's skilled at origami and archery! She's done more than her fair share of investing and taxidermy. Oh, and whistling! She's great at both bookkeeping and beekeeping, although maybe not at the same time. Although....

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Floria -- Mara Feingold-Link

Age: 27

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

A description of Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution appears on page 345.

A description of the Marble Maze Challenge appears on page 346.

A description of the Hivemind Challenge appears on page 347.

Glendeep

When to approach a party: on Friday night

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Floria should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Floria needs to convey, but she'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Floria doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, she'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if she's had a brief but positive interaction with the party!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: Floria is assigning this party's charge. She is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, Floria approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again her dear friend and fellow muse Aesthetika. Floria explains that there have been some strange thefts happening in town for the past several months, with the really surprising part being that whoever is stealing money is leaving behind a small painting. Aesthetika is a painter, Floria says, and it's true that there are some similarities between the paintings Aesthetika does and the ones people have been finding around. It's also true that Aesthetika has been trying to raise money to set up an art school for local children. Regardless of all this, Floria says, Aesthetika has explained that she hasn't painted these pictures. Floria tells the party that even if Aesthetika had painted these pictures - which she obviously didn't, because she says she didn't - she is of course not a thief. Nevertheless, she has now been officially accused of these crimes, which is deeply troubling. Floria tells the party that Aesthetika does not seem worried about this matter, but that she herself is very upset by it. She implores the party to please look into this charge which has been leveled against Aesthetika.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Floria tells the party that she has a rather unusual etiquette conundrum. She explains that she visited the Smirches' shop a week or so ago, and she could not help noticing that there was a pervasive odor of urine around the front door. Floria tells the party that this is no concern of hers, but that if the Smirches are thinking of doing any planting in this area, they should be aware that perhaps a different location would be better suited. She is unsure if she should

mention this to the Smirches or not. Floria does not want her comment to be perceived as a criticism.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: sometime on Saturday, hopefully before 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Floria tells the party that it was always a pleasure talking to Dora Davies about the roses she grew. Dora loved all sorts of flowers, but her favorites were the most temperamental varieties of roses, the ones that wanted very specific and onerous care in order to thrive. Floria tells the party that she used to make special fertilizer for Dora's rosebushes. It worked well and smelled just like roses itself, but it was toxic to humans. Floria always wore two pairs of gloves when making it. She tells the party that she doesn't miss having to make the pesky stuff, but she does miss Dora, who was simply lovely.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Saturday 5-7pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: From 5-7pm, Floria circulates. She tells any parties she encounters that she thinks she was unconscious for a while. She explains that Cal Coleman came into Inspirations Unlimited when she was the only person there. Floria says she knew she shouldn't let him touch Nemaia's gold book, but he was so insistent. He talked so fast and had so many reasons he needed to see it that she decided maybe it would be all right for him to see it just for a moment.

Floria tells the party that when Cal looked inside the book, he got so angry. He thought he'd find the secrets behind Inspirations Unlimited there, but as far as Floria knows, there really aren't any secrets like that. Cal yelled that the book contained nothing but a lot of people complaining about things he thought didn't really matter. He was so, so angry... and then he threw the book into the fire.

Distraught, Floria says that this is all her fault. She doesn't yet know about all the changes to the world, but she knows something terrible has happened. Nemaia's gold book is now just embers, and there is no sign of Cal Coleman. Everything is all her fault.

If any party tells Floria about the Makai plan to hold a meeting at 8pm, Floria promises to be there.

Reason this info matters: this helps the parties make sense of the 4pm change to the world and sets the stage for the 8pm meeting

Glendeep, again

When to approach a party: Floria is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. She will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. She should check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Sunday between 11am and noon*, Floria approaches the party. She tells the party she appreciates them looking into the charge that was leveled against Aesthetika. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Floria encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.)

In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Aesthetika didn't create the paintings or steal the money; Frost did.

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- All of this was done under the direction/manipulation of Carmina Bordeaux, who's seeking to frame Aesthetika as revenge for failing to make Carmina a successful artist.
- The money that's mysteriously shown up amongst Aesthetika's belongings was left there by Frost, who's trying to right the wrong he's doing.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Floria can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Floria can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Teknos -- Brace Peters

Age: 47

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

A description of Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution appears on page 345.

A description of the Marble Maze Challenge appears on page 346.

A description of the Hivemind Challenge appears on page 347.

Elsewhich

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the marble maze challenge

Info to give the party directly: Teknos tells the party that he does indeed have quite a lot of Elsewhichian wine. He doesn't have it available right now, though. Teknos explains that when he woke up on Friday morning with absolutely no memory of the night before, he worried he must've indulged rather excessively at Cary Montalvo's bachelor party the night before. Teknos didn't want that to happen again, so he hid all his good booze far out in the woods. He tells the party that he now understands that nobody remembers the events of Thursday night, so he feels a lot better. He promises the party he'll meet them in the tavern at 9:45am on Sunday and bring them to the wine then.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: There's no specific info Teknos needs to give the party, but on Sunday he'll be excited to show them a prototype he received, and this will seem more natural if he can establish a connection with them on Saturday.

Item(s) to give this party: none (he'll meet them in the tavern at 9:45am Sunday and will bring them to the Elsewhichian wine then)

any parties encountered (ideally 2-4 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Teknos tells the party that it's always an honor to work with an inventor and be part of their creative process but that he confesses working with Belle Bishop was a special joy. Besides the fact that Belle is a delightful person - so smart and funny and interested in everything! - Teknos believes that the development of the Bellaphone is truly going to help to bring people closer together.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Big Musical Number

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Teknos tells the party that he has had the pleasure of meeting Kerrick Dealbinder before and knows him to be a good and honest man. Teknos acknowledges that this makes the current situation, where Dealbinder is claiming to have found a box out in the woods that contains a crown, rather perplexing. This story seems unlikely to be true. It is possible, Teknos says, that someone stole the box containing Tanya Peacock's tiara and then hid that box deep in the woods, but he cannot personally think of a reason anyone would have done such a thing. Perplexing!

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Teknos tells the party that he was approached by that young woman, Quinoa.

Quinoa was hoping he could construct a drinking cup for her. Teknos tells the party that he had a drinking cup he wasn't using that he'd offered to her, but seemingly she needed a very specific type of cup: it needed to keep the contents almost absurdly cold, and it needed to be comically large. Teknos tells the party that it took him several hours to construct a cup to these specifications but that he managed to do so. When Quinoa came to collect the cup, she asked him to write the name Stanley on the side of it. Teknos admits that he is confused by this, since Stanley is not the young woman's name. Is Stanley the name of the cup? Teknos is left with questions.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Elsewhich, again

Time: 9:45am, Sunday (Teknos is the penultimate step for this party)

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Teknos tells the party that he has something he'd like to show them later - he doesn't need to say more than this now, because we want their first focus to be on their path ending - and will take them to the hidden Elsewhichian wine, waiting quietly out of the way while the party talks Kira through the ritual. After this is done, Kira has a scene with her grandmother, Kovi Woundtender, who is waiting near the front of the tavern. Again, Teknos goes with them but doesn't distract from or intrude on the scene.

Item(s) to give this party: Teknos will meet the party in the tavern and lead them to the Elsewhichian wine, which is hidden just outside Winterhill Clearing. Teknos will know where it's hidden, because he's going to hide it before this encounter.

[Note: to do their ritual, the party also needs "someone who has magic within, but who knows it not." They may or may not remember this. If Kira isn't already with the party, or if the party doesn't mention that they're going to go get her, Teknos should ask them to tell him about their ritual before they walk all the way to the hidden wine. If they take out the letter Dealbinder gave them and reread it, they'll get to this line and Teknos can ask them who this is. Note also that the bucket of wine cannot be moved (because if they do, it's evident that the 'magical' chalice is already in it.) If the party tells Teknos that he should show them the wine and then they'll bring it to Kira, he should tell them it's awfully heavy and suggest they go get Kira and bring her to the wine rather than vice versa.]

Elsewhich, yet again

Time: 10am Sunday (Kira is the final step on the party's party path / Teknos is present for this scene as well)

Where: Kira will be hanging out in/near the tavern so that she's findable when the party (hopefully) comes looking for her. (She can't be in the Makai Camp because that'll put her in the way of several other parties.) Kira will accompany them to Winterhill Clearing (led by Teknos) to perform the ritual there.

Signal to appear: According to the letter Dealbinder gave them, the party's ritual must be performed by somebody who "has magic within, but who knows it not." Hopefully the party remembers this fact! If they don't, their Companion and/or Teknos can nudge them mentally until they do.

Assuming the party does remember they need this person, they will hopefully interpret their keeper's Sunday morning vision correctly and will know that Kira is the person they need. When the party tells Kira about this, she laughs. There are no Makai casters, she says. She is going to be a Cliffscaler, so they must be mistaken about their vision. Hopefully the party will keep insisting that they are right!

Kira finally decides that it is polite to at least try to help with the ritual. She is clearly nervous about this. She has no experience with 'hex' of any kind, and taking part in this strange Lyrian ritual is frightening to her. Ultimately, though, she does it.

Activity/Info: To perform the ritual, the party needs to put the golden laceleaf pendant on Kira. Other ritual items are placed gently into the large container of Elsewhichian wine. Everyone present must then gather round, as the magical heliotrope candle is lit, and the Ritual Words spoken three times.

If the party suggests that they take the bucket elsewhere, Teknos discourages this. The ritual must be done right now, in Winterhill Clearing. (In reality, this is because the bucket is really heavy, and carrying it around will make it totally evident that there's something else in it besides "wine".)

Just before the party begins speaking the ritual words, Kira takes the dented old cup from them. She is still very nervous. At best, she says, the ritual will fail and the Lyrians will be disappointed. At worst, something will go horribly wrong.

Frightened though she is, Kira submerges the dingy old cup in the wine and scrubs it well with her hands. When the party finishes reciting the ritual words, Kira hesitantly pulls out... the other chalice that has been hidden at the bottom of the bucket. This chalice is a thing of beauty – shining silver with grapes carved into the sides. When she removes it from the bucket, Kira stares dumbfounded at what she has done.

After the above scene is completed, the party will (hopefully) spend a little bit of time being impressed by the "magically transformed" chalice and congratulating Kira on the good job she did, etc. The party may talk about taking her back to Elsewhich to study magic or whatever; Kira can just play along with this. She is still in awe and still frightened of the mysterious force of magic, but she is clearly also starting to get excited and intrigued. If she can manage to draw the party into supporting her – convincing her that becoming a Cliffscaler merely because she is not afraid of it is perhaps not the best path for her, that becoming a caster may be much scarier but also much more rewarding, etc. – that's great!

Kira tells the party that she'd really like to share this amazing news with her grandmother Kovi Woundtender who Kira thinks is probably back near the tavern. She asks the party to please come with her to help explain this remarkable thing that's happened.

Teknos tells Kira and the party that they should go. He's very excited for Kira and he's happy to clean up the wine, etc. (We don't want the party to try to do this because the old chalice is of course still in the bucket. Once the party has gone, Teknos can dump out the wine and then please bring the bucket et al back to the Basement.)

Kovi Woundtender will be back by the tavern. Hopefully this will be another satisfying scene for the party, when they get to be present when Woundtender learns this unexpected and wonderful new thing about Kira!

Teknos has another scene to do with the party after they talk to Woundtender, but once the party and Kira leaves, it shouldn't take him long to dump the wine and then bring the now-much-lighter bucket back. Once he's brought this to the Basement, he can rejoin the party out in front of the tavern to do his charge revelation scene with them

Item(s) to give the party: the magically transformed chalice (already in the bucket; Kira doesn't need to carry it anywhere)

Elsewhich still, are you kidding me?

When to approach a party: Sunday around 10:15am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: After their party path and post-party-path scenes with Kovi Woundtender are complete, Teknos brings the party back to the tavern. He's very excited to show them an item he just received from one of his inventors. It's a new sort of wand with a fascinating new targeting system on it. This wand is just a prototype; it doesn't actually have an effect. It has just been shipped to World's Edge, and is packed (along with a lot of packing material) inside a large crate. Teknos removes the lid of the crate, placing it on the floor, and then lifts out the wand. Through all of this, Teknos is telling them about the inventor who built the prototype, the creative process, etc. None of this matters; it just needs to sound like something Teknos actually cares about so the party is surprised by the part of the scene that really matters.

Hopefully, there won't be other parties in the tavern at this time. Ember is there, paying no attention to anything Teknos or the party are doing. (If there *are* other parties, Ember should try to shoo them outside if possible.) In a perfect world, there will be a couple other staffers around, just so Ember doesn't seem like a focus of the scene. Note that this scene *can* be moved outside if needed, but that the crate may be unwieldy and that the scene may be hard if there's bright sunlight. This will have to be played by ear.

After Teknos has unpacked the wand, he shows it off to the party. It looks higher tech than the other wands the party has seen. Teknos points out a few of its features and then tells the party that, as he says, this wand is just a prototype. It won't actually affect anyone, but still, he won't point it at a person, just for safety reasons. The wand's newly designed tracking system is really quite extraordinary, he says. And then he flips the switch on it, which activates the "tracking system"... which is a laser pointer.

Ember is suddenly *very* interested in this interaction. Or, rather, in the magical red dot that's moving across the floor.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let

the party run the show if at all possible!]

[Also note: this laser pointer should, of course, not be pointed directly at anyone's face.]

If the party figured out Ember's deal before this scene, she can go all out confirming their suspicions. If they have no idea, she can move more slowly, expressing keen interest but not yet full-out chasing the dot. She can also, when the time is right, climb into the lid of the crate.

Ember can make her cat behavior more and more apparent until the party asks her questions, at which point she can answer truthfully (and dismissively.)

- Yes, she used to be a cat. Duh. (If the party believes she's still a cat or whatever, she doesn't need to get bogged down in this. Ember = cat is the part that matters.)
- Yes, she left presents at the Smirch shop for her friend Karmin. Duh.
- Yes, she sometimes plays there, knocking merchandise off shelves and sleeping on boxes. Duh.
- To most any other questions/comments, especially things like "But Evelyn was about to be prosecuted for this!" or "These things cost the Smirches business!", Ember answers "I don't think I care about that." And, if the party persists, "No, I'm sure I do not care." And then she turns her attention elsewhere. Ember isn't evil, but she really, really doesn't care.

If the party gets that Ember is a cat but has not made the connection that the "sabotage" is all normal cat behavior, Ember asks, "Where is Karmin? I like him more than you." Hopefully this will move the party in the right direction; if it still doesn't, let the Basement know!

(Note: Karmin Smirch is out at this time, selling items either in or near the tavern. It might be easier if he is not in the tavern when this scene is taking place, although he also could be, with Ember hanging around with him. Karmin and Ember can determine how this will work best.)

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Kulinos -- Cris Shuldiner

Age: 60

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

A description of Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution appears on page 345.

A description of the Marble Maze Challenge appears on page 346.

A description of the Hivemind Challenge appears on page 347.

any parties encountered (as many as possible)

When to approach a party: Friday in the tavern, ideally when the party isn't directly engaged / not immediately after they arrive

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: Kulinos tells the party that Inspirations Unlimited is open tomorrow. His friend and fellow muse Teknos made up a bunch of technomagical wands - like, more than they have room to store - and if the party wants to visit, he suspects Nemaia would be only happy to give a few of them away. He gives them a card listing the hours and info.

Item(s) to give this party: the card listing the hours/info about Inspirations Unlimited

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kulinos tells the party that he is always delighted when someone - anyone! - takes an interest in food and food preparation. But goodness, when the Sprinks first arrived in World's Edge, Angelica Sprink didn't have any idea about... well, anything. Kulinos remembers being in the tavern one morning, and Angelica was served a bowl of oatmeal. Apparently the Sprinks' cook at home always adds sugar to Angelica's oatmeal before it is brought to the table. Kulinos tells the party that Angelica had taken a bite of oatmeal and been startled that it wasn't sweet. There's nothing really wrong with that. The problem is it seemed Angelica had no idea what she might do to make the oatmeal sweeter, even when there was a bowl of sugar right there on the table. It's not really his place to judge, Kulinos says, but the lack of this knowledge rather surprised him. Perhaps that was an anomaly, though. Recently he was in the tavern and Angelica informed him that rhubarb leaves are toxic. Which, to be clear, he already knew. But he was pleasantly surprised to learn that *Angelica* knew. Perhaps the oatmeal thing was simply an odd blindspot in Angelica's understanding of the world. Either that, or someone has recently taken it upon themselves to educate her about... well, everything.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: sometime before Saturday at 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kulinos tells the party that everyone wants to believe unpleasant people can't make good food. It's a nice idea, he says, but it's not true. Case in point: back before Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater came to town, the tavern was owned by a woman named Scarlet. Kulinos tells the party that the food was quite good despite Scarlet herself being a thoroughly unpleasant person. Scarlet could be appealing when she wanted to be, he clarifies, but she often didn't want to be. He doesn't think anyone in town was sad when Scarlet sold the bar and went back to Keer. That's where she was from originally - Windsor-by-the-Bay, a little fishing village on the coast of Keer. Kulinos tells the party that Scarlet had spread the

word in Keer when she wanted to sell the tavern, which is how Solomon heard about it. Soon after Scarlet sold the tavern, she regretted her decision, which is par for the course with someone as volatile as Scarlet. Kulinos heard that she'd written multiple angry letters - the only kind Scarlet knows how to write, he suspects - telling Solomon and Bonnie that they needed to sell her the Inn back and offering them large sums to do so. Thankfully, the Stillwaters are happy in World's Edge and have refused Scarlet's offers. Kulinos is glad of it. Good food is only part of a good meal, he says. Good company matters as well, and it's hard to enjoy that when the woman behind the bar is screaming at someone.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Kulinos tells the party that he was approached by those visitors from Elsewhich, Huxley and Quinoa. They had a recipe they were hoping he could make for them. Normally Kulinos is a great fan of new recipes, but this one sounded very unpleasant, given that it called for glue, glitter, dye and salt. He tells the party he informed the pair that such a mixture would be unpleasantly slimy and was more than a little surprised when they claimed that slime was exactly what they were hoping for! Kulinos tells the party that he made the recipe as directed, but that he's now in no hurry to dine in Elsewhich.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Aesthetika -- Tasi O'Malley

Age: 46

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

Traveler Lore concerning Aesthetika specifically appears on page 207.

A description of Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution appears on page 345.

A description of the Marble Maze Challenge appears on page 346.

A description of the Hivemind Challenge appears on page 347.

Arden

When to approach a party: any time this charge is not being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aesthetika tells the party that, a couple weeks ago, the Crown of St. Mora was left anonymously on the doorstep of the Valerius family house. The Crown was stolen from the cathedral several years ago, and no one has seen it in the intervening time. As a holy relic, it's very important to the Church to have it restored, of course. It's also a beautiful and profoundly significant item artistically-speaking, which is presumably why it was stolen in the first place.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Glendeeep

When to approach a party: if and ONLY if the party asks / uses truth magic

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: If asked directly, Aesthetika answers any of their questions truthfully. She didn't create any of the paintings that have been left around town, nor does she know who did. She didn't take any money from anyone. Recently, some money has been turning up in her desk or with her other belongings, but she has no idea where it's coming from or how it got there. She made a couple colors of shimmering paint, but hasn't had time to make any more.

If the party uses truth magic, Aesthetika and/or Carmina Bordeaux should listen carefully to the question asked. For instance, Carmina Bordeaux's answer to "Did you paint pictures in Aesthetika's style?" or "Did you steal money from people?" is no, whereas "Did you cause pictures to be painted in Aesthetika's style?" or "Did you cause money to be stolen?" is yes. Please talk to the EMs if you'd like help preparing for this!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aesthetika tells the party that she was in the tavern early this week when the Dawn Star was mysteriously found... in a drawer full of dishtowels! She explains that it was lunchtime in the tavern and everything was predictably hectic. Servers were clearing away the lunch dishes and somehow a big jug of water got knocked over. People ran to fetch towels to mop up the spill, and at the bottom of the drawer was the pendant. Aesthetika tells the party that it was so strange, seeing Pansy Golden reach into the drawer and pull out the Dawn Star. She explains that she had seen pictures of it before but never expected to see it in person. It's very recognizable: a gold pendant set with an opal the color of the sky at

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sunrise, and then pink tourmalines all around it. The stories say legendary Pirate King Jack Brigham took it from the severed neck of a sea gorgon. That sounds like an incredible story, but perhaps no more unbelievable than the idea of the pendant turning up under some dishtowels. The world is an astonishing place, says Aesthetika.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Miscellania -- Betsy Rosenblatt

Age: 48

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

Secret Info:

She's done some things that are certainly private and some things that are probably illegal and she regrets none of them. These are Miscellania's secrets.

It was only a month ago that the Peacock Family Singers arrived in World's Edge. Someone told her their manager brought them to town so he could work with Melados. Miscellania didn't think much about it either way.

But a day later, she met a man outside of Inspirations Unlimited. He was sitting on a stump, staring into the wind-blown trees but not really seeing them. He looked like a man who didn't sit on stumps very often. "Are you all right?" she'd asked him.

He looked at her, and this time he really *looked*. "I don't know," he said.

That's how she met Milton Peacock.

He went on, that day and in later days, to explain to her. Nemaia had turned him away, telling him he didn't need to work with Melados. "You have everything you need, musically," Nemaia said. Miscellania tended to agree with this. And once he had time to digest it, Milton Peacock seemed to as well.

In the days that followed, she learned a lot about the band and a lot about the family. She is very good at learning new things. She learned about the business of music, which, she understands, is different from the *making* of music. The Peacock Family Singers were quite good at the latter and rather unsuited to the former.

Mostly, though, she learned about Milton himself. Lots of people didn't look past his loud tie and waving hands and big voice to really see him, but Miscellania did. He is perceptive. He is fiercely kind. He makes decisions about people quickly and accurately, and once he commits, he doesn't look back.

Also, he is smart and funny and interesting. As, in fact, is she. (Miscellania dabbled briefly in false humility but found it did not meet her needs.)

She really, *really* likes Milton Peacock. She hasn't known him for long, but she could imagine a future with him. There are things he's not telling her and she knows it. That doesn't bother her. In fact, she rather likes it. It's part of what makes him interesting.

The only thing that makes her sad is that she thinks there might be ways she could help him, except that he's not asking for it. She's not sure he'd let her help. She hopes so.

This question has become more pressing just this past week. That's because someone apparently sent an anonymous note to Justice Orion Wilde, the itinerant prosecutor who'll conduct a trial in World's Edge on Sunday. The note accused Milton of stealing 12 thousand royals from the Peacock Family Singers account.

Milton acknowledged his guilt in this matter. He explained that he has gambling debts, very significant ones, and that he stole the money to cover these. He accepted that he'd go to jail for this crime.

Not if Miscellania can do something about it, he won't.

And, in fact, she *can* do something about it. She doesn't broadcast this fact because that would be gauche, but Miscellania has a good deal of money stashed away. She has dabbled in investing and she knows a thing or two about financial planning. She is, to put it bluntly, rich.

She's also smart. She knows Milton Peacock isn't a gambler. She's not sure who has gambling debts, but it isn't Milton.

But she's seen the way Milton protects people. Maybe it's one of his biological brothers, but it could just as easily be Shaun or Tanya or any of the other Peacocks. It could be someone who's not (yet) part of Milton's chosen family. It doesn't really matter, because once Milton commits to someone, he commits all the way. There is someone out there with very significant debts. They might not be for gambling. Possibly Stevie's gotten herself in trouble with some dangerous people or Donna is addicted to pain pills. It's not Miscellania's business.

But someone Milton cares for was in trouble and 12 thousand royals would solve it, and so Milton embezzled the money. He did this and he will go to jail for it.

Unless...

...the thing about financial crimes is that they're fixable. They're different from murder or arson. You can't un-kill a person or un-burn a building, but maybe you can un-steal money. Miscellania has 12 thousand royals. And on Saturday, without telling anyone, she is going to deposit it into the Peacock Family Singers' account. Late on Saturday night, the manager at their bank is going to place a call to the prosecutorial pavilion explaining that although they originally *thought* the money was missing from the Peacock account, it is now there after all.

If no money was stolen, then Milton cannot be guilty.

If Milton isn't guilty, then he cannot be sent to jail.

Miscellania doesn't know if Milton loves her as much as she loves him.

But just this once, someone else is going to take care of Milton Peacock for a change.

A description of *Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution* appears on page 345.

A description of *the Marble Maze Challenge* appears on page 346.

A description of *the Hivemind Challenge* appears on page 347.

Sythwan

Approximately when: Friday night (Miscellania is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: Miscellania tells the party that she's happy to bring the party to meet Melados.

Before leaving, Miscellania needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom anywhere near Inspirations Unlimited. If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should probably do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Sythwan. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Miscellania should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once Miscellania has escorted the party to Inspirations Unlimited and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, she returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Miscellania tells the party they've picked an interesting time to come to World's Edge. Justice Orion Wilde arrived just this morning and will hold a trial on Sunday, addressing any charges that have been leveled in town over the past year. She confesses to the party that she perhaps had overly high expectations for Justice Wilde after hearing about all the very important cases he's presided over in his career. He's made a huge difference in the lives of Lyrian citizens, and Miscellania is very grateful for that. But still, he's only human. Probably, Miscellania says, her expectations of him were unreasonably high. Still, he's supposed to be extremely fair and efficient. That's a lot, Miscellania says.

Item(s) to give this party: none

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time Friday or before 4pm Saturday, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Cal Coleman is giving out similar information from a different perspective. It's awesome if you manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if you don't.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Miscellania tells the party that lots of people come to World's Edge to work with

Inspirations Unlimited. Of those, Cal Coleman is unique because, rather than wanting to work with a muse, he wants to reproduce and monetize their business.

Miscellania tells the party that she's sorry Cal has wasted his time coming here. She explains that she herself has dabbled a bit in entrepreneurship, and she could have told him that Inspirations Unlimited isn't a reproducible or scalable business model. She tells the party that she did in fact try to explain this to Cal but that he didn't seem ready to hear her yet. He'll just have to figure it out on his own, she says.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Saturday 4pm shift

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Miscellania tells the party that she occasionally works with a client on business matters - she's pretty good at marketing - and that even though she knows what Ember is doing to increase engagement and capitalize on her fanbase, it still works on Miscellania. Yesterday Ember talked to Miscellania for just a minute and then abruptly walked away, which increased Miscellania's emotional investment in the encounter! Or take the fact that Ember hangs out with Karmin Smirch. Miscellania normally avoids the Smirches, because they're egregious people, but now she finds herself smiling at Karmin despite herself! Ember is very good at what she does, Miscellania tells the party. Her image is carefully curated, but it reads as effortless. Also, Miscellania is thinking about maybe starting to style her hair the way Ember does.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Miscellania tells the party that Aesthetika is so gracious about seeing what is beautiful in people, and that sometimes this makes her unable to see when someone is actively disagreeable. She tells the party about an incident that happened several months ago: Lady Carmina Bordeaux came to Inspirations Unlimited, saying she wanted to become a painter. Nemaia interviewed her, just as she does with all prospective clients, and determined that she wasn't a good fit. Miscellania explains that this happens sometimes, but that in this case, Lady Bordeaux became very upset and burst into tears. Aesthetika is so kind hearted that she offered right then to take Lady Bordeaux on as a private client, at which point the sobbing immediately stopped in a way that made Miscellania suspect that it had been rather performative. Still, she tells the party, there is no rule preventing any of the muses from working privately with anyone of their choosing... although in her experience, if Nemaia has ruled someone out as a client, there's usually a good reason for it. Miscellania tells the party that, sure enough, there was indeed a good reason for this: Lady Carmina Bordeaux was under the impression that Aesthetika was just going to magically make her a painter - and not just a skilled painter, but a *famous* painter, one who made lots of money selling her paintings. Miscellania reminds the party that many skilled painters work their whole lives without ever achieving fame or commercial success, and that this happens even after years of practice and toil. Lady Bordeaux was uninterested in doing any sort of practicing and certainly no toil; she just wanted an instant infusion of skill. When it became clear that Lady Bordeaux was unwilling to do any sort of work at all, Aesthetika refunded the money she'd been paid, but Miscellania tells the party that Aesthetika still feels badly about the incident.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Koreos and Miscellania don't need to approach parties, but they'll be near the tavern (or inside it) Saturday 6-8pm with the Marble Maze and some technomagical wand components. Ideally, they'll be noticeable enough that parties that haven't yet had a chance to do the maze and/or hivemind challenges can see that they're there! If the party has already done both challenges, it's up to the discretion of the muses and the Companion whether or not they are allowed to do it again to get another component or two.

Activity: the marble maze challenge and/or hivemind challenge

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Info to give the party directly: none

Reason this encounter matters: Not all parties will manage two visits to Inspirations Unlimited before it closes at 4pm. We wanted those parties to have a chance to do these cool activities and to get wand components. Also, we ask Koreos and Miscellania for their help in monitoring the participants' emotional well-being at what is sometimes a low point in the weekend. Please notify the EMs of anything concerning!

Item(s) to have on hand: marble maze, marbles, wand components

Nemaia -- Kristi Hayes

Age: definitely either middle-aged or immortal. Unclear which.

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Traveler Lore concerning Inspirations Unlimited appears on page 207.

A description of Inspirations Unlimited's Wand Distribution appears on page 345.

A description of the Marble Maze Challenge appears on page 346.

A description of the Hivemind Challenge appears on page 347.

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nemaia tells the party that Aesthetika is a very generous and compassionate person. The world is not always kind to people like that, which is a shame. She tells the party about an incident that happened several months ago: Nemaia explains that when a creator wishes to contract with one of the muses, she conducts an interview with that person. Assuming they are judged to be a good fit, they pay a nominal fee and are matched with a muse. After that point, there are any number of different services the muse in question might provide. Some creatives need assistance brainstorming ideas. Others benefit from a structured work plan. Some need encouragement and praise, while others are better served with a tough love approach. Nearly all of them can use practical support: childcare, food preparation and the like. Of course, not everyone who comes to Inspirations Unlimited is actually looking for the sort of service they provide. Some people are under the impression that they use magic to produce results, which is not the case. The muses can help a great deal, but it is still a tremendous amount of work on the part of the creator in question, and not everyone is prepared for that. This, Nemaia says, is at the heart of the incident she mentioned. A potential client approached Inspirations Unlimited, but was not, to Nemaia's thinking, a good fit, and was thus turned away. Nemaia tells the party that this caused great distress to the would-be client, and seeing this distress, compassionate Aesthetika offered to work with them privately. There is no rule against this, of course. Sadly, it didn't appear that the working relationship was a fruitful one. Aesthetika attempted many things to assist her client in becoming a more skilled painter, but ultimately, the client wasn't willing to put in the copious work that this requires. Nemaia tells the party that this still weighs on Aesthetika. *If the party asks who the client was*, Nemaia says that she doesn't discuss anything clients - even would-be clients - say to her.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nemaia tells the party that Miscellania has seemed really happy lately, which she loves to see. She's been spending a lot of time with Milton Peacock and Nemaia is guessing that this is the source of Miscellania's happiness. Nemaia confesses that she's worried about what will happen if Milton is convicted of embezzlement. Nemaia acknowledges that her muses are all adults, but still, she hates to see them hurt, and she's afraid there is hurt in Miscellania's future.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Sunday, just before the trial

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you

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approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nemaia circulates just before the trial, asking if anyone has seen Cary Montalvo

Reason this info matters: this sets the stage for Nemaia's scene with J Peg (and reminds the parties that no, they haven't seen Cary)

Lakeside Cabin's Two Wand-Distribution Challenges

Explanation: Unlike most other staff, the characters in Lakeside Cabin (Inspirations Unlimited, in this plot) have two different challenges that they'll hopefully complete with all/most parties. [Note that in this plot, the "Lakeside Cabin Set Location" is not ACTUALLY in Lakeside. It's in Hillcrest. But EMOTIONALLY it's in Lakeside. We apologize for the confusion.] Here's why the two-challenge system is happening and how it works:

All of the characters in Lakeside are performing the Marble Maze challenge. This challenge can be performed with any party, not just the parties who are assigned to get a party-path item from Lakeside. Because Lakeside is so centrally located, most parties stop by at least once even if there is no party-path item they need there.

After the party has spent an appropriate amount of time playing with the Marble Maze, the staff reward them with 3 wand components - 1 Target, 1 Qualifier and 1 Action - all of which are chosen blindly. (That is, the maker closes their eyes and picks one component from each of the three trays, thereby ensuring that they don't end up with, say, 3 Qualifiers.)

Before the party leaves Lakeside, the staff invite them to return at a later time, saying that they have one additional activity they're hoping the party can help them with. They tell the party that they'll reward them with additional wand components for doing so. (We want to make sure the parties know that it's worthwhile to return to Lakeside.)

When the party does return, the staff in Lakeside can perform the Hivemind challenge with them. After the party has spent an appropriate amount of time playing Hivemind, the staff reward them with 2 wand components. These are also chosen blindly, but the maker can decide which tray(s) of components they want to pick from. That way, if a maker knows they need more Targets, they can choose 2 from that tray, even though they can't determine what Targets they'll get.

In general, we are hoping most parties will complete the two challenges in this order: Marble Maze first, then some time doing something else, then the Hivemind challenge. This isn't essential, however, and there are several cases where flexibility is warranted.

For example, if Arden has just started playing the Marble Maze and then Clairia arrives at Lakeside, it might make sense for a staffperson or two to step outside the cabin and perform the Hivemind challenge with Clairia. That way, Clairia doesn't get sent away, nor do they need to wait 20 minutes for Arden to finish up.

Or, it might be the case that a participant from Keer is sitting resting in the tavern while his party walks up to the Roamers. Even if Keer hasn't completed the Marble Maze yet, a staffperson or two from Lakeside could come over to the tavern, play Hivemind with the participant and then leave him with 2 wand components to give his party's maker when they return.

If the party completes the Hivemind first, the staff should also invite them to return at a later time to complete the Maze and receive additional wand components.

Regardless of which order the challenges are completed in, staff should reward the party with the proscribed number of wand components: 3 for Marble Maze (chosen blindly, one from each tray) and 2 for Hivemind (chosen blindly from the tray(s) of the maker's choice.)

If the staff in Lakeside are able to keep track of which challenge(s) a given party has completed, that's helpful but not essential.

Educational goal(s): to get useful and interesting wand components distributed to more makers

Item(s) needed for this challenge: three trays of wand components, paper and pencil to keep track of which parties have done which challenge(s)

the Marble Maze Challenge

Activity: All of the Inspirations Unlimited makers (or as many of them as are available) are sharing this challenge. Whether or not a party needs a party path item from one of the makers, staff will be giving out wand components to parties who perform this challenge. (See page 345 for an explanation of how this challenge interacts with these staffers' other challenge.)

Nemaia (or any one of the makers) reminds the party that successful collaboration is the single biggest factor that determines success or failure. A group that works together well is a collaboration, and nothing is more powerful. She tells the party that the UI makers are happy to provide them with some wand components, provided the party spends some time collaborating.

So that the party can practice this, the makers pull out a large board they have. It is an oversized version of a marble maze toy, where a player must maneuver a marble past holes and around walls by using knobs to tilt the board. Our version is significantly larger and instead of knobs, has six handles, one for each person in the party to hold.

The rules are as follows: each participant may use only one hand to hold the handle. A staffperson will place a marble at the starting point, and it must be moved to the designated end point solely by tilting the board (not by touching the marble, obviously.)

On each party's first try, they must get one marble through the maze. There is no time limit; if the marble falls through one of the holes, it is placed back at the starting point by a staffperson.

If the party successfully completes the challenge easily, the staff can increase the difficulty (see below) and let them try again. Each party should spend 10-15 minutes doing the challenge. Success or failure doesn't matter much; we just want the party to have the experience of working together in this way.

The staff have a decent amount of discretion how the challenge gets harder. Possibilities are:

- adding an additional marble or multiple additional marbles
- imposing a time limit
- restricting one or more participants from speaking (especially useful if one person was clearly dominating the instructions last time)
- having one or more people close their eyes and/or having one or more people stand backwards, holding the handle behind them
- requiring different marbles to end in different locations

With whatever challenges are added, it's important to maintain the rule about having only one hand on the handle.

After the party has spent a while doing the activity, the staff give them a reward: 3 wand components, chosen blindly. (That is, the party's maker is allowed to close their eyes and choose 1 component from the Target tray, 1 from the Qualifier tray and 1 from the Action tray.)

Before the party leaves, the staff encourage them to return later and perform a different challenge (Hivemind), after which they're again happy to give out more wand components.

After the party leaves, the staff should record which party it was, so the other staff in the cabin know to play Hivemind with this party when they return.

Educational goal(s): to provide practice working as a team. to allow the party to improve with communication and teamwork skills over repeated attempts

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the marble maze and marbles, the three trays of wand components, and paper and pen to record that a party has completed the challenge

the Hivemind Challenge

Activity: All of the Inspirations Unlimited makers (or as many of them as are available) are sharing this challenge. Whether or not a party needs a party path item from one of the makers, staff will be giving out wand components to parties who perform this challenge. (See page 345 for an explanation of how this challenge interacts with these staffers' other challenge.)

Nemaia (or any one of the makers) reminds the party that successful collaboration is the single biggest factor that determines success or failure. A group that works together well is a collaboration, and nothing is more powerful. She tells the party that the UI makers are happy to provide them with some wand components, provided the party spends some time collaborating.

Much like the Marble Maze, this game, called Hivemind, is about trying to get in the same headspace as the people you're playing with. Nemaia finds it a good way to build teamwork skills amongst her muses, and so they sometimes play it. She suggests the party play it with them now.

To play, the group sits in a circle and picks two people, seated next to each other, to start. Let's call those people A and B.

On the count of three, A and B each say a word – any word – at the same time. Let's say A says "kissing" and B says "spaghetti."

Now B turns to face the person on her other side, C. They're each going to have to say a new word, a word that is at the intersection of the two words that were just said. They can say any word, with only the limitation that they cannot use a word that's been said already (or a variation on it, so they can't say "kisses" or "spaghetti sauce.") On the count of three, B says "mouth" (because that's what you use to kiss and to eat spaghetti) while C says "Olive Garden" (because, tragically, that is his idea of a romantic date spot.) (And yes, "Olive Garden" is of course two words, but nitpicky rules lawyering is really not what this game needs.)

The game keeps going until both players say the same word. (There's at least a chance that players C and D, above, will both say the same word on the next turn.) If the party "wins" the game quickly, especially before everyone has had a chance to go, the staff can have them play again. They can play for 10 minutes or so if the party is enjoying themselves.

Although this game works nicely with the whole party, it can be played with only one participant and one staffperson if needed.

After the party has spent a while doing the activity, the staff give them a reward: 2 wand components, chosen blindly from any tray(s) of the maker's choice. (That is, the party's maker can decide to pick 1 Target and 1 Action, or 2 Actions, etc.)

If the party has not already completed the Marble Maze, the makers encourage them to return later and do so, after which they're again happy to give out more wand components.

Educational goal(s): to relax and be silly; to encourage the participants to work collaboratively

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the three trays of wand components, and paper and pen to record that a party has completed the challenge

Milton Peacock -- Jeff Foley

Age: 51

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Secret Info:

He was 14 years old when his mother got sick. His father had died several years before that, when his mother was pregnant with Elly. He was 16 when it became clear she wasn't ever going to get better.

Near the time she died, she called him – just him, the oldest – to her bedside. She'd looked right into his eyes. "Promise me two things, Milton. Keep making music, all of you."

"Of course, Mama. We always will."

She held her hand up. "That's only half of it. Promise me you'll keep the family together."

"Mama, you don't have to ask for..."

"Promise me, Milton."

He'd promised.

They'd gone on tour for a couple years as the Swallow Brothers Band, but Charlie was right about the name being less than great, even if it was really theirs. Milton wanted something close to that, something memorable. Naming themselves after a different bird – one that people actually knew was a bird, for starters, rather than a verb – was a no brainer. They were getting gigs and playing together as The Peacocks, and the years passed and things were pretty damn good.

They periodically had other vocalists sing with them, especially background singers. Charlie had hooked up briefly with one of these, and now she was gone but Charlie's tiny daughter was with them. And still, things were good. They weren't getting rich but they had music and each other and they lacked nothing.

They'd gone to see a show, a solo vocalist. She was incandescent on the stage, her voice beautiful and haunting and her huge eyes so full of life. Her name was Tanya Simmons.

After the show, they'd milled around with other people in the music biz. Tanya came out, was talking to everyone. Charlie and Elly both watched her, which was hardly surprising. Tanya was gorgeous and most people were watching her.

Milton was as well, but he saw something most people weren't watching for. He saw how she was soaring on the adrenaline rush of a good show, how profoundly she let joy lift her up. And he saw when someone spoke a word or two in her ear – he never did learn what it was, maybe a technical problem or a small criticism – and the light momentarily but profoundly died in her eyes.

The Peacocks became friendly with Tanya – this wasn't hard to do – and even as Elly was growing more and more infatuated with her, Milton saw something that worried him. Tanya felt everything so deeply and when she stumbled even a little, she crashed down hard. Milton had met other people like that before and it ended badly for those people if they didn't have some kind of safety net in place.

Tanya Simmons had legions of fans. But no safety net.

That night, Milton sat down with his brothers and said "I think we should bring Tanya on board."

Elly was already nodding.

But Charlie considered this. "You think we should ask her to join the band?"

Milton shook his head at this. "No. I think we should ask her to join the family."

Even Elly was a little bit taken aback by this.

They were The Peacocks and they were used to speaking candidly with each other. Charlie spoke up now. "You want Elly to propose to her?"

Milton shook his head. "Who Elly proposes to or doesn't is his own business. I'm saying we make her part of the family. And if we do that, Elly needs to understand that even if this..." and here, Milton drew a little sign in the air, meaning Elly-and-Tanya, "...even if this goes south, she is still part of the family. For as long as she wants to be."

Milton was pleased to see that Elly wasn't agreeing to that too quickly.

The brothers sat in silence for several minutes. And then...

"I say yes. But only if Elly is all the way on board." And Charlie looked at his younger brother. Not pushing, just waiting and watching.

After another minute, Elly gave one of those smiles that only Elly could do, like the sun breaking through clouds. "Yes. All the way yes."

They didn't change the name of the band then. And Tanya didn't change her name for three more years, until she married Elly on a misty June day that everyone said was the loveliest wedding they could remember.

The following year, they saw a mediocre band do a mediocre set in a mediocre bar in Arden. There was a guy singing with the band who was harmonizing in a way caught Milton's attention. Like he was finding cracks in the music and filling them in with molten gold.

After the show, Milton spoke to this singer. "What are you doing with this band?" Milton asked. He meant, "Why are you wasting your time in this group that's not worthy of your talents?"

That wasn't the question the guy heard. "Yeah, I know," he answered. "I'm keeping up as best I can, but I'm lucky to have them." Insecurity tightened the muscles in his face and doubt clouded his eyes.

That night, Milton told his brothers "I need to add to the family again." The guy was Shaun Lathan, but that week, his name became Shaun Peacock. And the band officially became the Peacock Family Singers.

Over the years, the pattern repeated itself. Milton found people, talented performers every one, but always with something in their past or their personalities that threatened to drag them under. Mick, with his ferocious anger. Dusty, with her guileless inability to protect herself. Donna, who pushed everyone else down in an attempt to lift herself up.

Some of them came aboard gratefully and gracefully, like Shaun and Dusty. Some of them were wary. "Right. Because I'm clearly a cousin," said Mick, folding his arms across his chest and raising an eyebrow.

But Milton refused to be baited. "No one's saying you're a cousin. If you don't want in, there's no hard feelings. But you're a Peacock or you're not." He never pushed and he never persuaded. He just waited.

And every time, the person decided that yeah, okay. They were Peacocks.

Sometimes they slipped up. Donna pissed people off over and over and sometimes Stevie got blind drunk again after promising she wouldn't. Whenever anyone appealed to Milton, he'd hold up his hand and ask, "Well, she's part of the family, so what do we do about this?" And every time, they found a way forward.

None of that is secret. But it's necessary to know it in order to understand Milton's secret.

He'd promised his mother two things. Weirdly, he'd thought that the first part – to keep making music – was going to be the easier one.

But the family he's built is now unwieldy. Ten-person acts are unusual. When they exist, it's usually a clear lead singer and a lot of interchangeable back-ups. Everyone but the lead is disposable. That's not how the Peacock Family Singers operate.

Also, they don't have a clear musical style, because everybody had different strengths and preferences. You couldn't easily call them a folk group or a pop band or a rock band.

Both those things meant it was hard to get gigs. It's hard to sell what you can't define. And it's hard to budget when you're feeding and clothing and paying ten people. Not everyone in the group had really noticed yet. Milton kept hustling harder and harder. He brought the group all the way to World's Edge, to work with one of the muses from *Inspirations Unlimited*, but Nemaia turned him away. Her voice was gentle when she did so. "Your music is exceptional," she said. "You have more songs than the group has time to sing. You have everything you need, musically." Milton knew that was true even as his heart sank hearing it.

The trip to World's Edge wasn't a total waste, though. Milton started talking with a woman he met there, *Miscellania*. She was herself one of the muses, even though her connection to Milton was personal rather than professional. She is so easy to talk to. She knew something about everything and Milton could talk to her in a way he didn't do even with his family.

"I'm badgering the band to 'up the PIZAZZ!' because I can't think what else to try," he told her.

"Some promoters tell me to 'Cut half the group and then come back.' I can't do that. I'd no more do that than I would cut off Charlie's legs or Elly's arms," he told her.

"I don't know what to do anymore," he told her.

But mostly, they talked about nothing, or at least nothing related to the group. Which was lovely and a relief, after years of thinking about little else.

And Milton didn't tell her how dire the situation was. That the Peacock Family Singers were nearly out of money, and he had to do something.

If more people knew about the Peacock Family Singers, they could be successful, Milton just knew it. And nothing succeeds like success. If people knew them, if people believed they were already a hugely successful band, they'd have it made.

And that's when Milton made his choice.

It was, ultimately, quite simple. He wrote an anonymous letter to Justice Orion Wilde, who was scheduled to visit World's Edge soon. In it, the anonymous writer accused Milton of embezzling 12,000 royals from the Peacock Family Singers and provided the Justice with the band's bank account. Milton was the only one with access to the account, so there was little chance anyone else could get blamed for taking the money.

And of course, Milton didn't actually have to take anything, because there wasn't any money there to take.

The plan is already starting to work. There's a reporter in town who's writing an article about the Peacock Family Singers, and people are starting to pay more attention. People love a story of artists who've been screwed over by a manager. And a band that had so much money to steal is clearly a band worth listening to. Milton's plan is working.

Of course, the downside is that he's going to go to jail. Quite possibly for a very long time. He wishes he didn't have to do that, especially now that he's met Miscellania. She is... special. Really, really special. He could imagine a true future with her, and that's not going to happen now.

But in the end, it doesn't matter. It will be worth it, because he will have kept the promise he made more than thirty years ago. At night, when the rest of the Peacocks are asleep, he looks up at the stars and speaks very softly.

"They'll keep making music, Mama.

And I did it. I kept the family together."

A description of the Perfect Square Challenge appears on page 379.

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the perfect square challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: pendant set with a fire gem

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time all weekend, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: There's no specific information Milton needs to convey here, but he should do his PIZAZZ! shtick in front of parties when possible..

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for and adds emotional impact to the Big Musical Number

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Milton tells the party that in business as in life, first impressions are very important. For instance, he's sure that the Smirches have a perfectly fine establishment stocking all sorts of useful merchandise, but he is unhappy to report that his first experience at the shop was an... unappetizing one. Milton tells the party that he'd gone up to the shop several weeks ago and no sooner had he crossed the threshold that he stepped into an unfortunate puddle of slime and lint and goodness-knows-what. Housekeeping is a time-consuming task, but so important!

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Milton tells the party that he very much regrets taking all that money away from the Peacock Family Singers. He hid his gambling from the band and from his good friend Miscellania, and recently his debts spiraled completely out of control. Milton says that he knew it was wrong to steal the money, but that he just hadn't known what else to do. He tells the party that he's hopeful the Peacock Family Singers will be able to bounce back from this financial loss. The band's star is really on the rise! They're sounding better than ever before and really upping the PIZAZZ! He asks the party if they've seen the posters in the tavern about the free show the band is performing on Sunday evening. Milton explains that his friend Miscellania made the posters for them - she's done a bit of graphic design - and they came out great! If the party has questions about the gambling, Milton answers them well (that is, he doesn't make it clear he's lying) and as vaguely as possible (e.g. there are bad guys in another town that he owed all the money to.)

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Charlie Peacock -- Chris Reichert

Age: 48

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

A description of the Perfect Square Challenge appears on page 379.

Arden

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the perfect square challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: cowry shell

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time they're not otherwise occupied

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Charlie tells the party that he's concerned about his older brother Milton. Milton works so hard to make the band a success, Charlie says. Charlie wishes sometimes that his brother could remember that yes, music is a business. But it's more than that. It's a gift.

Reason this info matters: this provides emotional resonance to the Peacock Family Singers contributions to the Big Musical Number

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Charlie tells the party that his sister-in-law Tanya is having a birthday on Sunday. Tanya always likes making a big deal of her birthday and ordered a tiara from the Tirothian Trading Company catalog. Charlie tells the party that he thought this was a good plan, so much so that he's a little annoyed he didn't think of it first, because 8 royals - plus probably 20 more for shipping and handling; that's how they get you - seems like a small price to make Tanya so happy. Anyway, he hadn't thought much more about the subject, but then Tanya got a notice saying the package had been delivered despite the package being nowhere to be found. Charlie tells the party that he and his brothers had asked around, figuring someone else had signed for the package and it was just misplaced, but so far it hadn't turned up. Maybe that would've been the end of the matter - although knowing Tanya, there's a good chance it wouldn't have - but then on Friday a group of Makai had shown up in town and one of them walked into the tavern wearing Tanya's tiara. That, Charlie explains, means that this is now a situation. And to be fair, you can't blame Tanya for wanting the tiara she ordered. At this point, Charlie is just trying to stay out of the line of fire.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Charlie tells the party that although the Peacock Family Singers haven't been in town long, Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater have made them feel like part of the community. Charlie says that Solomon was away recently and only returned on Friday. Solomon got a letter from his native Keer because his elderly father was dying and so he made the trip back there to say goodbye. Solomon even pinned a drawing of himself to the bar so that all the patrons would behave themselves while he was away. Charlie tells the party that he was in the tavern when Solomon got back, and the story Solomon told was a strange one. From the sound of it, when Solomon got to Keer, it turned out his father was actually fine and no one knew who'd sent the letter or why. As far as Charlie heard, Solomon has no idea what the whole thing was about.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Charlie tells the party that he's not sure most of the other Peacocks know this, but Milton brought the band to World's Edge because he wanted to work with Melados, the muse of music. Charlie tells the party that he tried to tell Milton that this wasn't necessary, that they have a lot of great songs and that Milton continues to write more, but Milton wouldn't listen. Charlie explains that his older brother has always been hyper-focused on making the band a commercial success, and he thought maybe better songs would do that. Charlie says that the reality is that it's really hard to cover expenses with a 10-person band. The Peacock Family Singers are great musically, but they're not necessarily a band that's commercially viable enough to support all those people full time. Charlie says that he doesn't see this as a problem; maybe it means that some or all of them need to work part-time at something else. But Milton didn't want to consider that. Charlie tells the party that Milton went to Inspirations Unlimited and talked to Nemaia, and Nemaia turned him away because she said Milton already has all he needs, musically. Charlie points out that this is in fact what he himself has been saying all along. Charlie says that Milton's visit to Inspirations Unlimited wasn't completely a waste because it seems like his brother has become friendly with Miscellania, one of the muses. *If and only if the party asks about Milton stealing money from the band*, Charlie says that he just doesn't understand this and that Milton refuses to talk to him about it.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Elliot (Elly) Peacock -- Mike Robb

Age: 40

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

A description of the Perfect Square Challenge appears on page 379.

Keer

Approximately when: Friday night (Elly is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: none

Before leaving, Elly needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at the Peacock Family Singers camp, although there is one nearby. If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should probably do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Keer. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Elly should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once Elly has escorted the party to the Peacock Family Singers camp and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, he returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Elly tells the party just how odd it was, waking up this morning with absolutely no recollection of the night before. He explains that yes, he was planning on going to Cary Montalvo's bachelor party - and he did? He thinks? - and so maybe he had a drink or two more than he should've. But he doesn't remember *anything*... and apparently, neither does anyone else in town.

Elly explains that he talked with Pascal Valerius and his husband Santiago. They were out of town last night, and neither of them have any difficulty remembering exactly where and when they had dinner and what they talked about afterwards. But none of the people who were actually in World's Edge can remember anything. It's the strangest feeling.

Item(s) to give this party: none

Sythwan

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Elly is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the perfect square challenge

Info to give the party directly: Elly tells the party that he heard they were looking for a celadon egg. He has one, and he'd be happy to let the party have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At the very end of the encounter, Elly asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Elly could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: celadon egg

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Elly tells the party that he'd woken up early on Friday morning. His brain wasn't even functioning yet and it hadn't even occurred to him that he couldn't remember a single thing about the night before. Elly tells the party that he went in search of coffee, but when he walked down to the tavern, he was in for a shock. The theater in the center of town, which people had been restoring, it was just... gone. It had burned till only the skeleton of the building remained. He was standing staring at it when Danny Donovan came out of the tavern. It was clear Danny was as shocked to see the burned building as Elly himself was. Of course, Danny was a shocking sight himself. His face and hands and clothes were covered with soot and he smelled almost as much of smoke as the theater did. Elly tells the party that now people are saying that Danny set the fire. He can't imagine doing something like that and then just forgetting about it, but he was there when Danny saw the theater... or, rather, the remains of it. And Elly can attest: until that moment, Danny had absolutely no idea what he'd done.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Elliott tells the party about something odd that happened about a week ago. He explains that he and Tanya had gone out for a walk, and when they returned home, there was a little painting set atop his belongings. Pretty cool, huh? A day or two later, Elly says, he'd noticed that 55 royals were missing from his trunk. He's not sure if the money went missing before or after the painting was left, or possibly at the same time. Elly tells the party that Tanya has taken a walk every day since because she's hoping there'll be another painting left when she gets back, but so far, nothing. Maybe tomorrow's the lucky day!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Elly tells the party that his parents died a long time ago - his father before he was even born, and his mother when he was only five - and that his brothers, Milton especially, raised him. Elly says that he doesn't believe these stories about Milton stealing all that money from the band, not even if Milton is the one telling the stories. He tells the party that the Peacock Family Singers have been touring as a band for more than two decades now, and in that time he's never seen Milton do anything that's not in the best interest of the band. They weren't always ten people like they are now. Elly tells the party that he remembers 8 or so years ago, when Mick joined the band. Milton and Elly had gone to see him perform. Mick was so good, but it was almost hard to watch him because there was so much anger in him that you could almost see it spilling out of him. There's a lot of great music that's fueled by rage, Elly says, but this wasn't like that. They'd talked with Mick after the show and gods, this anger just seemed like it was festering in him. It was a bad situation with that band, with the place Mick was in his head. Elly confesses to the party that as much talent as he saw in Mick, it made him nervous, taking someone like that on board. Milton, though, had made up his mind. He convinced Mick to join them, and it turned out Milton was right. Away from those guys he'd been living and performing with, Mick's anger cooled down a lot. Elly tells the party Mick won't ever be the most easygoing guy, but that he seems a lot happier now. And there's no denying he's super talented. Milton is great at that, at seeing what's needed. Elly refuses to believe he'd do anything to hurt the other Peacocks.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Tanya Peacock -- Dana Sullivan

Age: 42

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

A description of the Pitchpipe Challenge appears on page 378.

Noctara

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the pitchpipe challenge

Info to give the party directly: Tanya tells the party that yes, she absolutely DOES have an azure riverstone and NOTHING would give her more pleasure than giving it to them because they are AMAZING. The only TINY ISSUE is that the riverstone is GOOD LUCK and she's always slept with it under her pillow the NIGHT BEFORE HER BIRTHDAY. Which is in fact THIS VERY NIGHT. Tanya tells the party that she will meet them BRIGHT AND EARLY on Sunday - 9:15am, in the tavern - and will give them the azure riverstone then.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. MAKE SURE the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Tanya tells the party that the past several days have been some of the best and worst of her life. First, her very dear new friend Belle asked her to be a BRIDESMAID and obviously she said YES. Tanya tells the party that she absolutely ADORES Belle. And THEN she learned that Belle and Cary's wedding - Tanya adores Cary as well and he and Belle are SO GREAT TOGETHER - is on Sunday which is ALSO Tanya's BIRTHDAY. Tanya tells the party that she decided to order herself a beautiful TIARA to wear on the non-wedding parts of the day and she found the EXACT ONE she wanted in a catalog! Tanya explains that she was SO excited for the tiara to arrive and when she got a notice saying that it had been DELIVERED she basically SCREAMED. But then, when she went to the tavern to collect the package, it wasn't there. It wasn't outside the door or inside the door or by the back door or behind the bar. Tanya tells the party that she was just GUTTED. People were so kind and helped her look but the package was just NOWHERE. And then a group of people arrived in town - the Makai? - and one of the men - Something Something Dealbinder? - came into the tavern and he was WEARING TANYA'S TIARA. Well. Tanya tells the party that the next few hours are a bit of a BLUR but apparently this Dealbinder person is claiming that the tiara is HIS which is a BALDFACED LIE. Tanya explains to the party that she does not want this Dealbinder man to be sent to prison but that she absolutely needs her tiara back RIGHT NOW. This is not just about the 8 royals for the tiara plus the 16 royal shipping fee but rather is about the PRINCIPLE OF THE THING. And also possibly about her PAIN and SUFFERING which has been INTENSE.

Item(s) to give this party: none (she'll meet them in the tavern at 9:15am Sunday to give them the azure riverstone)

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Tanya tells the party that she hasn't known Ember long - Ember got to town about 6 weeks ago, shortly before the Peacock Family Singers did - but that Tanya ADORES Ember. Tanya hopes Ember adores her back. It's honestly a little... hard to tell with Ember? That's just part of what makes Ember SO COOL. So many people are fake, Tanya says, but Ember is always 100% REAL. If Ember doesn't want to talk to you, she doesn't waste anyone's time; she'll just say "I don't want to talk to you" and walk away, and Tanya finds that SUPER REFRESHING. Tanya tells the party that when she found out that she and Ember were both going to be Belle's bridesmaids she literally SCREAMED. Ember DOES adore her, Tanya just knows it. Just yesterday Ember came and sat down kind of near Tanya! #SquadGoals!

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Tanya tells the party that Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater have been SUPER welcoming to all the Peacocks. Solomon recently had to be away for a couple weeks, and before he left, he'd hung a picture of himself on the bar so that everyone behaved while he was away. Tanya tells the party that, a few days after Solomon left, she was in the tavern when a guy she didn't recognize came in. This guy took a look at the sketch of Solomon and said, "That's Scurvy Jack Brigham! I'm positive of it!" Tanya tells the party that *then*, a couple nights later, a different stranger came in and the EXACT SAME THING HAPPENED. Tanya tells the party that of course she doesn't want to make light of a serious crime like piracy but also that this is SUPER EXCITING. She's been coming to the tavern just about every day, and all along, it was the COMPLETELY FAMOUS pirate Scurvy Jack bringing her coffee! Of course, officially everyone will keep calling Jack by his alias. Jack - or, rather, quote-unquote *Solomon Stillwater* doesn't have to worry. His SECRET is 100% SAFE with TANYA!

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Noctara, again

Time: 9:15am, Sunday (Tanya is the penultimate step for this party, meeting them in the tavern with the azure riverstone and then accompanying them to their party path ending.)

Info to give the party directly: Tanya has the item for them, but asks of them one additional favor: after they have completed their party path, she'd like them to accompany her to talk to Kerrick Dealbinder about her stolen tiara. Tanya accompanies them to Serenity Point, staying quiet and out of the way for their encounter with Bonnie Stillwater. After this encounter is completely finished, Tanya reminds them that she wants to talk to Kerrick Dealbinder, in the Makai camp. It's possible, depending on what the party thinks about their vision/this charge, that they might want to seek out Karla Smirch. Given that they'll be near the Smirches' shop already, they might ask to do this first. So long as it's before 10:15am, it's fine for Tanya to go with them to the Smirches' to look for her. Karla won't be in the shop, although Ursula will. Ursula won't give the party any information and should engage with them as little as possible. If it's after 10:15am, Tanya and the Companion should steer them away from the Smirches' shop, since Waylon will be finishing their own party path there! (The only reason we're letting the party go to the shop if it's earlier is so they don't waste lots of time walking back later.)

Item(s) to give this party: copperstone crown

Noctara, still

When to approach a party: on Sunday after their party path is complete, around 9:30am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: This scene includes a lot of staff, not all of whom are present the whole time. Explaining the sequencing is easiest if it's presented as one big encounter, so please read the whole thing to find your name. This sort of encounter will henceforth be known as a Noctaran Clusterfuck.

On Sunday after their party path is complete (around 9:30), Tanya Peacock brings the party to the Makai camp. There, they find an agitated Kerrick Dealbinder. He has captured an intruder! This intruder is currently trapped inside a *very* large cloth sack. Dealbinder is periodically poking the sack and demanding that the intruder confess, which the intruder has thus far refused to do.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

After the party presumably removes the intruder from the sack, they learn that it's Jack Johnson. This revelation should have a sort of zany, madcap feel to it in keeping with this charge, and in the beginning, all the staff present are talking at once. Dealbinder is trying to interrogate Jack, Jack is outraged that Dealbinder captured him but is otherwise proclaiming his unwillingness to talk, and Tanya is loudly insisting that Dealbinder give her the tiara. Ideally the party will have at least some ideas about what has gone on here, but even if they understand little, we hope they will take control of the scene and restore some semblance of order! Eventually, lead as much by the party as possible, the staff can reveal the following information:

- "Jack Johnson" isn't really a talent scout. His real name is Ethan Frank, and he's a palace guard in Dolorón, a job he hates (and is frankly terrible at.) He has his employee ID badge with him.

- The crown Dealbinder has isn't Tanya's missing tiara. It's part of the crown jewels of Lyria, and it was stolen on Ethan's watch. He's trying to return it before anyone else at the palace learns it's missing.
- The crown was stolen by a ring of jewel thieves people are calling the Gilt Crew. Surprisingly, Ethan was able to track some of them down. (Ethan is, in fact, a pretty smart guy. He just can't see well.) He knows there is a mastermind behind this heist, but not who it is. (As far as he's concerned, that doesn't matter; he just wants to return the crown.)
- Ethan heard rumors that the crown had been taken to World's Edge, so he came here looking for it. He hadn't been able to locate it... until Kerrick Dealbinder walked into the tavern wearing it.
- Ethan has been trying to steal the crown back from Dealbinder for the past several days, but every time he's tried, he's been thwarted. By the Makai.
- Ethan has a note in his possession and eventually shows it to the party. It was sent to one of the members of the Gilt Crew by the person who masterminded the heist. It says: "*Leave the crown in the pre-arranged drop location. Once its authenticity has been verified, your share of the proceeds will be sent to you.*" It's signed not with a name but with a sabertooth symbol.
- It's likely the party won't learn all this information before being interrupted again (see below), which is fine. Still, the staff do ultimately need to convey the above info.

After the party has been interacting with Tanya Peacock/Kerrick Dealbinder/Jack Johnson for 5-10 minutes, Phineas Smirch enters the Makai camp. Phineas is oblivious to whatever drama is currently unfolding and he makes an announcement to Dealbinder: this is Dealbinder's lucky day, because Phineas is prepared to buy the crown from him for 10 royals! That's (Phineas thinks) 2 royals more than the crown is worth, and given that (Phineas thinks) Dealbinder stole the crown in the first place, this is pure profit for him! 30 seconds later, the KPS (Kingdom Postal Service) Guy arrives and announces he has a delivery for Tanya Peacock. Sorry he's running late! Hopefully these additional intrusions plunge the scene back into chaos and the party can again gain control! Once they do, additional info is revealed:

- When Phineas went to bring Karla her breakfast tray, she was talking in her sleep, saying something about needing the crown. Obviously Phineas wants his little girl to be happy, which is why he's here with this extremely generous offer for Dealbinder.
- Tanya's package obviously contains the tiara she ordered from Tirothian Trading Company. 8 royals was probably overpaying for it. Tanya, however, is DELIGHTED by it. Once she realizes he didn't steal her crown, Kerrick Dealbinder is her new best friend. TWINNING!
- Phineas has no idea that Karla is the mastermind behind this heist or anything else. If the party seems to have no idea about this, Phineas can casually refer to her as Fang once. Hopefully this won't be necessary. If the party tells him about her involvement, he is proud but extremely surprised.

There are so many people involved in this scene that it's challenging to say exactly how it will go. The staff should convey their info as best they can and be ready for whatever. If something unexpected happens, we'll fix it afterwards.

Ultimately, Ethan won't leave the Makai camp without the crown. He and Tanya leave the camp with the party; the remaining staff should play this by ear. Because the party is about to get attacked, it is much easier if staff are at the rear of the party or at least the middle, rather than being out in front!

As the party is leaving the Makai camp, they encounter the Hired Wolven Hit Squad. Although there aren't terribly many Wolven in this squad, they are imposing foes. When they see the party, one of them says "They have it! Move in!" and then they engage. The Wolven put up a very good fight but are eventually killed. If the party doesn't think to search their bodies, Tanya says "Ooh, I wonder if they have any TREASURE?" They don't, but they *do* have a note, which reads: "*Half the payment is enclosed; the remainder will be placed in the usual location upon completion of the job. On Sunday morning, retrieve the crown from Starwatcher's Hill and leave it in the drop spot. Kill anyone who stands in your way.*" It, too, is signed with the sabertooth symbol.

If the party captures and/or magically questions any member of the hit squad, the Wolven reveal that they were paid 800 royals down with the promise of 800 more upon completion. They don't know who hired them. Their "drop spot" is a random obscure spot far out in the woods.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Joni Peacock -- Emily Bernier

Age: 24

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

A description of the Perfect Square Challenge appears on page 379.

P'loa

Approximately when: Friday (Joni is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they *don't*, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the perfect square challenge

Info to give the party directly: Joni tells the party that, just as Obsidian said, she does know a little bit about a ritual to locate a lost person. Joni herself is not a caster, but she recently met a gentleman who is.

She explains that, when the Peacock Family Singers are on tour like this, there's a lot of down time. When she can, she likes to see if there's ways she can help people out in whatever place they're staying. They've been in World's Edge longer than many places they go, and about a week ago, she helped an elderly man who couldn't read or write. The gentleman in question is what they call a hedge-wizard, a caster who's never had any sort of formal training but who has innate magical ability. He'd wanted to write a will, and that's what Joni helped him with.

Joni tells the party that she found the gentleman's will so interesting that she asked if she could make an extra copy of it, and he'd agreed. The will talks about a ritual, what the hedge-wizard called a Ritual of Togetherness, which could be used to locate a missing person. Joni gives the will to the party and tells them they're welcome to keep it.

I, Jed Thimble, being of sound mind and old body, do hereby and forthwith and henceforth lay out this accounting of what's for who: My oldest, Peggie, is to get the house, on account of she's the one who's cleaned it ever since her ma passed, and that seems only right. My middlest, Little Jay, is to get the cows, on account of how they like him best, and there's no sense making a cow mad and expecting anything but nasty thinnish milk from her.

My littlest, Binnie, is to get whatever cash can be scraped together from selling the rest, and my apologies that it's not more.

All of mine are to keep track of this ritual, which has come in handy more times than I can count over the years. Did a nice job putting this together if I do say so myself.

I don't know that this ritual has a big fancy name. In my head I always called it the Ritual of Togetherness, and since I'm the one who's having it set to paper, I guess that's as good a name as any.

A Ritual of Togetherness is for when you need to find a person, including a person who's laying cold in a grave. It's not necessarily for bringing you to them, or them to you. It's for bringing the both of you together. That's why it's called that.

Here's what you need:

- a strong cedarwood box*
- something what belonged to the person you want to find*
- a fluorite crystal*
- a seekingstone*
- a shimmerstone orb*
- a small bunch of leatherleaf herb*
- favor from the Court of Mirrors*
- ashes of a lightning-struck oak*
- black diamond shards*

Getting the stuff's the only hard part of the ritual. Once you've got it, all you need to do is go to the person's last known location, then put all the stuff in the cedarwood box. Give it just a minute or two for the magics to all get familiar with each other – and then you're on your way!

This ends my last will and testament. Signed this September 25 – Jed Thimble's mark

Joni says she has a few ideas about who the party might be able to acquire some of these items from. She strongly advises the party to write these names down right on the will itself. She knows she forgets everything if she doesn't write it down!

- cedarwood box – Ned Crochett
- something belonging to the person you want to find – Angelica Sprink
- fluorite crystal – Irena Montalvo

- seekingstone – Quinoa
- shimmerstone orb – Lincroft Spence
- leatherleaf herb – Vernon Gill
- ashes of a lightning-struck oak – Kira

Joni tells the party that she's not sure where they might go to get black diamond shards.

As for the favor from the Court of Mirrors, she's not entirely certain what to tell them. The Court is some sort of parallel mirror dimension, very dark and deadly. There used to be a portal to the Court on the grounds of the Baron's home, but it was very dangerous and the Baron's family has someone perform the rituals needed to keep the portal closed. That's a good thing, because it was apparently a terrible place, but it does mean Joni has no idea how they'll acquire a favor from the Court.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Joni will be assigning a charge to this party on Saturday. There's no specific information Joni needs to convey, and doing that should be easier since she's had a brief but positive interaction with the party.

Item(s) to give this party: the will listing the items they'll need to find

P'loa

When to approach a party: Joni is assigning this party's charge. She is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, Joni approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Solomon Stillwater. Joni tells the party that she and the other Peacocks haven't been in town for very long, but it's already apparent to her that Solomon is a good person. The Peacock Family Singers travel a lot, which means they're often strangers in a new town. Joni tells the party that not everyone is friendly to strangers, but Solomon is, and was right from the moment the group first arrived. Solomon is one of those people who can be in charge when he needs to be, Joni says, but you only need to look at his face to see that he's very kind. It was shocking to her to hear people accusing him of piracy. She tells the party that she's a little worried because Solomon himself doesn't seem to be taking this accusation at all seriously. Joni says that she wants to believe that Justice Wilde will find out the truth no matter what, but... what if he doesn't? He's just a person, and sometimes people make mistakes. The idea of Solomon going to prison for something he didn't do is terrible to her, and she'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against Solomon.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Joni tells the party that she probably shouldn't say this, but that the Smirches are kind of terrible. They're just really kind of awful people. Joni tells the party that it sort of caught her off-guard, when she found out Ember is friends with Karmin Smirch. Maybe Karmin isn't like the rest of his family? Joni tells the party that he doesn't seem like a great guy, but Ember is probably a pretty good judge of character, and if Ember likes Karmin then maybe he's a good guy after all? Joni confesses that she'd like to be friends with Ember. Maybe that could happen? If Ember was trying to grow her audience? Joni tells the party that she doubts it. Ember is too cool to be friends with her.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Joni tells the party that nothing about this story, where Milton embezzled 12 thousand royals from the band, makes any sense. It's not that Milton couldn't take money out of the Peacock account if he wanted to. He's the one who manages all of the band's finances, so he could absolutely do this. But, Joni tells the party, she can't imagine how the band managed to accumulate that much money. Nor can she imagine how Milton would possibly accrue such significant gambling debts. 12 thousand royals is a huge amount of money! None of this makes any sense, Joni says.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael, the party encounters a group of women - Pearl Bryce, Nix Valerius, Joni Peacock, Donna Peacock and Nina Bliss - all feverishly discussing a plan. Pearl pulls the party over and tells them what's happening. She explains that they cannot allow Katherine Carmichael to go to jail for shooting Vernon Gill. Vernon is an odious person, she says, and surely Katherine must have had a valid reason for shooting him. [Remember: none of these women know that Vernon is faking his injuries or that Katherine didn't really shoot him!] Joni tells the party that they all love the Kit Carnage books so much. Kit has been so important to all of them. Donna reiterates that they cannot let Katherine go to jail.

Nix tells the party that Pearl has come up with a plan to keep Katherine from going to jail. When Katherine's charge comes to trial, Pearl is going to claim that *she* was the one who shot Vernon. And then Nix is going to say that no, *she* shot him. Then Joni and Donna are also going to claim that *they* were the ones who shot him. With so many other people confessing, Justice Wilde can't possibly rule that Katherine is guilty! [Note: yes, this plan is 100% us ripping off the "I'm Spartacus" scene.]

Nina interrupts here. She tells the others - as she has already been doing - that this plan isn't going to work. First of all, they cannot get up and lie in a Lyrian court of law. Second of all, even if they're willing to commit perjury - which they should not be! - this plan is likely to result in a legal situation the law calls Merrick's Conundrum. In a case like this, it's not at all impossible that Justice Wilde could simply declare all of them - Katherine Carmichael *and* Pearl and Nix and Joni and Donna - guilty! He could require *all* of them to pay damages to Vernon Gill, resulting in the unpleasant Mr. Gill receiving a very, very large amount of money indeed! And he could send *all* of them to jail.

The group then resumes arguing amongst themselves, because Pearl is still insisting that they need *some* plan to save Katherine, while Nina is sympathetic but vehemently opposed to this particular plan. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

Hopefully at some point in here the party confides in these women and tells them the truth about Katherine, that she didn't shoot Vernon or anyone else. Assuming the party does this, all these women are overcome. Katherine is an inspiration! She's so brave! Hopefully, the party then makes the leap to the fact that telling Katherine's real life story will inspire women and girls just like Kit Carnage's stories do... and Katherine is actually real.

If the party *doesn't* tell these women the truth here, or if they propose a different plan, someone should tell the Basement and we'll make a plan from there! Also, if it's early enough and if it seems like the party really wants to have this scene with Katherine pre-trial, then we can send her back out at that time.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Shaun Peacock -- Eli Hunt

Age: 43

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

A description of the Pitchpipe Challenge appears on page 378.

Keer

Approximately when: Friday (Shaun is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they don't, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the pitchpipe challenge

Info to give the party directly: Shaun tells the party that yes, he does know some things about the Knights of the Golden Circle. He's very sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but he thinks it's very unlikely the party will be able to summon them successfully. Still, they seem like extremely capable people so it's certainly worth a try...

Shaun just happens to have a paper explaining how it is that people once summoned the Knights. He explains that there is a group of local children who like to visit the Peacock camp on their way home from school. One of them, a young girl named Mara, struggled with learning to read and write, and so Shaun's been spending a little extra time with her. He knows how it is to be the slowest one in the class.

Several weeks ago, Shaun tells the party, he'd told the girl the story of the Knights and just recently, she surprised him by writing the story down for him. He wouldn't normally give away something like this, but he knows how important the party's mission is. Besides, this way he can ask Mara for another story. She's a bright little thing and all she needs is a little more practice to catch up to her classmates.

The Knights Of The Golden Circle

told by Shaun Pecok

writtun by Mara

Wunce upon a time, many many years ago (before Shaun was even born! when Obsiddien was a little baby!) there were some wonderful knights called the Knights of the Golden Circle. They were the best knights in the whole land – brave and strong and good. Whenever a person truely needed help, they could magically call upon the Knights and the Knights would always come and help them. Here is the way that someone would sumon the Knights:

The person would need to gather together:

*a perfect spheer of earth
a perfect spheer of air
a perfect spheer of fire
a perfect spheer of watter
limelite
a fortshun's wheel pendint
a horn of sumoning
a ring set with a glimmergem
a nightstone ring*

When all those things had been gathered, the person needed to stand in just the right place. In World's Edge it would be the Bowwer of Dremes. One person would hold the earth spheer and another person would hold the air spheer and another person would hold the fire spheer and another person would hold the watter spheer. They would be four people, so they would stand in a diamond-shape. In the center of the diamond-shape would be two more people. One of them would hold the horn of sumoning and put on the nightstone ring and the glimmergem ring. The other person would hold the limelite and put on the fortshun's weel pendint. That person would say Summoned are you, o Knights. Great is our need. O heare this our plea. Just when they finished with the words, the one holding the horn of sumoning would blow it loud for a long time.

Then, if the need was really truely great, then the Knights would come.

Nowadays, there are no Knights of the Golden Circle anymore, which is very sad. Even if there were, you probably couldn't sumon them because their are so manny things you wood need.

The End

Shaun tells the party that he has some idea where they can find some of the items they need. Shaun tells the party that they should definitely write the names down right on the letter. He never remembers anything if he doesn't write it down.

- perfect sphere of earth – Huxley
- perfect sphere of air – Sylvie Valerius
- perfect sphere of fire – Kovi Woundtender
- perfect sphere of water – Nina Bliss
- horn of summoning – Al Bishop
- ring set with a glimmergem – Jpeg
- nightstone ring – Electra

Shaun isn't sure what a fortune's wheel pendant is or where the party might get one.

As for a limelight, Shaun confesses that he is at a loss as to what to tell them. A limelight provides illumination in a theater. There was a theater in World's Edge which Aria Morgan was in the process of restoring, but it tragically burned to the ground just last night. Shaun can't think of anywhere else that a limelight might be attained.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the story listing the items they'll need to find

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time after Saturday breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Shaun tells the party that he feels so sorry for the poor Sprink family. He heard that their home in Keer - which is apparently only one of the homes they have, but still - was just recently burned by the pirate Jack Brigham. Shaun tells the party that this must mean the pirate attack occurred while Solomon Stillwater was also in Keer. Shaun tells the party that of course Keer is a very large place, but still, it's lucky neither Solomon nor his family were harmed in the attack!

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Shaun tells the party that it's to be expected, when the Peacock Family Singers arrive in a new town, that some people will be excited to have them there, while others will not. He tells the party that he can't really blame people who fall into that latter category, because people are worried having a traveling musical group is going to make a lot of noise and disturbance. Certainly Edwin Davies had made it very clear that he didn't like the idea of the Peacocks being around. Shaun tells the party that Edwin wanted to know if they had a permit for camping where they are (they do, thanks to Milton) and whether they were aware of local noise ordinances and vagrancy laws (they are, again because Milton checks on these things.) Shaun says that Edwin seemed rather disappointed they weren't in violation of anything. Luckily, Edwin had gone on his way then, after telling them he wouldn't be attending any shows they put on but before Mick or Stevie could make any 4-letter suggestions to Edwin.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Shaun tells the party that he's been with the Peacock Family Singers for almost 10 years now. He's still not entirely sure why they took him on, except that Milton Peacock is a really good-hearted person and signed Shaun on as a bit of a charity case. That's the kind of thing Milton does all the time, Shaun says. Not that the other Peacocks are charity cases, but just... Milton has a tendency to take in strays. Shaun tells the party he remembers seeing Dusty play for the first time, probably 5 or so years ago. She had the voice of an angel - still does - and just this complete openness about her where you could see right into her heart. The show was wrapping up and there were some guys talking about a party they were going to and asking Dusty to join them. Shaun tells the party that it was very, very clear these weren't good guys... very clear, that is, to everybody except Dusty. She trusts everyone implicitly and she was all set to go off with those men. Milton was watching that and he decided right then and there to talk to Dusty about joining the Peacocks. That's just how Milton is, Shaun says. If Milton took some money from the Peacock Family Singers account, then it's because he needed it.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Donna Peacock -- Lindsay Daviau

Age: 39

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

A description of the Perfect Square Challenge appears on page 379.

Elsewhich

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the perfect square challenge

Info to give the party directly: Donna does have a cat's-eye jewelbox; an ex-boyfriend gave it to her. The party's welcome to it. Men give her gifts all the time. Better gifts than this one.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: cat's-eye jewelbox

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Donna tells the party that, when she was little, all her friends read the Kit Carnage books and so she read them too. The books were all right, Donna admits. Donna tells the party that she's not going to go around fangirling Katherine Carmichael - the actual Kit Carnage - unlike some people she could name. Although... Donna tells the party that this might sound weird, but... back when she was a little younger, she had a boyfriend and... well, let's just say that he was a real piece of work. He was always putting her down - her! Donna! Insane, right? - and making it seem like she was lucky to have him. She has no idea why she put up with it, but as she said, she was younger. Anyway, Donna says, this is the weird part: there was a scene in one of those old books where Kit gets thrown in jail for something she hasn't actually done; Donna can't remember what. Anyway, in the scene Kit is behind bars and wearing the same filthy clothes she's had on for days, and some important rich man - maybe he was the bank president or something? It doesn't matter - he comes into the jail. He looks at Kit through the bars and he makes some rude comment or other. Donna tells the party that Kit lifts her chin up and she looks the man right in the eye and says "*Watch your tone, sir.*" Just like that, like she's a queen, even though she's locked up and filthy. Donna tells the party that one night, her then-boyfriend had started in on her, telling her she'd be prettier if she wore her hair different or some bullshit thing, and she's not even sure what part of her brain it came from, but she looked at him, right in the eye, and said "*Watch your tone, sir.*" Not angry, but like she was made of steel, just the way Kit Carnage said it. Donna tells the party that the guy didn't stick around much longer after that, after he realized Donna wasn't going to be taking any more of his shit. She has no idea why she even remembered that scene from a book she read back when she was little. Crazy!

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Donna tells the party she was in the tavern Monday when Lenora Graves announced she needed to contact some possibly-dead professor. The whole thing was *very* over-the-top, Donna says. Lenora was going on about how sensitive she is and how she'd seen three dogs having sex or something, which is apparently some sort of terrible omen. Honestly, Donna tells the party, she'd just been trying to tune the whole thing out. This proved impossible, because Lenora has a very high-pitched voice and Donna *cannot* tolerate voices like that, and then Lenora pulled out her Ouija board *in the middle of the tavern* and Donna was getting the idea she was absolutely *not* going to be allowed to eat her lunch in peace. No sooner had Lenora begun her bizarre mystical process than that odd cultist Dorito started screeching that *she'd murdered the Professor!* Donna says that if there is one thing she *cannot* stand, it's excessive drama, and Monday was *rife* with it. Ugh.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Donna tells the party that Milton Peacock has a lot of nerve. Donna clarifies that she doesn't mean that Milton stole 12 thousand royals from them; she knows Milton wouldn't do such a thing. But someone did, and that means the band has been doing better than any of the other Peacocks could have dreamed. Donna tells the party that for years now, she's been asking Milton to get her her own tent, ideally one with a built-in heating and cooling system. Has Milton done this, Donna asks rhetorically? No, he has not! She's also been asking for an upgraded wardrobe. And again, Milton has told her no! Donna tells the party that this is insane, given the band had plenty of money to spend! If Milton had bought her a light-up makeup mirror when she asked, there would have been less money in the account for someone to steal! The least Milton could have done is given her a raise given that the band is doing so well!

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael, the party encounters a group of women - Pearl Bryce, Nix Valerius, Joni Peacock, Donna Peacock and Nina Bliss - all feverishly discussing a plan. Pearl pulls the party over and tells them what's happening. She explains that they cannot allow Katherine Carmichael to go to jail for shooting Vernon Gill. Vernon is an odious person, she says, and surely Katherine must have had a valid reason for shooting him. [Remember: none of these women know that Vernon is faking his injuries or that Katherine didn't really shoot him!] Joni tells the party that they all love the Kit Carnage books so much. Kit has been so important to all of them. Donna reiterates that they cannot let Katherine go to jail.

Nix tells the party that Pearl has come up with a plan to keep Katherine from going to jail. When Katherine's charge comes to trial, Pearl is going to claim that *she* was the one who shot Vernon. And then Nix is going to say that no, *she* shot him. Then Joni and Donna are also going to claim that *they* were the ones who shot him. With so many other people confessing, Justice Wilde can't possibly rule that Katherine is guilty! [Note: yes, this plan is 100% us ripping off the "I'm Spartacus" scene.]

Nina interrupts here. She tells the others - as she has already been doing - that this plan isn't going to work. First of all, they cannot get up and lie in a Lyrian court of law. Second of all, even if they're willing to commit perjury - which they should not be! - this plan is likely to result in a legal situation the law calls Merrick's Conundrum. In a case like this, it's not at all impossible that Justice Wilde could simply declare all of them - Katherine Carmichael *and* Pearl and Nix and Joni and Donna - guilty! He could require *all* of them to pay damages to Vernon Gill, resulting in the unpleasant Mr. Gill receiving a very, very large amount of money indeed! And he could send *all* of them to jail.

The group then resumes arguing amongst themselves, because Pearl is still insisting that they need *some* plan to save Katherine, while Nina is sympathetic but vehemently opposed to this particular plan. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

Hopefully at some point the party tells these women the truth about Katherine, that she didn't shoot Vernon or anyone. Assuming this, all these women are overcome. Katherine is an inspiration! She's so brave! Hopefully, the party then makes the leap to the fact that telling Katherine's real story will inspire women and girls just like Kit Carnage's stories do.

If the party *doesn't* tell these women the truth here, or if they propose a different plan, someone should tell the Basement and we'll make a plan from there! Also, if it's early enough and if it seems like the party really wants to have this scene with Katherine pre-trial, then we can send her back out at that time.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Mick Peacock -- Mike Hsieh

Age: 45

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

A description of the Pitchpipe Challenge appears on page 378.

Dolorón

Approximately when: Friday night (Mick Peacock is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Mick asks the party to tell him all about their mission.

Mick tells the party that he'd really like to help them. He confesses that he himself is not really much of a reader, but still, he's not a fan of censorship, which is what this curse on the Great Library sounds a lot like. Sadly, he has no idea how to get any pixie dust. If he's honest with the party, he always thought it was a made-up thing.

Mick suggests that maybe the party should talk to Lexia. She's a muse of writing - *the* muse of writing? He doesn't really know how all this stuff works - so if anyone knows how to fix a library, it's probably her. Mick points her out to the party.

Sometime during the conversation, Mick introduces the party to their Companion. Mick says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Dodo, who has been sitting at the same table. Mick quietly lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Mick tells the party that it was the damndest thing, the way no one who was in town last night can remember anything from that night. He explains that when he woke up, he had no idea what had happened, and also he's pretty sure he was wearing someone else's pants, but that this wasn't really surprising because last night was Cary Montalvo's bachelor party, and although Mick himself is not a huge proponent of marriage, he's more than happy to celebrate someone else taking the plunge. So when he woke up with no memory of the night before and his mouth tasting like an animal had died in it, it wasn't all that surprising.

The surprising part, Mick says, is that no one could remember anything... even people who didn't go to Cary's party, or the party for Belle, Cary's fiancée. From what Mick's heard, Pascal Valerius and his husband Santiago were out of town last night, and they remember everything. But no one who was actually in World's Edge has the slightest idea what went on. Weird.

Anyway, if the party talks to anyone who's missing a pair of pink bootie shorts, that person should talk to Mick.

Item(s) to give this party: none

Glendeep

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the pitchpipe challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: spring tambourine

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Mick tells the party that White Noise is bad news. He... had a friend who used it a few times. His friend stopped before it got to be a real problem, though. Which was good, for Mick...'s friend. The thing about Noise, though, is that after using it, you're in terrible shape the next day. Bloodshot eyes, awful headache. At least, that's how it

used to affect Mick's friend. Mick tells the party that he saw Danny Donovan on Friday morning, and although Danny's cloak was all singed and he was shaken up, he looked physically just fine. No bloodshot eyes, no headache. Now Mick is wondering, is... his friend just a real lightweight?

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Mick tells the party that there's something disturbing about talent scout Jack Johnson, which is that he's... not a total sleazeball? Jack showed up in town on Tuesday, and in that time he hasn't made any blatantly false promises to any of the Peacock Family Singers. He hasn't made any backhanded compliments designed to play on anyone's insecurities, nor has he propositioned anyone for sex. Mick tells the party that he doesn't know what's going on here. Are they supposed to believe Jack is just a good-hearted guy who has the band's best interests at heart? Who is Jack really?

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Mick tells the party that he was there in the tavern early this week when someone found that piece of jewelry belonging to Jack Brigham. He explains that it was the very end of lunch and someone knocked over a big waterjug. When servers ran to get towels to clean up, there in the drawer, hidden down underneath the towels, was the pendant. Mick tells the party that he wouldn't have recognized it except that he dated a woman a while back who was really into pirates. Like, *really* into pirates. And the pirate she was *most* into was Jack Brigham. Mick explains that this means he learned quite a bit about the man they call the Pirate King, which is how he knows that the jewelry they found in the tavern is called the Dawn Star. Mick tells the party that some people in town are now saying that Solomon Stillwater actually is Jack Brigham. Mick has no idea if that's true or not. He tells the party that the idea that Jack Brigham is secretly tending bar in World's Edge and has a priceless pendant hidden in a drawer just waiting to give some woman... well, it makes him feel like maybe he's fallen into dirty fan-fiction his ex wrote. The world is weird, Mick says.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Dusty Peacock -- Anna Kelly

Age: 41

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

A description of the Perfect Square Challenge appears on page 379.

Waylon

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the perfect square challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dusty tells the party that she can't imagine the rumors about Milton Peacock stealing 12 thousand royals could possibly be true. Milton is the kindest man in the whole world and he would never do such a thing. Dusty acknowledges that Milton confessing to the crime is perplexing. Maybe Milton just... forgot he didn't do this? Dusty tells the party that although she just knows Milton isn't the one who stole the money, it's still exciting to think about the band having earned 12 thousand royals. She knew they were doing well, but she never dreamed they were doing *that* well!

Item(s) to give this party: smokestone jar

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dusty tells the party that she's heard some people saying that that young man Bracken has been bothering Angelica Sprink, hanging around her all the time and that sort of thing. Dusty says that this would be totally not cool, if it's actually happening. Nobody should be pestering someone if they want to be left alone! Dusty tells the party that Angelica is just lovely and she for sure doesn't want to see anyone bothering her. On the other hand, Bracken also seems to be a very nice young man and Dusty just can't believe that he'd be doing anything wrong.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: at some point when Carmina Bordeaux is not nearby and this charge is NOT being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dusty tells the party that she does not actually work at the tavern, but that Lady Carmina Bordeaux, who is a guest at the Valerius House, seems to think she does. Several times now in the tavern, Lady Bordeaux has snapped her fingers for Dusty, saying "You, there! I need more water!" or "My soup is too hot!" or "This room is too cold!" Dusty tells the party that she attempted to explain to Lady Bordeaux that she does not indeed work at the tavern, but that it did not appear that the lady in question heard her. She brought Lady Bordeaux more water as requested and fanned her soup to cool it down. Warming up the room was more challenging, but Dusty assures the party she did what she could. Dusty tells the party that she didn't mind helping out in this way; she is certain Lady Bordeaux would have done the same for her. No doubt the Lady would be embarrassed if she knew about her mistake!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Stevie Peacock -- Kris Size

Age: 47

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

A description of the Pitchpipe Challenge appears on page 378.

P'loa

Approximately when: Friday night (Stevie is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: Stevie is happy to walk the party out to meet Joni Peacock

Before leaving, Stevie needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at the Peacock camp. If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should probably do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from P'loa. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Stevie should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once Stevie has escorted the party to the Peacock camp and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, she returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Dolorón

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the pitchpipe challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: signalstone ring

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Stevie tells the party that she has known multiple people who started using White Noise and then couldn't stop. She says that she talked with Danny Donovan about the subject a week ago. Danny's okay, Stevie says. She wouldn't go loaning him money or anything, but he's easy enough to talk to. Stevie says that, at least at that time, it seemed like Danny was doing decently well. He told her that he'd stopped using Noise in the winter and that Aria Morgan had taken a chance by hiring him and that he didn't want to let her down. Stevie tells the party that this was a week ago and that she'd really believed that Danny had no intention of using again. Of course, that was before the theater burned down. Maybe Danny hadn't known he'd go back to the drug, or maybe he's a good liar. Stevie says that the alternative is that Danny wasn't using Noise on Thursday night but just torched the theater out of spite. But it's probably not that. Right?

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Stevie tells the party that there was supposed to be a talk last week - last Sunday at 3pm, to be exact - by a professor from Twickenham University. He was going to lecture on his book, *Signs & Wonders*, which was all about how omens and symbols shape the way we see the world, especially at times when we think the world is all going to shit. Stevie tells the party that people maybe don't expect her to be the book-reading type, but that this Merriweather guy had some pretty cool ideas in the middle of what was, sadly, a kind of long-winded book. Still, Stevie says, she was looking forward to hearing him speak. It was a drag he never showed up for the talk.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Stevie tells the party that she's never heard of anyone disturbing a wayshrine before, ever. There are plenty of bad people in the world, of course, but wayshrines are... well... sacred. Of course, it's hardly surprising that a demon doesn't care about that, or maybe is even drawn to that sort of destruction.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Jack Johnson -- Paul San Clemente

Age: 58

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Traveler Lore concerning the Gilt Crew appears on page 210.

Secret Info:

Oh, gods. Where to even begin? What a terrible awful colossal mess he's made of all this. This is Jack's secret.

His name isn't Jack Johnson. It isn't John Jackson, either, or Carl Wilson or Dick Paulson or any of the other names he's accidentally given out over the past couple days. He isn't cut out for all this complicated intrigue, he really isn't. He is going to fail completely and everyone is going to hate him and they'll be justified, after all the ways he's screwed up.

Hold on. He might maybe need to breathe into a paper bag for a couple minutes.

Okay. His real name is Ethan Frank. He's not a talent scout – he wishes! – at all. He's a palace guard in Dolorón. He hates the job. And he is, let's face it, terrible at it. He's only there because his wife's cousin got him the job, back before they very sensibly put some of those anti-nepotism restrictions in place. He kept meaning to quit, but he wasn't sure what else he'd do for work. Hating the job now seems like the least of his worries, given that he's going to be fired soon, and quite probably brought up on charges that might even include treason.

Oh, gods.

Ethan's supervisors were smart enough to realize he wasn't cut out for this work. He's hopelessly nearsighted, so a job that requires being watchful isn't a great fit. And he's got a bum knee, so if he ever needed to give chase, he could just forget about it. Plus there's the fact that he tends to panic under pressure. So, yeah. They placed him guarding an inner sanctum of the treasure rooms, because ironically, it's a place where there's little for him to screw up. It was so unlikely any thief would get past outer defenses that it seemed a safe spot to post Ethan.

And it was. Mostly. Because while it was *unlikely* anyone could get past outer defenses, it wasn't *impossible*. And two weeks ago, that's exactly what happened.

The crew that orchestrated it was very, very good. Ethan can tell that much. He's a pretty bright guy, actually. He might even do well if he were in a job where he didn't have to see things or run or encounter any danger. This heist was very quick and very quiet, so much so that almost nobody realized it had happened. Nobody except Ethan, when he found the safe sitting open and empty. The safe that normally holds the crown jewels of Lyria.

That's right. *The crown jewels of Lyria were stolen on Ethan's watch.*

He's gonna need to breathe into that bag again.

Ethan can't think too hard about the two weeks he's had or he'll never slow his breathing down. He'd closed the safe – the hideously empty safe – back up and told no one what happened, and he'd taken some vacation time. Right now, his temporary replacement is sitting in a room in the castle, guarding... nothing.

Once Ethan was away from the palace, he started doing some research. Again, he's decent at that stuff. He's pretty sure the crown was stolen by a notorious ring of jewel thieves people are calling the Gilt Crew. Surprisingly, Ethan was able to track some of them down. It's pretty clear there's someone brilliant at the head of the Gilt Crew, someone masterminding the heists from a distance. It's not Ethan's job to track this guy down. He just needs that crown back before anyone realizes it's gone.

He heard rumors that the crown had been taken to World's Edge, so he came here looking for it. When Ethan arrived on Tuesday, he realized he'd need a cover story, so he gave his name as Jack Johnson – or was it Tom Benson? Dammit, he really should've written it down – and said he was a talent scout. There's a band in town – they're actually real good, not that he should be paying attention to that – and they've let him stay with them. He'd made absolutely no progress locating the crown... until some guy with face tattoos walked into the tavern wearing it.

Ethan nearly wet himself when it happened. Apparently the guy's one of the Makai sect; his name's Kerrick Dealbinder. Ethan was sure someone would recognize the crown, and sure enough, when the guy walked in, one of the women who sings with the band leapt up and yelled, "I know that crown!"

But then she'd started screaming about how the crown was *hers*. Which... what? Not unless Tanya Peacock is secretly a princess. Which honestly wouldn't be the weirdest part of this story.

But that doesn't appear to be the case. Tanya ordered a crown from a catalog – you can do that? Should Ethan maybe just order one to replace the missing crown jewels? – and she's convinced the one Dealbinder has is hers. It's not, though. Ethan's eyesight

is awful, but still, he knows the true crown of Lyria when he sees it. He's the only one, though, seemingly. It stands to reason, he guesses; they're really far from Dolorón here. So that was a lucky break.

Ethan's been trying to steal the crown back from this Dealbinder guy, but he hasn't had any luck yet. These Makai are a formidable bunch! He's not sure if Dealbinder is the mastermind behind the Gilt Crew or what. Ethan got a note off one of the members of the crew that'd been sent by the guy in charge. It says: "Leave the crown in the pre-arranged drop location. Once its authenticity has been verified, your share of the proceeds will be sent to you." It's signed not with a name but with a symbol of a sabertooth. Is that Dealbinder's mark, maybe? It doesn't matter. Ethan just needs to get the crown back.

And he needs to do it soon. The first complication – well, after all the garbage that's already happened – is that there's a prosecutor in town and because Tanya Peacock erroneously believes the crown is hers, the case is going to trial on Sunday. Ethan needs to get the crown and be gone before that happens, because having all of this entered into evidence is the last thing he needs.

The second thing is that there's a guy here in town who knows him. His name's Umberto Dunn and he's one of the Phantom Guard. They're not friends or anything, but if he gets a good look at Ethan, Ethan'll certainly be recognized. There's a couple other Phantoms in town for a wedding or somesuch, and thankfully they've been pre-occupied enough that none of them has recognized the crown itself. But it's only a matter of time.

So, to recap: He, Ethan Frank, Lyria's worst palace guard, needs to steal back the crown jewels of Lyria from a man who may or may not be a criminal mastermind and then get out of town with it before the special-forces soldiers who are in town recognize the crown or Ethan or both, and before Sunday at noon.

Oh, gods. He needs the bag again.

A description of the Perfect Square Challenge appears on page 379.

Waylon

When to approach a party: on Friday night

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Jack should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Jack needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Jack doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party!

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: Jack is assigning this party's charge. He is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled against Milton Peacock. Jack explains that he hasn't known Milton for long, since Jack only arrived in town a few days ago. Still, Milton has been nothing but welcoming, even inviting Jack to stay with the Peacock Family Singers. Jack tells the party that yes, this certainly seems like an open-and-shut case: from what he's been told, Justice Orion Wilde received an anonymous tip accusing Milton of stealing a huge amount - 12 thousand royals! - from the Peacock Family Singers. As the band's manager, Milton is the one with access to this money, and when questioned about the matter, he confessed to everything. Jack acknowledges that this does not look good for Milton. Still, Jack feels sorry for Milton. Apparently Milton had significant gambling debts and used the money to pay them off. Perhaps Milton was being threatened by the people he owed money to! Jack tells the party that maybe Milton can plead that he acted in self defense in this case? Surely there must be some sort of extenuating circumstances here, Jack says. Milton seems like such a good man. Jack tells the party that he'd really appreciate it if they could look into this charge against Milton.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Clairia

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the perfect square challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: fool's gold

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Jack tells the party that he himself had only been in town for a day when Vernon Gill arrived on Wednesday. Vernon was a career soldier, having attained the rank of sergeant, before a shooting ten years ago permanently damaged his right arm. Jack tells the party that apparently it was Katherine Carmichael who shot Vernon, and that it was only this past week that Vernon successfully tracked his assailant down and came to town to demand justice. This was quite an incredible story, but Katherine has confirmed it to be true! Apparently Vernon mouthed off to Katherine and, outraged, she shot him twice in the arm. It's a wonder Vernon wasn't killed! This is unacceptable, Jack tells the party. It's fortunate that Justice Wilde is now here and Katherine will be made to pay up and also serve jail time for this assault!

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Jack doesn't need to approach the party, but if he can manage to do his goofing-up-his-alias thing, alternately referring to himself as John Jackson or whatever, that's great. Also note that Jack very much does not want to be in the same place as Umberto "Shadow" Dunn. If Jack and Shadow can coordinate a scene where Jack is near the party and departs rapidly when Shadow approaches, that's great, although it's not at all critical.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: on Sunday after their party path is complete, around 9:30am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: This scene includes a lot of staff, not all of whom are present the whole time. Explaining the sequencing is easiest if it's presented as one big encounter, so please read the whole thing to find your name. This sort of encounter will henceforth be known as a Noctaran Clusterfuck.

On Sunday after their party path is complete (around 9:30), Tanya Peacock brings the party to the Makai camp. There, they find an agitated Kerrick Dealbinder. He has captured an intruder! This intruder is currently trapped inside a *very* large cloth sack. Dealbinder is periodically poking the sack and demanding that the intruder confess, which the intruder has thus far refused to do.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

After the party presumably removes the intruder from the sack, they learn that it's Jack Johnson. This revelation should have a sort of zany, madcap feel to it in keeping with this charge, and in the beginning, all the staff present are talking at once.

Dealbinder is trying to interrogate Jack, Jack is outraged that Dealbinder captured him but is otherwise proclaiming his unwillingness to talk, and Tanya is loudly insisting that Dealbinder give her the tiara. Ideally the party will have at least some ideas about what has gone on here, but even if they understand little, we hope they will take control of the scene and restore some semblance of order! Eventually, lead as much by the party as possible, the staff can reveal the following information:

- “Jack Johnson” isn’t really a talent scout. His real name is Ethan Frank, and he’s a palace guard in Dolorón, a job he hates (and is frankly terrible at.) He has his employee ID badge with him.
- The crown Dealbinder has isn’t Tanya’s missing tiara. It’s part of the crown jewels of Lyria, and it was stolen on Ethan’s watch. He’s trying to return it before anyone else at the palace learns it’s missing.
- The crown was stolen by a ring of jewel thieves people are calling the Gilt Crew. Surprisingly, Ethan was able to track some of them down. (Ethan is, in fact, a pretty smart guy. He just can’t see well.) He knows there is a mastermind behind this heist, but not who it is. (As far as he’s concerned, that doesn’t matter; he just wants to return the crown.)
- Ethan heard rumors that the crown had been taken to World’s Edge, so he came here looking for it. He hadn’t been able to locate it... until Kerrick Dealbinder walked into the tavern wearing it.
- Ethan has been trying to steal the crown back from Dealbinder for the past several days, but every time he’s tried, he’s been thwarted. By the Makai.
- Ethan has a note in his possession and eventually shows it to the party. It was sent to one of the members of the Gilt Crew by the person who masterminded the heist. It says: *“Leave the crown in the pre-arranged drop location. Once its authenticity has been verified, your share of the proceeds will be sent to you.”* It’s signed not with a name but with a sabertooth symbol.
- It’s likely the party won’t learn all this information before being interrupted again (see below), which is fine. Still, the staff do ultimately need to convey the above info.

After the party has been interacting with Tanya Peacock/Kerrick Dealbinder/Jack Johnson for 5-10 minutes, Phineas Smirch enters the Makai camp. Phineas is oblivious to whatever drama is currently unfolding and he makes an announcement to Dealbinder: this is Dealbinder’s lucky day, because Phineas is prepared to buy the crown from him for 10 royals! That’s (Phineas thinks) 2 royals more than the crown is worth, and given that (Phineas thinks) Dealbinder stole the crown in the first place, this is pure profit for him! 30 seconds later, the KPS (Kingdom Postal Service) Guy arrives and announces he has a delivery for Tanya Peacock. Sorry he’s running late! Hopefully these additional intrusions plunge the scene back into chaos and the party can again gain control! Once they do, additional info is revealed:

- When Phineas went to bring Karla her breakfast tray, she was talking in her sleep, saying something about needing the crown. Obviously Phineas wants his little girl to be happy, which is why he’s here with this extremely generous offer for Dealbinder.
- Tanya’s package obviously contains the tiara she ordered from Tirothian Trading Company. 8 royals was probably overpaying for it. Tanya, however, is DELIGHTED by it. Once she realizes he didn’t steal her crown, Kerrick Dealbinder is her new best friend. TWINNING!
- Phineas has no idea that Karla is the mastermind behind this heist or anything else. If the party seems to have no idea about this, Phineas can casually refer to her as Fang once. Hopefully this won’t be necessary. If the party tells him about her involvement, he is proud but extremely surprised.

There are so many people involved in this scene that it’s challenging to say exactly how it will go. The staff should convey their info as best they can and be ready for whatever. If something unexpected happens, we’ll fix it afterwards.

Ultimately, Ethan won’t leave the Makai camp without the crown. He and Tanya leave the camp with the party; the remaining staff should play this by ear. Because the party is about to get attacked, it is much easier if staff are at the rear of the party or at least the middle, rather than being out in front!

As the party is leaving the Makai camp, they encounter the Hired Wolven Hit Squad. Although there aren’t terribly many Wolven in this squad, they are imposing foes. When they see the party, one of them says “They have it! Move in!” and then they engage. The Wolven put up a very good fight but are eventually killed. If the party doesn’t think to search their bodies, Tanya says “Ooh, I wonder if they have any TREASURE?” They don’t, but they do have a note, which reads: *“Half the payment is enclosed; the remainder will be placed in the usual location upon completion of the job. On Sunday morning, retrieve the crown from Starwatcher’s Hill and leave it in the drop spot. Kill anyone who stands in your way.”* It, too, is signed with the sabertooth symbol.

If the party captures and/or magically questions any member of the hit squad, the Wolven reveal that they were paid 800 royals down with the promise of 800 more upon completion. They don’t know who hired them. Their “drop spot” is a random obscure spot far out in the woods.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder’s, see page 76 for the whole story

the Pitchpipe Challenge

Activity: Several members of the Peacock Family Singers - Tanya Peacock, Mick Peacock, Shaun Peacock and Stevie Peacock - will be sharing this challenge. The challenge works fine if they're all present, although they absolutely don't need to be. Tanya (or whoever) tells the party that Milton always says that a big part of PIZAZZ! is teamwork, so in preparation for their next gig, they're doing a fun team-building exercise. Tanya LOVES team building exercises! (Shaun is trying not to slow everyone else down. Mick and Stevie's opinion is left to the reader's imagination.)

The activity is called Pitchpipe, because it involves Pipes that the team can hold at a different Pitch, but ALSO because they are a musical ensemble. Tanya also LOVES when words mean two things! YAY!

The object of the challenge is to move a small ball from behind a starting line across a field and past a finish line about 25 feet away. Each participant will be given a short length of tube. The participants may not touch the ball directly and may not move their feet while they have possession of the ball. The challenge starts with all participants behind the starting line. A staff member will put the ball into the tube of one of the participants, at which point the challenge begins (and the timer should start). The participants must move the ball across the field to the finish line by transferring the ball from one tube to another. Time stops when the ball crosses the finish line.

If any rule is broken -- if the ball falls to the ground, if the ball is touched by a participant, or if the person with possession of the ball moves their feet -- then the party has lost the challenge and must start over.

If the party successfully completes the challenge easily, the staff can increase the difficulty (see below) and let them try again. Each party should spend 10-15 minutes doing the challenge. Success or failure doesn't matter much; after the party has spent a while doing the activity, the staff should declare the challenge complete.

The task can be made more difficult with small rule modifications, including:

- Reduce the amount of time the party has to accomplish the task. (Typically, reduce their time by about 25%. So, if they get the ball to the finish line in 60 seconds on the first try, challenge them to do the same distance in 45 seconds the next time.)
- Allow each person to only put one hand on the tube. (This makes it harder to control how fast the ball moves!)
- Do not permit the ball to stop moving, or to move backward. (This is quite hard as it will make the party need to move very quickly! May not be best for a party with mobility issues.)
- Rather than simply passing the finish line, the party must drop the ball into a bucket on the other side of the finish line.

These additions can be combined to make the challenge even more difficult – using one hand only and delivering the ball into a bucket. The staff should try to keep the challenge difficult but possible. Failing some tasks (even repeatedly) can give the party a real sense of accomplishment when they do achieve a win.

Educational goal(s): to provide practice working as a team.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: Six open-topped tubes, each about a foot long. A small ball (about the size of a golf ball.) A bucket. A watch with a second hand (or a phone). Paper and pen to record parties attempts.

the Perfect Square Challenge

Activity: Several members of the Peacock Family Singers - Milton Peacock, Charlie Peacock, Elly Peacock, Joni Peacock, Donna Peacock, Dusty Peacock and Jack Johnson - will be sharing this challenge. The challenge works fine if they're all present, although they absolutely don't need to be. Milton (or whoever) tells the party that a big part of PIZAZZ! is teamwork, so in preparation for their next gig, they're doing a team-building exercise! It's going to be great, no matter how much Donna rolls her eyes.

Milton tells the party that this is an activity they're going to do with their eyes closed. He explains the challenge before the close their eyes (because some people listen/comprehend better this way.)

In a minute, Milton says, he's going to have the party close their eyes, and then he'll hand them a rope that's tied at the ends with a single knot. The challenge is to form the rope into a square, trying to get as close to a perfect square as possible. All of them need to keep at least one hand on the rope at all times. When the group believes their square is perfected, they should lay it down on the ground. Only then will they open their eyes.

After Milton answers any questions the party has, he has them close their eyes. He then places the rope (which is about 40' in length) so that each of them are holding onto it.

So long as participants aren't doing any patently unsafe things (like making vigorous hand movements with no regards to who's nearby) the staff don't need to administrate this part of the challenge much.

After the party has set their squared-off rope down on the ground and opened their eyes to see how they did, Milton tells them there's one more part to the challenge. (This is assuming part 1 didn't take too long and the Companion isn't indicating they need to go.)

The challenge the second time is the same as the first, except that only two members of the party (as determined by the Peacocks) can actually open their mouths. The remaining party members can still communicate verbally, but only as much as is possible with closed mouths. Unsurprisingly, the Peacocks should choose the less vocal party members to be the ones who can actually speak.

Other than that, the challenge is the same: the whole party closes their eyes, everyone needs to have one hand touching the rope at all times, and they should lay down the square when they're finished.

Although the Peacocks don't need to (and shouldn't) do a huge debrief with the party upon completion of both parts of the challenge, they should feel free to point out any positive things they notice and/or address any glaring points.

Educational goal(s): to provide practice working as a team.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the knotted length of rope

Diesel -- Lance Nathan

Age: 48

Usually found: in the cultists' compound, in Greystone Clearing

Traveler Lore concerning the cultists appears on page 210.

A description of the Test of Ten Challenge appears on page 398.

Keer

When to approach a party: Friday night

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Diesel should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Diesel needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Diesel doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party!

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: Diesel is assigning this party's charge. He is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, Saturday just after lunch, Diesel approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that's been leveled again Dorito. Diesel acknowledges that there's probably not much the party can do, what with Dorito having gone and confessed and all. Dorito's always been a wild card, Diesel says, but mostly that just meant you can't ever tell minute by minute if she's gonna be joking around or freaking out or both at the same time. But murder? Diesel did not see that coming. This is the kind of thing that gives doomsday cultists a bad name, you know? Diesel knows there's plenty of people who want to badmouth them, but he's always tried to run... well, if not a tight ship, then at least a ship where no one's gonna get murdered. He tells the party that when that professor - Professor Merriweather, that was his name - didn't show up in town last Sunday, Diesel didn't think a thing of it. And then on Monday, when people started saying the professor was dead, again, it meant nothing to him. Someone said they should use a Ouija board to contact the professor's spirit, which sounded crazy to Diesel, but whatever. And then suddenly Dorito was saying she'd stabbed the guy! It was looking like the Baron wasn't going to have any choice but to lock Dorito up between then and the trial, and maybe Diesel should've just kept his mouth shut on the subject. But, he tells the party, he was thinking about what if they'd had the date wrong, about the Great Tumult? What if that happened and Dorito was locked in a cell somewhere? That seemed an awful shame, so Diesel'd asked the Baron if maybe he - Diesel, that is - could vouch for Dorito, could promise she'd be around to stand trial, and the Baron's family had decided that was okay. Diesel tells the party that he's tried to get Dorito to tell him a little about why she did this, but she's refused to say much of anything on the subject. Maybe the party could ask around a little bit? Diesel tells the party he's hoping maybe there's some kind of extenuating circumstances or whatever. Self-defense or whatever. Because Dorito's crazy, but she's got a good heart, Diesel thinks. It'd be a shame to see her get locked up. Diesel would really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against her.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Uri-Kest

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the test of ten challenge

Info to give the party directly: Diesel tells the party that he does indeed have a bottle of callibogus rum. It's foul stuff, so he's got a mostly-full bottle and he's happy to give it to them... but he can't right now. Diesel explains that his Mimi - that's what he always called his grandmother - passed away this past December. Tonight's the final night of the Rites, and he'd like to drink a toast to her. She loved callibogus, nasty as it is. Diesel tells the party that his Mimi was about 96 pounds soaking wet and that she kept her hair dyed bright orange. He promises he won't drink much of the callibogus because he doesn't have Mimi's cast-iron stomach. He tells them he'll meet them in the tavern at 10:15am on Sunday and give them the rum then.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none (he'll meet them in the tavern at 10:15am Sunday with the callibogus rum)

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Diesel tells the party that he's occasionally done a bit of work for Aria Morgan on that theater of hers. He wasn't there on Thursday, Diesel says. He tells the party that the theater had sat unused for almost 25 years before the restoration started, so it was a real mess inside. Diesel isn't bothered by mess, but he hadn't been happy when people started talking about ghosts. People told him that all theaters are haunted and claimed that the Morg was haunted more than most. Terrific, Diesel says. He hates that kind of shit. He tells the party that he never actually saw any ghosts when he was there, but that sometimes it sorta felt like he was being watched, when he was in there. Creepy, right? Still, Diesel says, a job's a job. His wife Equi was saying that ghosts fade over time, so maybe that's why he never actually saw any. The Morg was apparently built by Aria's great-grandfather, so that was a real long time ago. You'd think any ghosts would jump ship after two decades of the building sitting empty.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time after Saturday breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Diesel tells the party that he heard the Sprinks' home in Keer - which is apparently only one of the homes they have, but still - was just recently burned by the pirate Jack Brigham. Diesel tells the party that he's not one to go starting rumors, but he can't help but notice that this pirate attack occurred while Solomon Stillwater was in Keer. Diesel tells the party that when some people started saying that Solomon was actually Jack Brigham, he told them they were crazy. Diesel reminds the party that *crazy* does not necessarily equal *wrong*. It's kind of a big coincidence, isn't it, that Jack Brigham is spotted in Keer at the time when Solomon is there?

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Diesel tells the party he was approached by that visiting couple, Huxley and Quinoa. They told him they needed to learn some sort of crazy dance. Diesel tells the party he can't remember what it was called. A dingdong dance? Something. Diesel says he has no idea what that might be, but in certain post-apocalyptic circles, he's known as a real smooth dancer. He tells the party he'd taught them his favorite dance move, which he absolutely insists on showing the party as well.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh, again

Time: 10:15am, Sunday (Diesel is the penultimate step for this party; he gives them the item but does not accompany them to their path ending.)

Item(s) to give this party: callibogus rum

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Diesel is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. He will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. He should check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: Diesel approaches the party. He tells the party he heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Katherine Carmichael. He reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Diesel encourages them to present the info they've learned to him as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Vernon Gill lied about everything; Katherine never shot him and he isn't actually injured.
- Katherine was willing to take the fall for this crime because she believes her readers will be disillusioned if they learn she's not actually courageous like her heroine Kit Carnage.
- In actuality, the true story of Katherine being willing to sacrifice herself for others is even more inspiring.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Diesel can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Diesel can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) He can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Equinoxious -- Tenille Reichert

Age: 48

Usually found: in the cultists' compound, in Greystone Clearing

Traveler Lore concerning the cultists appears on page 210.

A description of the Test of Ten Challenge appears on page 398.

Waylon

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the test of ten challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: skull cup

any parties encountered (ideally 3-4)

When to approach a party: any time after the 4th Friday encounters and before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Equi references the golden page she carries from Nemaia's book. Although this paper (which she DOES show the party but DOES NOT allow them to read) reminds her of a good memory, she also vividly remembers the difficult memory she shared with Nemaia, where she described the male cultists as "hopelessly childish."

Reason this info matters: Please read the Changed World section, beginning on p. 158, for the context of this info and answers to a bunch more questions!

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Equi tells the party that she's heard about this business where Bartleby and Geneva Sprink are accusing that kid Bracken of harassing their daughter. Equi says she can't say whether or not Bracken is harassing Angelica or not; some women like the whole bad-boy thing. If that's what Angelica's looking for, Bracken probably fits the bill. Equi knows enough about the Western Moreth Home for Children - that's where Bracken grew up, after his grandfather Reynaldo died, back when Bracken was just a kid - to know that it's a rough place. You don't last in a place like that without some survival skills and the willingness to use them. Equi tells the party that she was there the day Solomon locked his keys in the tavern. Bracken had the lock picked in maybe 15 seconds, Equi says, and it's not a cheap lock. Bracken may be perfectly fine, but he certainly comes from a very different world than the Sprinks do. Still, Angelica Sprink is nearly grown, so this is her decision to make. Maybe she's looking for a boy who's trouble. It can get old after a while, though, Equi says. Ask her how she knows.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Equi tells the party that she's feeling guilty, something that rarely happens. She's wondering if she should have noticed that something was off with Dorito last Sunday, the day she killed that man, Professor Whatever. Dorito was agitated, Equi says. More agitated than usual. Equi tells the party that Bane had gone off for a walk and left Dorito behind, which was also unusual. Dorito had had a million questions for Equi: Did Equi think it was weird that Bane was taking a walk when he'd taken another walk a few hours earlier? (This is no weirder than anything in their compound.) Did Equi think Bane was acting gruff? (Yes. Bane is always gruff.) Did Equi think Dorito should go looking for Bane? (Yes, please. Get out of the compound for a while and maybe Equi could have a godsdamned moment of peace and quiet for once.) So it was a lot, even for Dorito. Equi isn't used to second-guessing herself, she tells the party, but maybe she should have asked if Dorito was okay. Talking about feelings isn't something they do. But Equi doesn't know. Maybe she should have checked on Dorito.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Dorito -- Erin Geno

Age: 32

Usually found: in the cultists' compound, in Greystone Clearing

Traveler Lore concerning the cultists appears on page 210.

Secret Info:

Look, Dorito's aware she's stupid, okay? That was always crystal clear to her. Still, she knows the shit that's gone down lately is a big-ass deal. Here's what it is:

She'd liked Bane from the moment he entered the compound. She liked how he looked and how he sounded. She's always make quick decisions on whether or not someone was worth her time, and she was pleased when she heard he was sticking around.

Right from the start, there were a bunch of obvious things about Bane. Well, obvious to Dorito, at least. One was that he can't see worth a rat's ass. She digs that this doesn't slow him down, though. He'll just growl "who the hell are you?" when someone approaches the clearing, and that identifies people well enough.

Second obvious thing: he really listens when people talk. He really listens when *Dorito* talks. Most people don't. They think of her as silly - which, admittedly, she is - and they think that's a reason to not really listen. Bane doesn't do that. He listens hard. Dorito digs that.

Another thing: there's a gentleness to Bane. Most people don't see it, which boggles Dorito's mind because it's so obvious. Maybe they're not able to look past the fact that Bane's big and his voice is real deep? Whatever. Those things are true, but they don't have anything to do with how he is on the inside. Dorito's pretty sure Bane doesn't want people knowing how gentle he actually is, which is fine with her. She digs knowing this about him even when no one else can see it.

Fourth thing: Bane had a secret. She didn't know what it was and didn't need to. Everybody's path to the Greystone compound was a twisting one. Bane occasionally had a look about him like he was saying one thing but thinking another, or like he was choosing words carefully. Sometimes he gets a look in his eyes that just means he knows more than he's saying. Mysterious, a little, which she digs. So, yeah, there's something secret there. He'll tell her if he wants to and won't if he doesn't. Dorito doesn't worry about stuff like that.

Last but most important thing: Bane liked her back, right away. Dorito really digs that. Like, a lot. More than she should, probably, but that's life.

Things were good. They were ready for the Tumult to come, and that was good. Then it didn't happen, but that was good, too. Thing were real, real good right up until they weren't.

This past Sunday, there was just something off about Bane. Dorito can tell these things. He was on edge, which he isn't usually. And he was wishing she wasn't around, which he isn't ever.

She'd let him go off on his own, because it's fair if he wants space. But later on, she'd silently followed him, because she was worried about him, just a little.

When she did this, she followed Bane deep into the woods, where she saw him locate a box hidden under some rocks. After he'd gone, Dorito had gone to the box herself. She shouldn't have, because this was clearly connected to Bane's secret, but she was too curious not to.

In the box, she found several things: a tweed jacket and a pair of glasses. A book by that professor guy, the one who was supposed to give some kind of talk that day, except that he'd never actually shown up. And a bag of money, with at least 400 royals in it.

Dorito wasn't sure what she'd thought Bane's secret was, but in that instant, she knew it was a big one. The only way Bane would've gotten these things of the Professor's is if he'd killed the man and taken them. There's no other explanation for it.

Dorito wasn't sure what to feel about that. Yeah, she'd known he had a secret, but murder is... not what she was expecting. Some people think of Bane as scary, just because he's big and has a deep voice. Dorito has always known the truth, that he's gentle and he's kind.

So yeah. He killed someone. It doesn't matter. If Bane killed the professor, then he had a good reason for it. Dorito is certain of this. So long as no one else found out his secret, everything would be all right.

But the very next day, Monday, in the tavern, Lenora Graves was going on and on about how worried she was about the professor. She claimed that something terrible had happened to him and announced she was going to use a magic board of hers to talk to his spirit. Dorito doesn't get scared easily, but she was plenty scared then.

Lenora put her fingertips on a little triangle-shaped piece and it started to move around the board of its own volition while Dorito watched, not daring to breathe. The piece started pointing to letters: to the letter B, then A, and then N.

Reading is tough for Dorito because of how dumb she is, but even she knows that those are the first letters of Bane. The professor might be dead, but he was using that terrible magic board to tell everyone what had happened to him. And right then, Dorito knew she had no other choice.

Before the professor could finish telling everyone, she'd jumped up and yelled that *she'd* killed Professor Merriweather. Sure enough, as soon as she said that, everyone had stopped paying attention to the magic board. They'd had a bunch of questions for her - why? When? How? - but these were easy enough to answer with short unhelpful responses. People know Dorito's not very smart, so no one was surprised to get answers like these.

On Sunday, there's going to be a trial, of course. Even as dumb as she is, Dorito knows she's going to jail. She doesn't want to, of course, but it's the only way. The alternative is watching Bane get locked up. He wouldn't survive there, as gentle as he is. She can handle it, though.

And this way, she can protect Bane. Because she really does dig him. Really *loves* him, actually.

She's not smart, but she knows that much.

A description of the Test of Ten Challenge appears on page 398.

Keer

When to approach a party: during Jpeg's 1st Saturday encounter with the party (and later as needed)

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Jpeg is the party's 1st Saturday encounter, so he approaches the party in the tavern and then walks to the camp with them. Dorito and Bane are out at this time and will be in the camp when Jpeg gets there with the party so the party will have a chance to meet these characters without Dorito and Bane appearing to seek them out.

During the party's 1st Saturday encounter with Jpeg, Dorito also interacts with the party. At some point during this interaction, Jpeg asks for the party's list of items they need, then casually hands it to Dorito and asks her a question about it. ("What's the other kind of ring they need, again?" or somesuch.) Dorito can read, but it's challenging and slow for her, and although she doesn't need to overplay this, the party will hopefully notice. After a few seconds of trying to sound out a word or two, Dorito gets angry and shoves "this stupid thing" back at Jpeg.

Other than the episode with the letter, Dorito is upbeat. She mentions Bane a bunch, in the way a person does when they have a crush on someone; she should continue to do this if she encounters the party again at other times. If and ONLY if the party asks her about why/how she killed the Professor (which they're less likely to do early on Saturday, but may well do later), Dorito gives short answers: "He pissed me off." "I knifed him." "I buried his body. I was drunk and I don't remember where." And, if the questioning continues: "He asked me a lot of stupid questions like these." It should be clear that she doesn't want to talk about this. Of course, if the party uses truth magic on her, Dorito should answer truthfully (as far as she knows) and within the scope of the spell and then should tell the Basement.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Noctara

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the test of ten challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: heart of darkness

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dorito tells the party that she's pretty into that girl Ember. Ember is hard to get to know, but that's kind of the appeal, right? Dorito tells the party that Ember is clearly real authentic, and also super relatable. Dorito digs those boots Ember wears. Does the party think Dorito could pull off that look? Dorito's pretty sure she's gonna get some boots like that.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dorito tells the party that she admits she didn't take much to Donna Peacock when meeting her for the first time. Maybe that's because Donna's beautiful and knows it. But, Dorito tells the party, there was one late night in the tavern when she and Donna got to talking and it changed her whole opinion. Donna told her that she gives Milton Peacock a hard time, saying he forced her to join the Peacock Family Singers because she'd glam them up. Donna then said that while this is a little true, she knew if Milton hadn't brought her onboard she'd probably be rich and famous and all alone somewhere. Dorito tells the party that this was a lot more self-awareness than she'd given Donna credit for. She's not sure Donna knows this was likely Milton's motivation all along, but hey, you can't have everything.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: Sunday around 10:15am, after they've encountered the Professor

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Dorito is out in a visible spot. Ideally, the party will have at least some ideas about this charge and hopefully they'll approach her to talk. If they haven't approached her by 10:45am, she should check in with the Basement and we'll make a plan. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!] Dorito takes them someplace private to talk, and should very reluctantly reveal the following information - this is, after all, a big secret! - in whatever order makes sense, and depending on what the party's doing/asking:

- Unless the party utterly misunderstood the interaction they just had, they should know she didn't kill Professor Merriweather, because, y'know, he's still alive.
- Hopefully they've also realized that Bane is Lewis Bainbridge, an anthropologist. If they've realized he's researching the cult, that's great, but not essential. (If they *haven't* realized the anthropologist part, we'll try to have someone else talk to them before they get to Dorito. We'll have to play this by ear.)
- IF the party says they met the Professor but doesn't mention anything about Lewis Bainbridge/an anthropologist/the Professor's colleague, then Dorito says, musingly, "So... does that mean Bane didn't hurt anyone?"
- IF the party says they met the Professor AND that he was supposed to meet his colleague/an anthropologist BUT DON'T mention anything about Bane, then Dorito says, "Oh, yeah. I didn't kill the Professor, I killed that other guy, the anthropologist."
- Essentially, Dorito needs to keep talking to them until they tell her that Bane is an anthropologist.
- If the party doesn't already know, Dorito can then explain that she thought Bane killed the professor because 1) he was acting very strangely last Sunday, and 2) she saw him with the hidden box of things that seemed to belong to the professor and 3) Lenora's Ouija board seemed to contact the professor's spirit, which accused Bane of murdering him. (This final point will be more believable and more interesting if Dorito says "the Ouija board was spelling out Bane!" That is, she doesn't explain it as "I'm dyslexic and so I thought...")

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- If the party doesn't already know, Dorito can also explain that she's in love with Bane and was prepared to take the fall for this crime in order to save him. She should probably word this as "I'm real into him" or whatever rather than talking too much about love. We want her two biggest emotional moments to be the following one, and then at the trial.
- *This* is Dorito's big emotional scene with the party, and the one where they'll hopefully step up: When Dorito learns that Bane is actually an anthropologist, she is shocked and then, very soon thereafter, upset. Dorito believes she's stupid. It's inconceivable that a genius - which, in her eyes, is what anyone with a title like "anthropologist" must be - would actually care about her. Bane has been *pretending* to like her while she's *actually* liked him for real. This is humiliating, she tells the party. She announces that she's just going to keep saying she killed Professor Merriweather. That's better than having Bane learn the humiliating truth. Hopefully the party will hearable-praise Dorito, telling her the stories they heard about her being perceptive. She might not be book-smart, but she's intelligent in a very real way. Ideally, this will mean the party is doubly responsible for the emotional payoff at the trial: they'll both make sure Dorito is declared innocent and make sure she finds love with Bane/Lewis Bainbridge.

If some part of this doesn't happen, Dorito should let the Basement know!

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Bane -- Deo Gallotto

Age: 36

Usually found: in the cultists' compound, in Greystone Clearing

Traveler Lore concerning the cultists appears on page 210.

Secret Info:

This situation has morphed into a conundrum of quite staggering proportions. This is Bane's secret.

His name isn't really Bane. That's not much of a secret; neither Diesel nor Jpeg were given those names at birth. But both those men took their new names honestly, choosing them not to deceive but rather to more fully inhabit their authentic selves.

Gods, he needs to be careful, letting himself talk like that. "More fully inhabit their authentic selves" indeed!

His real name is Lewis Bainbridge, and unlike the others in the compound, he introduced himself as Bane *specifically* to deceive. That's because unlike the others, he's not really a doomsday cultist. He's an anthropologist, and he came here specifically to study the cultists. And *that* required him to disguise himself, to go undercover, to pass himself off as something he was profoundly not.

To lie, in other words.

In the beginning, he hadn't seen anything wrong with that. That is, he hadn't seen anything *morally* wrong with it. It still wasn't *easy*, certainly. Lewis Bainbridge is comfortable in tweeds, or perhaps a nice corduroy for casual occasions. He lived surrounded by books and papers and journals. In a *room*, with a chair and bed and a *roof*.

Bane had none of those things. Bane had to dress in leather and sleep on the ground, including when it rained. He had no books to read, at least not any time he might be seen, and he had to keep all his notes in his head instead of writing them down. Perhaps hardest of all, Bane couldn't wear his glasses, because what sort of apocalyptic warrior peers out at the world through spectacles? He adopted the practice of bellowing "who the hell are you?" He hopes it made Bane appear tough instead of merely nearsighted.

Of course, he didn't destroy the few possessions he brought with him to World's Edge. He stashed them - his favorite tweed jacket, a book by his esteemed colleague Daniel Merriweather, his eyeglasses and a pouch of money in case he needs to suddenly extricate himself from World's Edge - in a box that he hid deep in the woods. But he can't access it often, lest anyone else in the compound grow suspicious. In order to truly study them, these fascinatingly bizarre folk who honestly believe the world is about to end, he needed them to trust completely that he was one of them. In so doing, he could hopefully grow to understand their childlike belief structures.

Gods, what a self-satisfied prick he had been.

Of course, he wouldn't actually use words like "simple-minded" or "stupid" in his write-up, but that's what he'd mean. It sounds nicer when you say "naive ideation" or "primitive worldview", but what you *mean* is "can you believe these morons actually think this!?" Lewis Bainbridge came to World's Edge thinking he'd find a bunch of simpletons crouching around a fire and he'd gather enough firsthand data and anecdotes to write an academic paper or three, papers for other academics to read and nod sagely and - yes - feel superior.

Instead, he'd found real people in the compound in Greystone Clearing. Smart people, determined and resilient, some of whom had been dealt rather bad hands in life. They'd made calculated choices that brought them to the compound in the woods and there they were creating a remarkably functional community. Lewis Bainbridge has attended enough backstabbing faculty meetings to know that building and sustaining a community like that isn't easy. Maybe, just maybe, these cultists weren't actually so stupid at all.

Especially the young woman called Dorito.

Lewis Bainbridge sat through a lot of lectures on observational technique to learn what Dorito does naturally. She has an ability to read people that astonishes him. It was clear after only a few hours in the compound that she would be the most likely to see through his deception, and quickly apparently how intelligent she is. He finds her remarkably perceptive and insightful.

Also super hot.

Remarkably, she seems to be attracted to him as well. Well, not to *him*. To *Bane*, which is of course not really him at all.

Although as the days pass, he must admit that he feels more like Bane and less like Lewis. Bane says what he thinks, and after a lifetime of tactful diplomacy, just saying what he thinks feels real good. Lewis was accustomed to reading the works of all the experts before forming an opinion, but Bane can't do that. An idea might end up being wrong, but at least it's his own, and fuck anybody who doesn't like it.

That feeling? Is very Bane. He *likes* feeling that way, confident in his own thoughts.

All of this is to explain why his original plan, to live amongst the cultists for 6 to 8 weeks, was extended. He told himself he was gathering additional useful data. But it was more than that. He likes being Bane. He likes living in the compound, feeling useful and self-assured. He likes being near Dorito. Even if he's doing all of those things under false pretenses.

But then his other life - Lewis Bainbridge's life, which he no longer entirely thinks of as his "real life" - intruded. He'd been startled to see a poster in the tavern announcing that Daniel Merriweather was coming to World's Edge to deliver a lecture. He thinks mostly like Bane these days, but still, he's a huge fan of Professor Merriweather's work; it was a big part of the reason he decided to study the doomsday cultists in the first place. He obviously couldn't just go to the lecture, because the Professor would inadvertently out him as a fellow academic. But he also couldn't pass up a chance to share some of the things he'd observed with his mentor and colleague.

He'd arranged to meet with Merriweather at noon on Sunday, just a few hours before the professor would deliver his talk. He'd been anxious that morning, knowing he'd need to slip away from the compound without anyone - especially Dorito - accompanying him. It hadn't been easy, because he and Dorito do most things together these days, but he'd managed. And yet, he'd waited in the designated meeting spot for several hours and the professor had never arrived.

He'd been disappointed but didn't take it personally, since the professor also failed to show up for his planned lecture.

But then the next day, in the tavern, Lenora Graves had been extremely concerned about Professor Merriweather's absence. She'd announced that she'd use a Ouija board to try to "contact the professor's spirit." He confesses he thought this was all a lot of silliness, right up until Dorito suddenly confessed to stabbing Daniel Merriweather.

Bane no longer knows what to think or feel.

As long as he's known her, Dorito has been mercurial. It's one of the things he likes best about her. You're never, ever bored when Dorito's around, because her mind just moves faster than other people's.

But this is utterly unexpected. Despite Dorito's black leather clothing and her fierce outlook on life, Bane has seen only kindness from her. Until now. Maybe he's been kidding himself that he belongs here, among the cultists.

And yet, he cannot bring himself to stop caring for her. Everything about her burns with the brightest of sparks. Just like her name, Dorito, "little golden one." That's what she is, still, and it is still how he sees her, even knowing she has done an inexcusable thing.

Who is she, to do something so terrible while still shining so brightly?

And who is he, that he still loves her anyway?

A description of the Test of Ten Challenge appears on page 398.

Keer

When to approach a party: during Jpeg's 1st Saturday encounter with the party (and later as needed)

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Jpeg is the party's 1st Saturday encounter, so he approaches the party in the tavern and then walks to the camp with them. Dorito and Bane are out at this time and will be in the camp when Jpeg gets there with the party so the party will have a chance to meet these characters without Dorito and Bane appearing to seek them out.

During the party's 1st Saturday encounter with Jpeg, Bane also interacts with the party. When they first enter the camp, Bane is confrontational, getting close to them and demanding to know who they are; he can include Jpeg in this general air of gruffness. Once they're in the camp, though, he is relatively pleasant. He mentions Dorito a bunch, in the way a person does when they have a crush on someone; he should continue to do this if he encounters the party again at other times.

At any point he can manage when Dorito won't overhear, he tells the party that Dorito is real good at reading people. It's like magic with her, almost, the way she can tell what someone's thinking or feeling. Bane wishes he could do that. Lastly, it's not impossible the party will use truth magic of some sort on Bane, so he should be ready for that just in case.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Glendeeep

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the test of ten challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: devil's-fire whiskey

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bane tells the party that Solomon Stillwater recently made a trip back to Keer, where he's originally from. Before Solomon left, he'd hung a picture of himself on the bar so that everyone behaved while he was away. Bane tells the party that, a few days after Solomon left, he was in the tavern when a guy he didn't recognize came in. This guy took a look at the sketch of Solomon and said, "That's Scurvy Jack Brigham! Why've you got his picture hung up?" Bane tells the party that *then*, a couple nights later, a different stranger came in and the exact same thing happened! Bane tells the party that he's not one to start rumors or anything, but the whole thing is a little suspicious. These guys can't prove Solomon is Jack Brigham, but then again, no one in town can really prove he's not, either. Bane clarifies that Solomon is a decent guy and he doesn't want to make trouble for him or anything. But it was kinda weird, those guys being so sure about who the picture was of. Could Solomon actually be the famous pirate? Probably not, right? But maybe?

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

JPeg -- Gareth Hinds

Age: 44

Usually found: in the cultists' compound, in Greystone Clearing

Traveler Lore concerning the cultists appears on page 210.

A description of the Test of Ten Challenge appears on page 398.

Dolorón

Approximately when: Friday night (JPeg is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: JPeg tells the party that he's happy to bring the party to meet Phyllis Fieri.

Before leaving, JPeg needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at the house, although there is one nearby. If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should probably do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Dolorón. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, JPeg should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once JPeg has escorted the party to Phyllis' FireWaterEarthAirB'n'B and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, he returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: JPeg tells the party that they've come to town at an interesting and busy time. In addition to the trial *and* the wedding that will be taking place on Sunday, tomorrow is the final day of the Rites of Remembrance, which means Soul Speaking is tomorrow night. This is one of JPeg's favorite traditions!

Item(s) to give this party: none

Keer

Approximately when: Saturday morning (JPeg is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the test of ten challenge

Info to give the party directly: JPeg tells the party that he heard they were looking for a ring set with a glimmergem. He has one, and he'd be happy to let the party have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: During the walk to the compound, JPeg tells them a little bit about the group and their story: As the party no doubt knows, more than a year ago, signs started appearing that the endtimes would soon be upon them: the Great Tumult, a time when most people would be wiped out. All the portents pointed to the date September 4th of this year: 9/4/994. JPeg tells the party that lots of people panicked, but Diesel instead started preparing for these endtimes. He'd gathered other like-minded survivalists, assembling a ragtag group and telling them of his idea: that if they started living as though the Tumult had already occurred, they would be well-equipped to withstand the privations of post-apocalyptic life. Just over 4 months ago, they'd established their compound in Greystone Clearing, and then they'd waited.

Of course, JPeg tells the party, September 4th came and went with no Great Tumult. After that, some of the Diesel's cultists had slunk away. But the committed are still there, he tells the party. And now, JPeg says, no one can remember what happened on Thursday night! Probably this is the start of the Tumult! The cultists are so ready! Dorito and Bane are out at this time and will be

in the camp when Jpeg gets there with the party so the party will have a chance to meet these characters without Dorito and Bane appearing to seek them out.

At some point during this interaction, Jpeg asks for the party's list of items they need, then casually hands it to Dorito and asks her a question about it. ("What's the other kind of ring they need, again?" or somesuch.) Dorito can read, but it's challenging and slow for her, and although she doesn't need to overplay this, the party will hopefully notice. After a few seconds of trying to sound out a word or two, Dorito gets angry and shoves "this stupid thing" back at Jpeg.

At the very end of the encounter, Jpeg asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Jpeg could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: ring set with a glimmergem

any parties encountered (ideally 3-4 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Lenora Graves, Kira and Huxley are all giving out similar information from different perspectives. It's awesome if they manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if they don't.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Jpeg tells the party that he's looking forward to the wedding on Sunday. Belle and Cary seem really happy together. Of course, they've had their difficulties, just like anybody. Lots of people in town are worked up because of the tattoo Jpeg gave Belle - theoretically it was supposed to be half of a pair of matching tattoos - on her wrist. Jpeg explains that Belle'd gotten the tattoo without discussing it with Cary first, and for reasons of his own, he hadn't wanted to get a matching one... or *any* tattoo, for that matter.

Some people think Jpeg should talk Cary into the matching ink, which is neither Jpeg's job nor any of his business. Other people think Jpeg shouldn't have tattooed Belle until she'd talked to Cary, which is also none of his business. Jpeg points out to the party that this is also not the business of everyone in town who's not Belle or Cary, but that doesn't stop people from having opinions about it all.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Big Musical Number and scene that follows it

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Jpeg tells the party that he's seen some of the paintings that have been left around town. They certainly could be done by Aesthetika. He tells the party that Aesthetika mentioned to him several months ago that she was working on making some paint with finely-ground mica added to it, giving it a soft shimmer on the page. At that time, she'd managed to make one or two different colors. These paintings feature a similar iridescent look, although there are far more colors used. Paints such as this are available commercially, Jpeg tells the party, but they're very expensive. The paintings he's seen are very good. He tells the party that he himself is good enough to have done them... but he didn't.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time this charge is not being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Jpeg tells the party that Ursula Smirch approached him about doing a tattoo for her. Jpeg tells the party that the tattoo was supposed to be on Ursula's back, a portrait of her daughter, Karla. Jpeg told Ursula he could do that. But then, he says, her list of demands for the tattoo kept growing. She'd told him she wanted Karla - her "little

princess”, Ursula calls her - to look completely lifelike. Ursula told him that if the design’s eyes weren’t as beautiful as Karla’s, she wouldn’t pay. And if the smile wasn’t as serene, she wouldn’t pay. If the nose wasn’t as exquisitely perfect... hopefully the party gets the idea. Jpeg tells the party that he can tell when a job is going to be not worth his while, so he’d politely informed Ursula that his schedule was already full and he’d have to turn the job down. It was probably all for the best, Jpeg says. While he was talking to Ursula, Karla got upset because she wouldn’t be able to see the tattoo, what with it being on Ursula’s back. Jpeg tried to explain that although *Ursula* would need a mirror to see it, *Karla* would be able to see it just fine. But that idea... was beyond Karla. Some jobs, Jpeg says, you just walk away from...

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder’s, see page 76 for the whole story

P’loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Jpeg tells the party that Solomon Stillwater had to make a trip back home to Keer, where he’s originally from. The evening Solomon found out about the trip, Jpeg was in the tavern. Solomon was feeling bad about leaving all the work of running everything to Bonnie, and he’d joked that he needed to hang a picture of himself in the bar so all the customers behaved while he was gone. Jpeg tells the party that they all thought that was pretty funny, so he’d drawn a quick sketch of Solomon looking appropriately fierce. Seemingly he’d made Solomon look much too menacing, because on two separate days when Solomon was away, strangers came in to the tavern and both times, when they saw the picture of Solomon, they’d thought it was a picture of Jack Brigham, that famous pirate. Jpeg thinks this is probably just because he made the eyes look too angry, but of course some people in town read too much into the strangers’ comments and started whispering about how maybe Solomon actually was Jack Brigham. People like to have something to whisper about, Jpeg says.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater’s, see page 142 for the whole story

Moxie -- Joyce Farnsworth

Age: 58

Usually found: in the cultists' compound, in Greystone Clearing

Traveler Lore concerning the cultists appears on page 210.

A description of the Test of Ten Challenge appears on page 398.

Clairia

Approximately when: Friday night (Moxie is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Moxie asks the party to tell her all about their mission.

Moxie tells the party that their mission sounds very important but also terrifying. How brave they all are! She'd really love to help them, but unfortunately she doesn't know anything about anyone named Ignatius or any sort of magical staff. She suggests that maybe the party should speak to Brimstone. Brimstone is an imp, an innately magical being. Moxie admits that she herself is always a little nervous around Brimstone, even though everyone assures her he's really a very pleasant fellow despite being the former minion of a dark sorcerer. Maybe Brimstone has an enchanted staff in his closet at home or something!

Sometime during the conversation, Moxie introduces the party to their Companion. Moxie says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests her very good friend Clementine, who has been sitting at the same table. Moxie lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Moxie tells the party how utterly unnerving it was to wake up this morning and realize she had absolutely no idea what had transpired the night before. Everything after Thursday late afternoon is just a complete unknown! She tells the party that some people assumed they couldn't remember anything because of last night's bachelor and bachelorette parties but that she personally did not attend Belle's soirée - parties make her anxious, as does the general concept of matrimony - and yet she still remembers nothing. Moxie informs the party that Solomon Stillwater was out of town last night and he seems to remember everything just fine. The whole thing is very worrisome!

Item(s) to give this party: none

Arden

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the test of ten challenge

Info to give the party directly: Moxie tells the party that it's surprising - and somewhat concerning! - that they're asking her for an argentum heart. She doesn't have one - and has no idea what such a thing is - but that she recently found a poem titled Argentum. It's full of unsettling imagery, Moxie says, and she'd be just as happy if the party would take it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the argentum heart

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Moxie tells the party that she was in the tavern when Vernon Gill arrived in town on Wednesday, and frankly the whole experience was very unnerving. She tells the party that Vernon told everyone the story of Katherine Carmichael's attack on him 10 years ago. Vernon was a soldier at that time. Moxie clarifies for the party that he wasn't one of those terrifying special-forces Phantom soldiers, but rather was a garden-variety-but-still-very-scary regular soldier. According to Vernon, he'd been in a bar in some small town in Arden, when Katherine Carmichael was also there. Moxie tells the

party that Vernon apparently said something upsetting or annoying to Katherine. After he left the bar, he heard Katherine call his name - Moxie always finds it jarring when someone calls her name when she's not expecting it! - and when he turned to look, Katherine shot him. Moxie personally has never been shot with a crossbow or anything else but she is quite sure that this is also jarring for nearly everyone! According to Vernon, she first shot him in the forearm and then in the shoulder. When he fell to the ground - something Moxie herself nearly did just *hearing* this story! - Katherine then approached and pulled both crossbow bolts from his body. When Vernon related this in the tavern, Moxie had to breathe into a paper bag for several minutes, but even so, she heard him explain that the bolts Katherine carries have her initials etched into the shafts, and that she didn't want to leave him with proof of her attack. He passed out from pain and blood loss at that time and when he regained consciousness, Katherine was gone. Moxie is now being very careful not to say anything upsetting or annoying to Katherine Carmichael, or really, anything to her at all. Terrifying!

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Moxie tells the party about something that happened about a month ago. It was all very unsettling. Ursula Smirch read a news article talking about a new machine that would restore keepers' prayers. Moxie had never heard of such a thing and finds this idea to be deeply troubling. Apparently she's not the only one; when Ursula claimed she was going to acquire such a machine, Evelyn got very upset about it. Moxie tells the party that Ursula was talking in the tavern one night about how once she had such a device, keepers wouldn't need to visit Crabtree anymore, and that was the comment that most concerned Evelyn. After a great deal of yelling - which made Moxie very anxious - Evelyn yelled that she wouldn't rest until Ursula was driven out of business. Shortly after this episode, strange and worrisome things started to happen to the Smirches' shop. It's probably not Evelyn doing those things, although it's clearly someone, and who else would do so? Moxie tells the party that she personally would be terrified to do anything that might anger Ursula, but clearly someone out there feels differently.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Clairia

When to approach a party: Moxie is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. She will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. She should check with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: Moxie approaches the party. She tells the party she heard they were looking into the charge that was leveled against Danny Donovan. She reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Moxie encourages them to present the info they've learned to her as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Danny didn't accidentally or purposefully set this fire; Aria's accidental knocking over a candle did.
- Aria's still alive because Danny heard her screams and ran inside to save her.
- "Every living soul" in World's Edge has forgotten what happened on Thursday night, but the ghosts who haunt The Morg saw everything, and they remember.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Moxie can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Moxie can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) She can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

The Test of Ten Challenge

Activity: Everyone in the post-apocalyptic compound – Diesel, Equinoxious, Dorito, Bane, Jpeg and Moxie – are sharing this challenge activity. It can be done with several or all of them at the same time, although it doesn't have to be.

The Test of Ten is a game the cultist sometimes play to pass the time: ten questions, each requiring ten answers. The answers may be given by anyone in the group. The staff suggest that they play with the party, informing them (nicely) that they will give up the item the party wants only if the party successfully passes the test.

Diesel (or whoever) reads each question. The questions test general knowledge of all sorts. The staff begin with Question 1 and do not proceed to the next question until the previous one has been answered.

It is our hope that all of the party members will contribute to the answers, although there may well be a question that only one party member answers, which is fine.

The questions are as follows:

1. Name ten synonyms for "happy"
2. Name ten people who live in this village
3. Name ten kinds of cheese
4. Name ten geometric shapes
5. Name ten children's songs
6. Name ten precious gemstones
7. Name ten things you can open
8. Name ten ways to show someone you love them
9. Name ten animals that start with the letter P
10. Name ten things there are ten of

If a participant contributes an answer that is slightly off – e.g. "excited" isn't really exactly the same as "happy", and turquoise isn't technically a precious gem – the staff should let it pass. Only if the party gives a flagrantly wrong answer should the staff consider discounting it, and even still, they should use their judgment on this. (If the wrong answer is the only thing that one participant has contributed, and if the party doesn't seem to realize it's wrong, it's probably best to say nothing.)

If the party is unable to "pass" the Test of Ten, the staff give them a chance to redeem themselves: in that case, the party must think of a Test of Ten-style question. If the staff cannot come up with ten answers and the party can, then the party wins after all.

Educational goal(s): to force the party to contribute to a group solution. to affirm the different areas of intelligence within the party.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a notebook or paper listing the questions

Justice Orion Wilde -- Tom Ricket

Age: 58

Usually found: in the Prosecutor's pavilion

Traveler Lore concerning Orion Wilde appears on page 206.

A description of the Charmed, I'm Sure Challenge appears on page 409.

Sythwan

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the charmed, I'm sure challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: moonstone shards

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time all weekend, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. These encounters are designed as a joint encounter with both Nina Bliss and Orion Wilde. As such, they're probably easiest/best if Nina and Orion are together when interacting with a party, although this is not strictly necessary.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Assuming Nina Bliss and Orion Wilde are together when they encounter a party, the interaction goes something like this: Nina excitedly tells the party about past victories of Orion's, times when he aggressively pursued justice and won. Orion then dispiritedly counters this cheerleading by reminding Nina that the victory was actually quite limited. (Details/examples below.)

Nina tells the party about a woman in Mystal who was embezzling tens of thousands of royals from the charity she was running, taking money that was earmarked to feed the impoverished of that city. Nina explains that Justice Wilde tracked down the ledgers that proved the woman guilty, ensuring she served significant jail time for her crime. Orion counters that this is true, but that most of the stolen money was never recovered. He is certain much of it was given as gifts to members of the woman's social circle, other members of Mystal's elite, who knew exactly where it came from. The woman was brought to justice, yes, but many others there were not.

And/or Nina tells the party about a baron from Weston, in Arden. She reminds the party that the aristocracy are often tasked with administering justice in cases when itinerant prosecutors like Justice Wilde are not available. Orion looked into many of the cases this baron ruled on and found grossly unfair rulings, always privileging the man's friends and business partners. Nina tells the party that the unscrupulous baron is now behind bars. Orion concedes that this is true, but informs Nina and the party that the man is imprisoned at Arden's Twining Correctional Campus, living in conditions many would consider luxurious.

And/or Nina tells the party that Justice Wilde was instrumental in convicting the violent Red Mask Gang, a vicious group of outlaws who operated in eastern Moreth and western Arden. Orion counters that although he did successfully prosecute the gang for several of their deadly attacks, he was ultimately unable to prove they were responsible for dozens of other assaults.

[It's best if Nina/Orion don't make up additional scenarios because the chance of inadvertently serving red herrings is high.]

If Nina is alone when she encounters a party, she can give her excited/appreciative commentary without any rebuttal. If Orion is alone when he encounters a party, there's not much he can say unless the party approaches him first. If they reference the cases mentioned in his lore or that Nina has described to them, he counters with evidence that yes, he has accomplished *something*, but not as much as is actually needed.

Ultimately, for any encounter in which Orion is present, he ends the encounter by telling the party: "Justice is a lot of work, and it's ongoing. Most people simply can't be bothered." This is his set-up for the trial, when a lot of people will indeed bother.

If the encounter happens in a place where there aren't other parties around (that is, not in the tavern) Orion can add "You'll never be in a room where most people care." This is especially fitting if the party tries to counteract his naysaying by pointing out that

they are passionate about justice, or that Nina is, or whatever. In a case like that, Orion acknowledges that this is completely true. Some people are willing to work for justice, and some people care. But they are the exception rather than the rule. Because ultimately, that's what's going to change Orion during the trial: being in a place where, in fact, everyone actually does care.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for and adds emotional impact to the way Orion transforms during the trial

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Orion tells the party that he's not at liberty to comment on any ongoing investigation, but that he hates desecration charges. Hates them! There's extra paperwork far beyond what you get with regular destruction-of-property cases, and there's already far too much paperwork as is it. He tells the party he was visited by Edwin Davies on behalf of that woman, Eugenie Bright, who's apparently Davies' aunt. Whatever. Orion says that it doesn't matter what Mr. Davies wants, barging into the prosecutorial pavilion first thing in the morning, going on and on about "I know there's a mandatory prison sentence of at least ten years in cases where a defendant is found guilty of desecration, but perhaps you could make an exception for my poor elderly aunt?" Orion tells the party that he'll tell them just like he told Mr. Davies: no, he cannot make an exception for anyone. That is what "mandatory" means. The justice department of Lyria takes matters of desecration very seriously, because if it did not, you can bet every church bureaucrat in the kingdom would be sending in angry letters. And Orion Wilde likes angry letters even less than extra paperwork.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: Saturday after 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Orion tells the party that he does not appreciate childish antics, even if - or especially if! - the perpetrator is one of these "influencer"-type people. Orion explains that he had come into the tavern to have a drink, which he was doing at the bar. That woman Ember was at the bar as well, which is no concern of Orion's as he was not interested in engaging in conversation. Orion tells the party that this was seemingly not acceptable to Ember. It was clear she was looking for attention, which she attempted to get by "accidentally" nudging Orion's drink. Orion tells the party he said a polite hello to Ember but then returned to minding his own business. Instead of returning his greeting or - ideally! - leaving him alone altogether, Ember instead slid his drink slightly closer to the edge of the bar. Orion was not going to give her the attention she was clearly seeking, so he ignored her behavior. This proved to be the wrong tack to take, as Ember continued shoving his glass until it fell off the bar entirely, pouring his drink in his lap. And then, Orion says, Ember simply turned and left the bar, without any sort of apology whatsoever. Is this sort of juvenile behavior considered cute now? Because Orion very definitely does not find it so!

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Celeste Wilde -- Esther Lee

Age: 51

Usually found: in the Prosecutor's pavilion

Traveler Lore concerning Orion Wilde appears on page 206.

A description of the Charmed, I'm Sure Challenge appears on page 409.

Glendeep

Approximately when: Friday night (Celeste Wilde is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Celeste asks the party to tell her all about their mission. She is very concerned to hear about the threat to the Duke's son!

Celeste tells the party that she's never heard of a Ritual of Reclamation. She's also not from World's Edge herself, although she doesn't believe she's met anyone in town named Lorelei. It's a lovely name, Celeste says, and she feels like she would've remembered it. Celeste suggests that the party talk to Baroness Adina Valerius. The Baroness is a skilled swordswoman, so if this Lorelei person has a sword, the Baroness probably knows her.

Sometime during the conversation, Celeste introduces the party to their Companion. Celeste says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Gloucester, who has been sitting at the same table. Celeste quietly lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Celeste reminds the party that she is of course in town for the trial, which her husband, Justice Orion Wilde, will conduct on Sunday. She serves as Orion's clerk, she tells the party, and she has every expectation that this trial will be an efficient and straightforward one, despite everything else that is going on in town.

As Celeste understands it, no one who was in town last night has any recollection of the hours between 6pm on Thursday and 6am on Friday. Orion and the rest of the prosecutorial entourage only arrived in town this very morning, and she assures the party that she remembers everything about yesterday. Celeste certainly doesn't like to question the eyewitness accounts of everyone in town, but from what she understands, there will be a wedding happening after the trial on Sunday - which is so exciting; Celeste *loves* weddings - and there were pre-wedding festivities held on Thursday night. Is it not possible that perhaps some people in town simply over-indulged at those parties and this explains the period people cannot remember?

Item(s) to give this party: none

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Celeste is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the charmed, I'm sure challenge

Info to give the party directly: Celeste tells the party that she heard they were looking for a aquamarine lookingglass. She has one, and she'd be happy to let the party have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At the very end of the encounter, Celeste asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Celeste could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: aquamarine lookingglass

any parties encountered (ideally 2-4 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Celeste tells the party what a thrill it has been getting to meet the inventor of the Bellaphone, Ms. Belle Bishop. Celeste explains that she's seen firsthand how important the Bellaphone has already been in pursuit of justice, because it allows her to research matters that happened far away, something that used to require weeks of waiting for letters to travel back and forth. She confesses that, if you had asked her, she probably would have expected the developer of such important technology to be some sort of socially-awkward genius, or else to be an arrogant know-it-all, and yet this couldn't be farther from the truth! Belle is warm and friendly and full of fun! Celeste tells the party Belle personally invited her and Orion and the rest of their staff to attend the wedding on Sunday. She cannot wait. She loves weddings!

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Big Musical Number

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Celeste tells the party that although she likes to think of herself as a mostly sensible person, there are certain things that she simply cannot resist: 1) the theater, 2) the occult, 3) glamour and 4) romance. So: an old theater haunted with the ghosts of past lovers? Sign her up! Celeste explains that everything she'd heard about the Morgan Theater was enticing. The building was the height of glamour back when Montgomery and Delia Morgan had built it, and all the most popular acts of the day had played there. Montgomery and Delia themselves were fascinating: both of them gorgeous and talented and the two of them so deeply in love. Of course they'd come back to haunt their beloved theater! Celeste tells the party that all theaters are haunted, but even so, the Morgan was said to be more haunted than most. Of course, she says, that was a long time ago. Even the most ardently devoted ghosts fade away over time. Still, Celeste was so excited to be coming to World's Edge, the home of the Morgan! She knew it had sat empty for two decades, but people said that the Morgans' great-granddaughter was restoring the building to its former glory. Celeste tells the party that she was crushed to arrive in town on Friday morning and learn that the theater had burned *the night before*. Obviously, the most important thing is that no one was hurt. But still. She was *crushed*.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Celeste tells the party about an interaction she had recently with Dorito. She has no business, she admits, talking about someone who will soon stand trial for murder, but in Celeste's defense, she says, she didn't know who Dorito was when the interaction happened. She explains that she and the rest of her husband's entourage arrived in town early on Friday morning and they'd all been busy getting their pavilion and workspaces set up, just as they do in every new town. She and Fenwick and Nina had been bustling around when an oddly-dressed young woman had shown up unannounced. She'd watched them work for a few minutes and then, without saying anything, she'd pitched in, helping Fenwick with the tent-poles and carrying trunks around when Nina directed. Celeste tells the party that a basket of paperwork had been upended just as Orion - that's her husband, Justice Orion Wilde - got back to the pavilion. Everyone was frantically grabbing up papers before the wind could blow them away, which was of course the priority. Except... Celeste confesses to the party that obviously her focus should've been on the documents, many of which are very important. But the other thing in the basket was a stone Celeste uses as a paperweight, and for a few frantic seconds, she couldn't find it. But that young woman, whom Celeste now understands is Dorito, she'd turned to Celeste and said "Here's the thing you're looking for." And sure enough, it was her stone paperweight. Celeste had gratefully slid it into her pocket, and that's when Dorito asked "When did he give it to you?" Celeste tells the party that she'd answered before even thinking about it, saying, "Back when we first met, and neither of us had a royal to spare." It was more than twenty years ago that Orion had found a beautiful smooth stone on the shore of a lake and given it to her. A minute or two passed before Celeste thought to ask this odd woman, "Wait, how did you know my husband gave me the stone?" And

Dorito'd answered, "When you couldn't find it, you looked from the ground to him to the ground to him again." Celeste tells the party that they'd gotten the pavilion all to rights and then that young woman had walked straight up to Orion and said "I guess you're the Justice. My name's Dorito and I stabbed a guy this week." Celeste shouldn't be talking about someone who'll soon be convicted of murder. But Dorito was a huge help setting up the pavilion. And she found Celeste's paperweight, and realized how much it means to Celeste. That doesn't excuse murder, obviously. But it's maybe worth remembering.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: Sunday around 10:15am, after the party has finished their party path

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday around 10:15am, after the party has finished their party path, Celeste approaches them. (Note that the party will likely have Ursula Smirch with them. Although Ursula is under the influence of the Testimony'd wine, she should stay largely quiet during this scene.) During this scene, Celeste should act mostly as though she's just thinking aloud rather than actually sharing information with them.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

For the rest of the weekend, Celeste has been an upbeat figure, but now the party sees her at her lowest point. She's talking largely to herself, saddened by the fact that her husband Orion no longer seems to care much about the justice he is tasked with meting out. This bizarre case against Milton Peacock, Celeste says, is the kind of conundrum that would formerly have captivated Orion. He wouldn't have rested until he'd made sense of its contradictions, but now, he seems willing to ignore them completely. Listing those contradictions aloud, Celeste recaps for herself (and for the party):

- An anonymous tip accused Milton Peacock of embezzling a huge amount - 12000 royals - from the band.
- When Nina Bliss contacted the bank in Mystal on Friday, they confirmed that the Peacock Family Singers' account was nearly empty.
- When confronted with this accusation, Milton Peacock confessed to the crime, citing outstanding gambling debts as the reason he'd stolen the money.
- Last night, the bank in Mystal contacted the prosecutor's pavilion via Bellaphone and talked to Fenwick. The bank asserted that the 12000 royals *was* in the band's account, which doesn't make any sense.
- Celeste would like to speak to the writer of the anonymous accusatory note, but of course they don't know who that is.

As she says this last point, Celeste gesticulates with the paper she holds, the anonymous note. Unlike everything else she's said, which the party has already heard, the party hasn't ever seen the note. Hopefully they ask to see it now; if they don't, Celeste should recap a bit more, continuing to call attention to it where possible.

The note doesn't say much: "To whom it may concern: Milton Peacock has stolen at least 12000 royals from the Peacock Family Singers. Don't take my word for it. Check the band's account: #009342 at the Federated Bank of Mystal. It's almost empty. - a concerned friend" Except that the i's in the letter are dotted with Milton's distinctive "peacock i." Hopefully the party notices this and comments on it. If they don't, Celeste should check in with the Basement.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Nina Bliss -- Peggy O'Connell

Age: 47

Usually found: in the Prosecutor's pavilion

Traveler Lore concerning Orion Wilde appears on page 206.

A description of the Charmed, I'm Sure Challenge appears on page 409.

Keer

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the charmed, I'm sure challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: perfect sphere of water bottle

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time all weekend, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. These encounters are designed as a joint encounter with both Nina Bliss and Orion Wilde. As such, they're probably easiest/best if Nina and Orion are together when interacting with a party, although this is not strictly necessary.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Assuming Nina Bliss and Orion Wilde are together when they encounter a party, the interaction goes something like this: Nina excitedly tells the party about past victories of Orion's, times when he aggressively pursued justice and won. Orion then dispiritedly counters this cheerleading by reminding Nina that the victory was actually quite limited. (Details/examples below.)

Nina tells the party about a woman in Mystal who was embezzling tens of thousands of royals from the charity she was running, taking money that was earmarked to feed the impoverished of that city. Nina explains that Justice Wilde tracked down the ledgers that proved the woman guilty, ensuring she served significant jail time for her crime. Orion counters that this is true, but that most of the stolen money was never recovered. He is certain much of it was given as gifts to members of the woman's social circle, other members of Mystal's elite, who knew exactly where it came from. The woman was brought to justice, yes, but many others there were not.

And/or Nina tells the party about a baron from Weston, in Arden. She reminds the party that the aristocracy are often tasked with administering justice in cases when itinerant prosecutors like Justice Wilde are not available. Orion looked into many of the cases this baron ruled on and found grossly unfair rulings, always privileging the man's friends and business partners. Nina tells the party that the unscrupulous baron is now behind bars. Orion concedes that this is true, but informs Nina and the party that the man is imprisoned at Arden's Twining Correctional Campus, living in conditions many would consider luxurious.

And/or Nina tells the party that Justice Wilde was instrumental in convicting the violent Red Mask Gang, a vicious group of outlaws who operated in eastern Moreth and western Arden. Orion counters that although he did successfully prosecute the gang for several of their deadly attacks, he was ultimately unable to prove they were responsible for dozens of other assaults.

[It's best if Nina/Orion don't make up additional scenarios because the chance of inadvertently serving red herrings is high.]

If Nina is alone when she encounters a party, she can give her excited/appreciative commentary without any rebuttal. If Orion is alone when he encounters a party, there's not much he can say unless the party approaches him first. If they reference the cases mentioned in his lore or that Nina has described to them, he counters with evidence that yes, he has accomplished *something*, but not as much as is actually needed.

Ultimately, for any encounter in which Orion is present, he ends the encounter by telling the party: "Justice is a lot of work, and it's ongoing. Most people simply can't be bothered." This is his set-up for the trial, when a lot of people will indeed bother.

If the encounter happens in a place where there aren't other parties around (that is, not in the tavern) Orion can add "You'll never be in a room where most people care." This is especially fitting if the party tries to counteract his naysaying by pointing out that

they are passionate about justice, or that Nina is, or whatever. In a case like that, Orion acknowledges that this is completely true. Some people are willing to work for justice, and some people care. But they are the exception rather than the rule. Because ultimately, that's what's going to change Orion during the trial: being in a place where, in fact, everyone actually does care.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for and adds emotional impact to the way Orion transforms during the trial

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nina tells the party that, upon arrival in town, she visited the Smirches' shop to purchase a set of teacups to replace some that got broken on the journey to World's Edge. Frustratingly, the only cups the Smirches had for sale were also chipped and damaged. Nina tells the party that, according to the gentleman she spoke to at the shop, someone else in town is purposefully knocking merchandise from the display shelves with the intent of harming the shop's business. Nina admits that she probably should not be mentioning this to the party, now that it's apparent that this concerns the ongoing investigation of Evelyn, the townsperson in question. Obviously Nina has no idea whether or not the allegations against Evelyn are true, but she does believe strongly that destroying perfectly good teacups is very wrong. Drinking tea out of a chipped teacup is unsatisfying and makes her edgy in a way she cannot explain.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Nina tells the party that Cal Coleman seems to be a very proactive entrepreneur. Cal came to town two weeks ago, she says. As she understands it, Cal's primary purpose is looking into the business model of Inspirations Unlimited, but he also made an offer to purchase the Inn at World's Edge. Nina tells the party that she does well enough reconciling needed purchases for Justice Wilde but that it's hard to imagine making so many large and expensive business decisions at once. This doesn't seem to phase Cal Coleman, but no doubt that's why he's cut out for that sort of work and she is not. Seemingly he was undaunted when the Stillwaters rejected his purchase offer because just a few days ago, when Solomon Stillwater was out of town, Cal offered again to buy the tavern. Nina tells the party she wishes she were as fearless and decisive as Cal seems to be.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael, the party encounters a group of women - Pearl Bryce, Nix Valerius, Joni Peacock, Donna Peacock and Nina Bliss - all feverishly discussing a plan. Pearl pulls the party over and tells them what's happening. She explains that they cannot allow Katherine Carmichael to go to jail for shooting Vernon Gill. Vernon is an odious person, she says, and surely Katherine must have had a valid reason for shooting him. [Remember: none of these women know that Vernon is faking his injuries or that Katherine didn't really shoot him!] Joni tells the party that they all love the Kit Carnage books so much. Kit has been so important to all of them. Donna reiterates that they cannot let Katherine go to jail.

Nix tells the party that Pearl has come up with a plan to keep Katherine from going to jail. When Katherine's charge comes to trial, Pearl is going to claim that *she* was the one who shot Vernon. And then Nix is going to say that no, *she* shot him. Then Joni and Donna are also going to claim that *they* were the ones who shot him. With so many other people confessing, Justice Wilde can't possibly rule that Katherine is guilty! [Note: yes, this plan is 100% us ripping off the "I'm Spartacus" scene.]

Nina interrupts here. She tells the others - as she has already been doing - that this plan isn't going to work. First of all, they cannot get up and lie in a Lyrian court of law. Second of all, even if they're willing to commit perjury - which they should not be! - this plan is likely to result in a legal situation the law calls Merrick's Conundrum. In a case like this, it's not at all impossible that Justice Wilde could simply declare all of them - Katherine Carmichael *and* Pearl and Nix and Joni and Donna - guilty! He could require *all* of them to pay damages to Vernon Gill, resulting in the unpleasant Mr. Gill receiving a very, very large amount of money indeed! And he could send *all* of them to jail.

The group then resumes arguing amongst themselves, because Pearl is still insisting that they need *some* plan to save Katherine, while Nina is sympathetic but vehemently opposed to this particular plan. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

Hopefully at some point in here the party confides in these women and tells them the truth about Katherine, that she didn't shoot Vernon or anyone else. Assuming the party does this, all these women are overcome. Katherine is an inspiration! She's so brave! Hopefully, the party then makes the leap to the fact that telling Katherine's real life story will inspire women and girls just like Kit Carnage's stories do... and Katherine is actually real.

If the party *doesn't* tell these women the truth here, or if they propose a different plan, someone should tell the Basement and we'll make a plan from there! Also, if it's early enough and if it seems like the party really wants to have this scene with Katherine pre-trial, then we can send her back out at that time.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Fenwick Michaels -- Kenneth Reeves

Age: 50

Usually found: in the Prosecutor's pavilion

Traveler Lore concerning Orion Wilde appears on page 206.

A description of the Charmed, I'm Sure Challenge appears on page 409.

Waylon

Approximately when: Friday night (Fenwick is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Fenwick tells the party that he doesn't know anything about a spell of Testimony - magic is forbidden in all Lyrian courts of law, so he has never learned much about spells - but he knows someone who does. He suggests they speak with Evelyn, an air caster who has a shop in Hillcrest. Fenwick was talking with Evelyn earlier today and she said something about a Testimony spell.

Evelyn doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Fenwick says. He himself cannot leave at the moment, but he brings the party over to Bailey, and asks Bailey if he would be willing to walk the party to Crabtree & Evelyn's shop. Fenwick wishes the party much luck in World's Edge.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Elsewhich

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the charmed, I'm sure challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: gospel weed

Arden

When to approach a party: any time this charge is not being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Fenwick tells the party that in his line of work, he hears all sorts of crazy rumors and speculations. Several months ago, he says, he heard a rumor that the Crown of St. Mora - which was stolen from the cathedral in Mystal a couple of years ago; it was all anybody talked about back when it happened - was in a little town at the far western edge of Moreth called World's Edge. The rumor at the time was that a merchant family in the town had the Crown. Nobody could prove it, it seems and nothing ever came of it. Fenwick admits he'd pretty much forgotten all about the Crown and the story, but then Justice Wilde's entourage got here to World's Edge and apparently the Crown of St. Mora had recently showed up again!

Fenwick tells the party that the Crown got left on the doorstep of the Baron's estate, so if that merchant family did have it squirreled away, either they gave it back or someone swiped it from them. Who knows?

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Fenwick tells the party that officially speaking, he has no opinion or vested interest in any of the charges Justice Wilde is investigating here in World's Edge, but just between them, he is really hoping that Solomon Stillwater is actually Jack Brigham. Scurvy Jack, the Pirate King! Of course, Fenwick says, piracy is a terrible crime and must be prosecuted to the fullest extent allowable by law, but also the man is a celebrity! Fenwick has never met a celebrity before! He tells the party that he'd honestly assumed that Jack Brigham had died, because there hadn't been any mention of him - no attacks, nothing! - for two years now. But now, Fenwick says, it all makes sense! If Jack Brigham has been laying low, incognito in a little inland town, just biding his time! Allegedly, of course.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: Saturday after 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Fenwick approaches the party. He's visibly distressed. He asks the party if he can talk to them someplace quieter. Once there, he tells the party that something has happened and he doesn't know what to do about it. Fenwick explains that just a few minutes earlier, that device - the Bellaphone, people call it? - in the prosecutor's pavilion made a terrible ringing sound. Fenwick has never touched one of those things before and he didn't know what to do, but no one else was there and the thing kept ringing and ringing, so eventually he picked it up. At this point, someone Fenwick couldn't even see began speaking to him. The voice wanted to talk to Nina, but Nina wasn't there. Then it asked for Celeste, who also wasn't there, and then for Justice Wilde himself who of course also wasn't there. It was clear the voice wanted to talk to anyone but Fenwick and to be certain, Fenwick himself also wished very much for this. But there was nothing to be done about it. The voice told him it was coming from the bank in Mystral. It explained that when Nina contacted the bank earlier, it had checked very thoroughly before telling her that the account there registered to the Peacock Family Singers contained 23 royals. Fenwick tells the party that the voice then got agitated and explained that it had checked the account again just now but that the account now contains 12,023 royals. Fenwick reports that the voice then informed him that this is 12 thousand more royals than before, which Fenwick found a little insulting, since he is perfectly capable of basic math even if he does not care for speaking to disembodied voices. He tells the party that he suggested that there must have been an error previously about the bank account containing only 23 royals, but then it was the voice's turn to be insulted. It asserted strongly that no, the 12 thousand royals had not been there previously. Fenwick asked the voice where the money had come from, but it told him that that information was not available at this time. It then reminded him that today is Saturday and quite late and the Rites of Remembrance, all of which Fenwick already knew. Since he couldn't think of anything else to ask, he told the voice goodbye. Fenwick tells the party that he doesn't know what to do now. He has attempted to find Nina but she is nowhere to be found. He attempted to talk to Justice Wilde or to Celeste, but Justice Wilde reminded him that he - Justice Wilde, not Fenwick - is off duty and not to be disturbed. Fenwick doesn't know who else to talk to and he heard the party had been looking into the charge against Milton Peacock, so he's talking to them now. Fenwick tells the party that he was there when Milton Peacock was questioned. Milton Peacock was assuredly not coerced in any way, and he definitively confessed to stealing the 12 thousand royals. But in this case, Fenwick asks, why is this money now in the account? This seems deeply problematic. Milton Peacock should not be convicted of embezzling if no money is missing. Fenwick doesn't know what to do.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

the Charmed-I'm-Sure Challenge

Activity: All of the members of the prosecutorial entourage - Orion Wilde, Celeste Wilde, Fenwick Michaels and Nina Bliss - will be sharing this challenge. It works regardless of how many/few of them are present for it.

Orion (or whoever) tells the party that the indefatigable Nina Bliss has decided she would like to create a more welcoming environment in the Prosecutorial Pavilion. After all, they are public servants! They serve the public, and the first step there is making sure each and every member of the public is courteously and enthusiastically welcomed into the pavilion (and, thus, metaphorically into the justice system itself!)

Nina is dissatisfied with the tendency, among her colleagues, to greet someone else with a simple handshake. How awfully prosaic that is! How humdrum! Where is the welcome in that?

Nina would like to know: how do the people in this party's duchy greet one another? Nina says that she has developed an alternative to the handshake which she is quite hoping will catch on. She asks a participant to stand up so that she may demonstrate. "I gently-but-welcomingly double-clap the air near his right shoulder. Then I similarly double-clap the air near his left shoulder. Then I lift myself up briefly upon my toes and click my heels together. I finish by clasping my hands together in front of my chest and bowing."

Nina tells the party that she is happy to give them the item they need, but first, would they indulge her with a practice session of her new greeting? Of course, this group is from a distant land, so to begin, the party will need to develop their own cultural greeting, a variation on or alternative to the tedious handshake.

If the party seems to have no idea how to proceed, Nina can help out: Perhaps using the traditional handshake as a starting point is a good idea. How might they modify it to be more representative of them, of their own culture? Or simply less tedious? Hopefully the party will have a little fun with this, incorporating high fives or fist bumps or whatnot.

Once the party has chosen their new greeting and has practiced it a few times, Nina has everyone stand. (Any other staff in the pavilion are encouraged to join in, as it's more fun that way.) Everyone needs to introduce themselves to everyone else. They are going to do a short little introduction session, just to practice.

Of course, Nina reminds them, it is always courteous to adhere to the customs of the person one is meeting. SO... when anyone, prosecutorial staffer or visitor, is introducing themselves to the visitors, they should use the visitors' handshake. When anyone is introducing themselves to a prosecutorial staffer) they should use Nina's right-shoulder double-clap / left-shoulder double-clap / on-toes-heel-click / hands-clasp plus bow.

And obviously, as with any introductions, each pair must give their names each time. E.g. "Hello! I am Nina Bliss!" / "A pleasure to meet you, Nina! I am Wolf of P'loa!" etc. They can all mingle for a few minutes doing these introductions. Surely some people will goof up handshake moves (especially if the group attempts to do this quickly) and stumble over names, probably including their own, but since relaxing is the goal, this is just what we want.)

The prosecutorial staff are welcome to do this challenge with other parties she encounters if they're not otherwise occupied.

And of course, while Orion Wilde is unlikely to greet parties later in the weekend with their custom handshake, it would be lovely if Nina did if possible!

Educational goal(s): to relax and get comfortable with each other, to learn each other's names

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none

Belle Bishop -- Alison Morris

Age: 52

Usually found: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale, or wandering

A description of the What Tree Would You Be? Challenge appears on page 425.

Keer

Approximately when: Friday night (Belle is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Belle asks the party to tell her all about their mission.

Belle tells the party that she's afraid she doesn't know very much about the Knights of the Golden Circle. Honestly, she always thought they were just a legend. She suggests that maybe the party should talk to that Makai woman, Kyli Talespinner. Belle's never met anyone who knows as many stories as Talespinner does, which is unsurprising, given that remembering and recounting stories - both true ones and legends as well - is her job. If there's anyone Belle can think of who can tell the party more about the Knights, it's her. Belle takes them to meet Talespinner.

Sometime during the conversation, Belle introduces the party to their Companion. Belle says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Keifer, who has been sitting at the same table. Belle quietly lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Belle understands how critical the party's mission is, but she hopes maybe they also have a small amount of free time while they're in World's Edge. If they do, she'd love to have them attend her wedding to Cary Montalvo, which is happening that very weekend! She's sure it won't be any bother to add in a few more guests, and the party seems like such lovely people!

Item(s) to give this party: none

Elsewhich

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what tree would you be? challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: gold laceleaf pendant

any parties encountered (ideally at least 6)

When to approach a party: any time after the 4th Friday encounters and before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Belle references the golden page she carries from Nemaia's book. Although this paper (which she DOES show the party but DOES NOT allow them to read) reminds her of a good memory, she also vividly remembers the difficult memory she shared with Nemaia, where she described her bridesmaids as "catty and petty and mean and toxic."

Reason this info matters: Please read the Changed World section, beginning on p. 158, for the context of this info and answers to a bunch more questions!

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Belle tells the party that she read the first Kit Carnage story twenty years ago, when she was babysitting Pearl Bryce and read it to Pearl as a bedtime story. Belle tells the party that the book was good enough that she'd gone out and bought the second book for herself right then and there. She loved the fact that Kit was willing to admit when she was wrong and also to stand up for herself when she knew she was right. Unlike some of the two-dimensional characters you find in children's books, Kit felt so *real*... which isn't surprising, of course, since she is in fact Katherine Carmichael, who obviously is indeed real. Belle tells the party that it was a thrill to meet Kit - well, Katherine, she should say - when she came to World's Edge. Belle hopes she didn't take up too much of Katherine's time, but she'd just had to tell Katherine about the times when she'd inspired Belle to do something difficult or frightening or even just unpleasant. In the books, sometimes, Kit gives herself a little pep talk and says "Deep breaths, Kit. Deep breaths." Belle admits that she's told herself "Deep breaths, Belle. Deep breaths." more times than she can count. It's funny how even a simple line will stay with you, Belle says.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Belle tells the party that the séance Eugenie Bright held was very strange. Belle wanted to attend both because it was important to Eugenie, who is a total darling, and also because it's fascinating from a scientific communications standpoint. If the dead can speak to us, how do they do it? Is it auditory communication, or neuropathic, or something else entirely? Belle tells the party that Eugenie had a table set with a velvet tablecloth sewn all around the edges with tiny bells. There was a picture of Eugenie's sister Theodora in the center of the table, and candles circling it, and once they were all present, Eugenie instructed them to hold hands and close their eyes. Eugenie had bowed her head and was just starting to speak, something about calling on spirits, and all of a sudden there was a bang and Belle smelled smoke. She opened her eyes thinking maybe a candle had tipped over, but no, there was a tall figure in the room! It was hard to see through the smoke, but Belle is reasonably certain its skin was green, and as it came closer to her, she realized that it was very, very tall. Eugenie had gone so pale Belle was afraid she would faint, and then the thing brought a fist down on the table. Lenora Graves was there, and she started screaming something about "Think happy thoughts! Think happy thoughts!", which seemed pretty unlikely to accomplish much, as far as Belle is concerned. And then the creature sort of lurched and stumbled to the door and went out into the night. Belle would have liked to follow it, but she wasn't certain it was a good idea to leave Eugenie.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Belle tells the party that she does *not* want to be one of those awful brides who thinks everybody should get married but that she's seen Milton Peacock going for walks with Miscellania and they are *adorable* together. Are they a couple? She doesn't know. Perhaps they're good friends. Or maybe Milton is a client of Inspirations Unlimited. Belle asks the party if it would be too terrible if she encouraged Miscellania to bring Milton as her plus-one to the wedding? Yes. That would be overstepping. She won't do that. Which is a shame because Milton and Miscellania? *Adorable*.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Captain Cary Montalvo -- Rob Daviau

Age: 55

Usually found: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale, or wandering

Traveler Lore concerning Cary appears on page 205.

A description of the What Tree Would You Be? Challenge appears on page 425.

Noctara

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what tree would you be challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: mortality dust

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Cary tells the party that he was outside the theater on Thursday mid-morning when Aria Morgan fired Danny Donovan from his job there. Cary tells the party that he was mostly paying attention to prevailing wind conditions, because Belle decided she wanted have guests throw rice after their wedding, but only if it wasn't going to end up in any areas where birds were nesting. Still, distracted as he was, Cary couldn't help overhearing the bulk of Aria and Danny's interchange, especially since Aria's portion was quite loud. As he understands it, Cary says, Danny threw away some very important papers and was subsequently fired. Cary tells the party that, in his experience, a moment like this can be a sort of crucible. Something very bad happens to a person and that person either rises to the challenge - maybe even grows in the process - or else the person breaks. Cary's seen it happen to soldiers in his command. Cary tells the party that it's a good thing he's not a betting man, because if he were, having seen the look on Danny Donovan's face at that moment, Cary really would have said that he was about to rise to the challenge. Cary's not even sure what makes him say that; he doesn't know Danny well at all. But, he tells the party, that's what he would have predicted. It's sad that instead it appears that the experience broke Danny instead.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Cary tells the party that Solomon Stillwater has a tattoo on his forearm of the initials JB, a tribute to his then-girlfriend JuneBug. This conversation came up one night when Solomon was teasingly trying to convince his wife that the tattoo stood for "Just Bonnie." Bonnie wisely pointed out that the tattoo had no doubt been acquired in some Keerian dive bar and that Solomon was lucky his arm wasn't gangrenous. Cary tells the party Solomon agreed with that and no one gave the tattoo another thought until people with too much time on their hands decided Solomon was secretly a pirate king... and not just any pirate king, but the one whose initials are JB. Let the record show, Cary says, that this is just one reason why tattoos are a bad idea.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Lieutenant Cameron (Light) Light-Astor -- Rich Pellosie

Age: 29

Usually found: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

Traveler Lore concerning the Phantoms appears on page 205.

A description of the What Tree Would You Be? Challenge appears on page 425.

Waylon

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Light is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the what tree would you be? challenge

Info to give the party directly: Light tells the party that he heard they were looking for some water from the Talian Sea. He has some, because some people consider it to be good luck. He's quite sure he'll have even better luck if he helps them out, so he'd be happy to let the party have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At the very end of the encounter, Light asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Light could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: water from the Talian Sea

any parties encountered (ideally 2-5 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Shadow is giving out similar information, so it's ideal if they don't hit all the same parties

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Light tells the party that it's been a privilege serving with Cary Montalvo. The Phantoms are a dedicated bunch, but Cary puts the rest of them to shame. Light says that he's heard Cary tell stories from 20 years ago and Cary remembers the names of every soldier who served under him. If it's someone they lost, Cary remembers even more than that. He'll say "Yeah, So-and-So was missing two fingers on her right hand, but she was the surest shot with a longbow I ever saw" or whatever. He'll talk about someone's favorite food and the dog they had and whatever else made them special. Light says that, you'd think having all those people living on inside Cary's head, that it might slow his thinking down, but if anything it seems to make him even sharper. Light tells the party he's never met anyone who can keep so many different elements of a plan straight like Cary can.

Light jokes that, of course, now Cary's busy putting the finishing touches on his wedding to Belle, so that'll be the real test of his mental acumen. Apparently there was some sort of canapé emergency this morning. Something about endive instead of watercress? He didn't follow all the details. He's not a genius like Cary is.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide general context for the wedding plot and adds to the emotional impact of those scenes

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Light asks the party if they've ever had the experience where they're sure they've met someone before, but they can't figure out where? Light says that he could swear he's met that talent scout Jack Johnson, but he has no idea when. He asked Jack, but Jack had no recollection of ever meeting Light, so probably Light is just mistaken. Maybe Jack just has one of those faces.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Saturday at 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Light approaches the party. He has committed a real breach of etiquette, he tells them, and he feels just terrible. He tells the party that he was talking to Sergeant Vernon Gill just a few minutes ago. Light tells the party that Sergeant Gill served - up until his terrible injury 10 years ago - with Lyria's standing army, rather than with the Phantoms or some other specialized unit. Sergeant Gill seemed unhappy, Light says, because his apple crisp was made with cinnamon, rather than with cloves as he prefers, and so Light was hoping he could do something to raise Sergeant Gill's spirits. He launched into a chorus of "Towers of Dolorón", the admittedly-raunchy marching song, but he fears he made Sergeant Gill's mood even lower because the man didn't know the song in question. Light confesses to the party that it hadn't occurred to him Vernon wouldn't know the song, because it gets hammered into the heads of every soldier, regardless of which branch they serve in. Perhaps Sergeant Gill is old enough that he enlisted before the song was widely known? Light thinks this must be the case, except that he's heard Cary Montalvo talk about the old-timers who taught *him* the song. Regardless of why Vernon doesn't know the song, Light is kicking himself for making the man feel even worse. Perhaps Light should order a fruit basket or something for Sergeant Gill?

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Sunday breakfast, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday at breakfast, Light and Shadow circulate in the tavern. Cary isn't out, but his lieutenants circulate among some of the parties, expressing their concerns about him. Light and Shadow tell the party that Cary is crushed Belle doesn't remember him. In their opinion, he needs to drink as much as he can as quickly as he can. Then Cary can forget Belle just as she's forgotten him.

Reason this info matters: this serves to remind the parties of the previous night's plot and set the stage for the Big Musical Number

Lieutenant Umberto (Shadow) Dunn -- Ben Warren

Age: 32

Usually found: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

Traveler Lore concerning the Phantoms appears on page 205.

A description of the What Tree Would You Be? Challenge appears on page 425.

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: Friday night (Shadow is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Shadow asks the party about their mission. He tells them that, despite his name, he doesn't know anyone named Shade. Also, he personally hasn't seen any sort the magical genie lamp, but that he knows someone who did: Esmerelda, one of the women who lives in the Roamer camp.

Esmerelda doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Shadow says, which is disappointing. Nothing can ever be easy, can it? Shadow tells the party that he himself cannot leave at the moment, but he brings the party over to Tinker Bill, and asks Tinker Bill if he would be willing to walk the party to the Roamer camp. Shadow wishes the party much luck in World's Edge. They'll need it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Glendeep

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what tree would you be? challenge

Info to give the party directly: Shadow does have a ghost key he can give the party. It was given to him a long time ago; it's supposed to bring good luck. He cannot in all honesty say that it has worked terribly well.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: ghost key

any parties encountered (ideally 2-5 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Light is giving out similar information, so it's ideal if they don't hit all the same parties

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Shadow tells the party that it's not the same, serving with the Phantoms now that Cary has retired. Shadow explains that he doesn't begrudge his former commander the retirement: there's a 1 in 3 chance a Phantom won't survive their first 2 years of service, so the fact that Cary was a captain for more than 20 years means he's beaten a lot of odds. Their battalion will be issued a new captain, and even people a lot more optimistic than Shadow know whoever they get won't hold a candle to Cary. Still, Shadow tells the party, he's glad that Cary is finally able to retire and finally able to marry Belle.

Shadow explains that there's still rather a lot to be done before the wedding on Sunday. Apparently Cary has worked out 4 possible seating charts to accommodate different permutations of which guests might fail to show up and which family members may arrive already intoxicated. Even Shadow hadn't realized the whole enterprise was so fraught with peril. He hopes it won't rain on Sunday. But it probably will.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide general context for the wedding plot and adds to the emotional impact of those scenes

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Shadow tells the party that he doesn't know much about that woman Ember. Apparently Ember is... famous for being famous? Shadow tells the party that he doesn't really understand what that means, but apparently it's a thing. It would be easy, given that, to find Ember ridiculous, but she's actually pretty cool. So many people like that are constantly seeking attention, Shadow says, but Ember doesn't actually seem to care if you notice her or not. She just does her own thing and doesn't care what anybody else thinks. Shadow tells the party that he himself has also always just done his own thing and not cared what anyone thought... but that he's pretty sure he doesn't pull it off nearly as well as Ember does. Maybe if he started acting a little more like Ember, people would like him more? No, Shadow concludes. Probably not.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Shadow tells the party that he was there in the tavern on Monday when Lenora Graves claimed she could use a Ouija board to contact the spirit of Professor Merriweather. Shadow tells the party that he doesn't think it's within the power of someone like Lenora to contact the dead. On the other hand, the alternative was having another conversation with Cary about napkin colors, so he'd decided watching a Ouija board wasn't a terrible way to pass the time. He tells the party that the pointer thing started moving and spelled out D – A – N. Shadow guesses it was spelling Daniel, the professor's first name. It's unclear why a spirit would introduce itself that way, but hey, what does Shadow know? He tells the party that he thought the whole thing was going to be tiresome - were they going to have to sit there while the spirit spelled out Merriweather? Because if so, maybe the napkin conversation wasn't so bad after all - but then that woman Dorito started screaming about how she killed the professor, so it was unexpectedly exciting after all. That, concludes Shadow, was unsurprisingly the end of the Ouija session.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: Saturday after 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Shadow approaches the party and tells them that he just had the oddest experience. Shadow says that Light has been telling him for days now about a guy in town, Jack Johnson, whom Light was certain he knew from somewhere or other. Shadow tells the party that he'd assumed Light was mistaken... until just tonight. He explains that he was coming into the tavern just as a man was leaving, and it wasn't until the man was gone that Shadow realized he recognized the man. His name is Ethan Frank, and he's a guard at the palace in Dolorón. Shadow didn't recognize him, what with Ethan not being in uniform. Shadow tells the party he came into the tavern and asked about the man who'd just left, and someone told him that the guy in question was Jack Johnson. Shadow admits that it's pretty dark in the tavern, so he can't be positive. Maybe this guy Jack is just a real close match for Ethan Frank? That must be the case, Shadow thinks. What would a guard from the palace be doing all the way in World's Edge? Ethan is certainly not in town for the wedding, Shadow says. Ethan's a good-enough guy, Shadow says, but he's a minimally competent guard. The rumor was always that Ethan has terrible eyesight, that he only got promoted to palace security because of family connections or something. There's no way Ethan would be invited to the wedding; Cary loathes situations like that, where connections take precedence over actual skill. Of course, now something terrible has happened to Belle and there isn't going to even be a wedding, Shadow says. It's odd, though; that guy looking so much like Ethan. Shadow wonders if there's someone out in the world who looks just like him?

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Sunday breakfast, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday at breakfast, Light and Shadow circulate in the tavern. Cary isn't out, but his lieutenants circulate among some of the parties, expressing their concerns about him. Light and Shadow tell the party that Cary is crushed Belle doesn't remember him. In their opinion, he needs to drink as much as he can as quickly as he can. Then Cary can forget Belle just as she's forgotten him.

Reason this info matters: this serves to remind the parties of the previous night's plot and set the stage for the Big Musical Number

Al Bishop -- Jeff Anderson

Age: 78

Usually found: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

A description of the Odd Couple Challenge appears on page 427.

A description of the How Can We Help? Challenge appears on page 426.

A description of the What Tree Would You Be? Challenge appears on page 425.

A description of the Soul Speaking Challenge appears on page 484.

Al will be doing the What Tree Would You Be? challenge with the party that's coming to him for a party-path item. He and Irena Montalvo will be doing the Odd Couple challenge AND the How Can We Help? challenge with any parties they encounter. And he will be running Soul Speaking on Saturday night.

Keer

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what tree would you be? challenge

Info to give the party directly: Al tells the party that yeah, he's got a horn of summoning. He got it back when he was in the service. He's happy to let the party have it, but... see, he'd had this idea that maybe Belly Bean would like him to play the horn just at the start of the wedding. She told him she didn't think that was necessary, but he kinda wants to practice a bit more on the horn, just in case she changes her mind. Al promises he'll meet the party in the tavern at 9:30am Sunday to give them the horn. That'll give him plenty of time to practice today. He's sure his roommate Irena won't mind...

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none (he'll meet them in the tavern at 9:30am Sunday to give them the horn of summoning)

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time Saturday when the party isn't otherwise engaged

Activity: the how can we help challenge AND the odd couple challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: a set of paired magic items and/or snacks/meds/bandaids/water as needed

any parties encountered (ideally 3-5 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time all weekend, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: There's no specific information Al needs to convey here, but he should do his shtick of referring to Belle as Belly Bean and telling rambling false stories about her in front of 3-5 parties.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for and adds emotional impact to the post-Big Musical Number scene

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Al tells the party that even after his daughter's wedding is over, he might stay in town a while. He likes the people here in World's Edge, and Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater really rolled out the red carpet for him, just like they do for everybody. They're good people, the Stillwaters. Al tells the party that Solomon was away recently and only returned on Friday. Solomon got a letter from someone in Windsor-by-the-Bay, in Keer, where he's originally from, explaining that his elderly father was dying. Before Solomon made the trip back to say goodbye, he'd pinned a drawing of himself to the bar so everybody'd behave themselves while he was away. Al tells the party that Solomon only just got back, but from what Al's heard, when Solomon got to Keer, it turned out his dad was actually fine. No one knew who'd sent the letter or why. Crazy!

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Al tells the party that he saw Diamond Dora Bright dancing a time or two back ten years or so ago. She was something else, that woman. He tells the party that he was delighted when he learned she was from World's Edge and that her sister Eugenie is still here. Eugenie's not a dancer, he says, but she still seems like a hell of a nice lady. It's a real shame, that whole mess with the demon and all. Obviously people can't just be summoning demons left and right, of course, but still. A real shame. Eugenie is a damn fine lady.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Keer, again

Time: 9:30am, Sunday (Al is the penultimate step for this party; he doesn't accompany them to their final step; he just gives them the item)

Item(s) to give this party: horn of summoning

Irena Montalvo -- Jo Agostinelli

Age: 75

Usually found: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

A description of the Odd Couple Challenge appears on page 427.

A description of the How Can We Help? Challenge appears on page 426.

A description of the What Tree Would You Be? Challenge appears on page 425.

Irena will be doing the What Tree Would You Be? challenge with the party that's coming to her for a party-path item. She and Al Bishop will be doing the Odd Couple challenge AND the How Can We Help? challenge with any parties they encounter.

P'loa

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what tree would you be? challenge

Info to give the party directly: Irena does indeed have a fluorite crystal. Normally, she tells the party, she uses it to provide focus and promote clarity. Just now, while she's rooming with Al, she thinks that slightly less clarity is actually called for. The party is welcome to take the crystal.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: fluorite crystal

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time Saturday when the party isn't otherwise engaged

Activity: the how can we help challenge AND the odd couple challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: a set of paired magic items and/or snacks/meds/bandaids/water as needed

any parties encountered (ideally 4-6 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Dramina is giving out similar information from a different perspective. It's awesome if you manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if you don't, and it's fine too if you overlap!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Irena tells the party she is so delighted that her son will finally be marrying his beloved Belle. Irena adores Belle and although Belle and Cary are so different, she sees how well-suited they are to each other.

Irena says that, she's also happy to see that Cary has found a good friend in Nemaia. Irena tells the party that Cary took his responsibility as a Phantom commander very seriously. His ability to strategize and think clearly saved a lot of people. But... not everybody. Like all soldiers, he saw good people die, and those deaths weigh on him, even if there was nothing he could've done to prevent them. Irena tells the party her son has always shielded her from much of the horror and violence he saw, and she knows that - sometimes for different reasons - he has shielded Belle as well. Cary talks to his lieutenants Light and Shadow, of course, but probably it's helpful to have someone to talk to who wasn't actually there, she thinks. For Cary, Nemaia is that person. Irena is grateful Cary has a friend like that.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for and adds emotional impact to the post-Big Musical Number scene

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Irena tells the party about a somewhat peculiar thing that happened 5 days ago. She'd gone out for a walk because Al Bishop was in their shared rental space and he was exuding chaotic energy, possibly as a result of the bean soup he'd eaten the night before. She tells the party that when she returned, Al was sound asleep, and sitting atop her bag was a small painting of... her! She had no idea where it had come from, but it was quite lovely, simple but full of light and movement. It was only later that she realized that some money - maybe 60 royals or more - was missing from her bag. Irena tells the party that of course she'd asked Al if he knew anything about either the painting or the money, but he'd been sound asleep and had no idea anyone had been inside. Irena tells the party that she isn't much troubled by the loss of the money, that it seems the universe had a plan for the money, just as it wanted her to have this lovely picture.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Irena tells the party about an interaction she had recently with Dorito. Irena tells the party that it has been more than a little challenging, sharing this space with Al Bishop and his intensely loud energy. At one point, she had pointed out to the man that it would be a more tranquil environment if he stopped strewing his belongings all about, but he maintained he liked it just fine the way it was. And since his things were only on his side of the room, there was little she could do about it. Irena confesses to the party that she thought perhaps if Al's side of the room were perhaps made even messier, he might be motivated to tidy up a bit, and so she - she is genuinely not proud of this, she needs the party to understand - might have perhaps *made Al's side even messier*, when he was out. Al, she tells the party, had not noticed. Irena explains then that the person who *had* noticed, oddly, is Dorito. Dorito had stopped by to ask Al a question, and she'd taken one look at the mess and asked why it was like that. Irena started to answer her that Al had very chaotic *chi*, but Dorito had waved her off. "Why'd you make it even messier?" is what Dorito had asked. Irena was so startled by this that she hadn't bothered lying, had instead merely asked how Dorito knew. Dorito explained several things to her, things like the fact that Al flung clothing out from his bed, but that some of the clothing had been flung in the wrong direction. Al was extremely messy with most of his belongings but always lined up his shoes neatly, maybe from his time in the military. And there were corn chips mixed in with the mess, despite them being Al's favorite and not a thing he'd ever leave lying around. Irena tells the party that this was rather discomfiting. She has roomed with Al now for more days than she'd like, but she hadn't noticed any of the things Dorito had seen. Irena tells the party that she likes to think of herself as an observant person, as a student of human nature. Perhaps she is, she says ruefully, but she is clearly not as adept a student as Dorito is.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Phyllis Fieri -- Vanessa Robb

Age: 40

Usually found: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

Secret Info:

Phyllis is a knight in the extremely secretive Order of the Black Light. This fact will be irrelevant for 99.8% of the weekend and really super important for the remaining .2%. See page 209 for details.

How/when/where/why did Phyllis become a Knight of the Black Light? Wouldn't you like to know!?

A description of the What Tree Would You Be? Challenge appears on page 425.

Dolorón

Approximately when: Friday (Phyllis Fieri is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they don't, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the what tree would you be? challenge

Info to give the party directly: Phyllis tells the party that, in fact, she does know something about pixie dust, at least theoretically. She was cleaning out a box of old letters and she found one from a former boyfriend. This was from long before she met Steve, of course. Howard was his name. He had issues.

Anyway, he wrote her a letter and... there's rather a lot in there about pixie dust. Melody is happy to give the letter to the party. There are parts of her past she's delighted to remember, but Howard isn't one of them.

Darling Phyllis,

I've been terribly busy of late but today is your lucky day: I've found time to write!

None of the other fellows here in my new office has the slightest idea what he's doing. They're lucky they have me; otherwise the whole place would fall to pieces! I have to spend half my day correcting other people's ignorant misconceptions, but I suppose that's the price one pays for superior intellect.

Just the other day, one of the chaps here – Bigsley is his name – said something about "a pinch of pixie dust", but when I queried him on the subject, it turned out he knew nothing about the stuff, even confessed he thought it wasn't real. Not real! I had to spend most of my afternoon enlightening him.

Probably you're in the dark on the subject just as old Bigsley was, so I'll tell you what I told him: pixies are as real as you are, but a good deal more magical, of course. They're small beings, most of them, although every once in a while there's one that grows nearly human-sized. Lucky is he who's treated to the sight of them cavorting in a woodland glade, all bedecked in their bright finery and lifting their wee jolly voices in laughter!

As for pixie dust, it's powerful stuff. It's not easy to conjure up, of course. Even attempting the ritual requires a extensive collection of magical components:

*merula-fruit cordial
a silver incense-burner
whiteleaf sage
limelight
a signalstone ring
a gemwing butterfly
water from the River Sigh
a seafoam sphere
a snake-eye talisman*

After you've acquired all those things – I'm speaking rhetorically here, of course; this isn't the sort of complicated thing you yourself would want to try – you need to bring them all to the base of a great hill. Over in World's Edge, you'd go to the base of Overlook Hill, on Autumn's Path, I'd assume. You'd light the whiteleaf sage and set it inside the incense burner. Then you'd pour out half the merula-fruit cordial out onto the ground, right there at the base of the hill.

From that point on, the rite would have begun, and none of the people performing it should speak save what the ritual calls for. Those present should arrange themselves in a line, single file, and walk slowly up to the crest of the hill, with the first holding the chain of the incense burner and the last holding the cordial. Once there, they should arrange themselves – still silent, mind – around the ashes of an old fire. The limelight and the gemwing, the river water and the ring, the seafoam sphere and the snake-eye talisman should all be placed atop the ashes. Then all

those present should place their right hand atop the incense-burner and their left atop the bottle of cordial. They'd then move their hands in a circle, pouring out the remainder of the merula cordial onto the ashes. Whilst pouring it out, everyone must say together "Let it be done, let it be done, let it be done!"

And if everything has been done correctly: voila, pixie dust!

But I fear I've neglected you horribly in this letter. No doubt you're clamoring to know how I'm doing, and who can blame you? Overall, I've been well, although busy as noted. I expect a promotion any day now. After all, I'm already running the place! I dined out with Humphrey last Saturday and the cod was overcooked. I gave the serving girl several pointers which I'm sure she appreciated. The weather here has been uncomfortably warm, which as you know I cannot abide. I have read several new books, but I fear you'll have to wait to learn my opinion of them. I warn you that it may be more than a week till I can write again. So frightfully much to do when one is as important as I!

Best regards from your favorite, Howard

Phyllis tells the party that she has a few ideas about where they might get some of the stuff mentioned in the letter. They should probably write all this down on the letter itself. Phyllis knows that she herself forgets nearly everything if it's not written down!

- merula-fruit cordial – Malachi
- silver incense-burner – Isaiah Cooke
- whiteleaf sage – Kora Peacekeeper
- signalstone ring – Stevie Peacock
- water from the River Sigh – Bracken
- seafoam sphere – Pansy Golden
- snake-eye talisman – Crabtree

Phyllis has never heard of a gemwing butterfly and she doesn't have any idea who might have one.

As for a limelight, Phyllis confesses that she is at a loss as to what to tell them. A limelight provides illumination in a theater. There was a theater in World's Edge which Aria Morgan was in the process of restoring, but it tragically burned to the ground just last night. Phyllis cannot think of anywhere else that a limelight might be attained.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the letter listing the items they'll need to find

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Phyllis tells the party that it's such a shame, the Morg burning down. People are saying it was Danny Donovan's fault, and although she hates to say it, Phyllis wasn't surprised to hear it. She tells the party that Danny's a charming guy, but even when he's not using, he's not exactly reliable. Phyllis explains that she's hired him in the past to do handyman-type jobs. When he shows up, he does a good job, but sometimes he won't show up. He's not a bad guy, Phyllis says. But he can be careless... and that's when there's no drugs involved.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Phyllis tells the party that she didn't know Theodora Davies all that long, but that Dora treated everyone like a close friend, so you got to know her quickly. Phyllis says that she met Dora about a year before she died. Dora had this fabulous rose garden all full of esoteric flowers that were very expensive and very high-maintenance to grow. Terrible property investment, but Dora wasn't the kind of person who made decisions like that. She was very extravagant, very generous. Phyllis tells the party that it was funny, because she'd just assumed that that was how Dora had always been. But apparently that wasn't the case at all. Someone told her that Dora used to be loathe to spend any money, but that at some point,

she'd just decided to live it up. Well, it was Dora's money to spend, Phyllis says. She made it dancing, which you could easily believe, meeting Dora. She carried herself like she was on stage, always. Phyllis didn't know Dora for long, but she won't ever forget her.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Phyllis tells the party that she's a little worried about Milton Peacock. Every time she sees him, he seems more and more anxious about finding some bookings for the Peacock Family Singers. Phyllis tells the party that not everyone knows how to manage stress like she does. Her method is a 55-minute kickboxing class followed by 3 glasses of chardonnay. Milton needs to try that before he gives himself an ulcer, Phyllis says. Although... dammit! She was supposed to be at kickboxing right now!

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

the What-Tree-Would-You-Be? Challenge

Activity: Everyone at the FireWaterEarthAirB'n'B - Belle Bishop, Cary Montalvo, Cameron Light-Astor, Umberto Dunn, Al Bishop, Irena Montalvo and Phyllis Fieri - are sharing this challenge. The set-up for the challenge works slightly more smoothly if at least a couple of them are there, although this is not necessary.

Belle tells the party that she had originally wanted to have the whole wedding party do a pre-wedding murder-mystery scavenger-hunt spa weekend escape room, so that they could all get even better acquainted, but then there was an assassination attempt in <redacted> and the Phantoms couldn't get back to World's Edge until just recently. But this is fine, because Belle has just taught the wedding party a fun get-acquainted game instead! The party can play now, too!

It's isn't a game with a winner or loser. The only rule is that you cannot answer for yourself.

Belle (or whoever) chooses one party member at random to be the first Subject (If she happens to pick someone who doesn't seem too shy/quiet, that might be a good person with whom to start.) She then asks "If this person were an X, what kind of X would s/he be?" X can be anything. Some Xs that work well are

- a food or beverage
- an animal
- a weather condition
- a musical instrument
- a tree
- a month of the year
- an article of clothing
- a game

There are plenty of others.

Anyone in the group except for the Subject can call out an answer. It's fine if the person answering explains why they think this, although it's also fine if they don't. (The only exception to this is maybe if the Subject hears an answer that they seem to find off-putting. In that case, it might be worth having a staffperson ask "Oh, *why* is she like a snake?" or "Oh, *how* is he like January?" or whatever. Hopefully the other person has a positive association with the X in question, and it would be a shame if someone took a kindly-meant answer the wrong way.)

Hopefully, people will get creative with the symbolism, rather than just taking it as "If Alice were a food, she'd be pancakes, because she really like pancakes." If that's all they're getting, perhaps the Companion or other staffer can chime in with "I think Alice would be a fizzy bottle of soda pop" or something that's more evocative of the subject's personality.

After someone's given an answer for that question, Cary (or whoever) asks a new question with a different Subject and a different X. He can repeat Xs if he wants, but he shouldn't ask a bunch of questions in a row with the same Subject, since this can get kind of overwhelming for the person in question.

The staff can keep this little game going for 5-10 minutes, continuing to swap from Subject to Subject, so long as the party seems to be having fun with it, although as always, it's good to stop the activity before it gets tiresome.

Educational goal(s): to allow the party a chance to think imaginatively. to give the participants a chance to hear how others perceive them in a silly, non-intimidating kind of way.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none

the How Can We Help? Challenge

Activity: Al Bishop and Irena Montalve have two challenges, both of which they are sharing. They can do both challenges with any parties they encounter. They don't both need to be present in order to do them. This one is not a traditional challenge, in that there's nothing Al & Irena are requiring – or even asking – the party to do. Quite the opposite, actually.

Instead, we're hoping Al & Irena can help ensure that all the participants are having the best time possible. To that end, they can approach any party that's not actively engaged with something else and ask them "how can we help?"

They should ask the party – or individual participants, if that works out – various questions to try to solicit answers. Who's hungry? Thirsty? Who needs a band-aid or some sort of medicine? Who's a little chilly?

Al & Irena have a basket with them containing several things participants are likely to need. They have protein bars and pitchers of water with which to refill participants' water bottles as needed; they also have band-aids, travel packs of Kleenex and sunscreen.

Participants may need medication or something else the couple doesn't have with them. In cases like this, they can either remind participants that their Companion is carrying Advil and Tylenol and/or that the Valinor's Path, Knight's Walk, Rosedale and tavern bathrooms are stocked with Alka-Seltzer, Imodium and Tums, as well as tampons and pads. If Al & Irena have time and energy, they can retrieve an item like this from the nearest bathroom or just tell the participant where that bathroom is.

If a participant needs a different med, there's a good chance it's in the Basement first-aid box; Al & Irena should please retrieve it for the person. If a participant needs a medication we don't have, or needs something else – a warmer outfit, dry socks, a chance to nap, whatever – they should please let the EMs know right away so we can make this happen.

IMPORTANT: Al & Irena will also be carrying a small notebook with them. With the exception of a simple "I'm hungry" or "I need to refill my water bottle", they should please write down ANY problem a participant tells them about, making sure they note who the person is. These notes should all get passed along to the EMs. 98% of these 'problems' will be trivial ones, but it's still important that we later follow up with that participant who complained of dehydration/headache/tiredness/coldness/etc. to verify that the water/Advil/nap/socks resolved the problem.

It's entirely likely that participants will ask for help with plot-related issues. This isn't a problem, but we want to make certain that Al & Irena address all real-world problems before addressing any Otherworldly requests. In general, they can tell the party they doesn't know anything about the subject in question ("Where can we get a limelight?" etc.) If a party has a question that might be answered by rereading any papers they've received, like maybe a letter from their Duke or any riddles they've gotten, Al & Irena can suggest that, but otherwise they can simply wish the party luck and move on.

Educational goal(s): to prevent a small problem from becoming bigger and detracting from a participant's adventure

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a basket containing protein bars, small box of band-aids, small container of sunscreen, a few travel packs of Kleenex and a small notebook, ideally all hidden under a cloth or something. a pitcher of water

the Odd Couple Challenge

Activity: Al Bishop and Irena Montalvo have two challenges, both of which they are sharing. They can do both challenges with any parties they encounter. They don't both need to be present in order to do them.

Al & Irena explain that, due to some sort of clerical snafu, they have both been booked into the same FireEarthWaterAirB'n'B. Their host Phyllis Fieri has been really apologetic and accommodating and has done everything in her power to make sure they're both comfortable.

But they're still two very different people sharing a pretty small space.

This unexpected cohabitation has been made slightly trickier because the cottage is - like all FireEarthWaterAirB'n'B properties - mildly enchanted. That is, *most* of the rental properties owned by this magical service are *mildly* enchanted. *This* rental property is in *World's Edge*, quite possibly the *most magical spot* in the *mana-rich duchy of Moreth*. Phyllis Fieri's rental property is ground zero for some seriously nutty magical shenanigans.

Specifically, magical artifacts just keep materializing.

One minute, a corner of the room will be empty except for Irena's dreamcatcher and Al's dirty underpants. The next minute, there are magic items there. It's disconcerting and also taking up valuable space. Al and Irena have come to the conclusion that the smartest way to get rid of these magic items is to give them to parties of visiting adventurers.

There is something unusual about these items the universe has graced them with, which is that all of them are paired items which two people might use together. That is, one portion of the item is designed to be worn by one person, and the other piece is worn by someone else. The two halves of the item work together to produce one effect.

It's almost as though the universe is picking up on Al and Irena's odd-couple energy.

Al and Irena explain that they'd like to gift a pair of items to the party. All of the items they have to give away are magical artifacts that augment the natural abilities of a person. They're all positive ones, Irena assures the party, but other than that, neither she nor Al know exactly – or even approximately – what the items do.

After selecting a pair of items for the party, Al and Irena don't just hand them over. Or, rather, they try to, but sometimes when they try to hand an item to a particular person, the item resists, almost as though opposing magnets are pushing against each other. It is clear that the universe has ideas about exactly who each item will – and will not – be given to. In case the participants aren't clear, Al and Irena make it clear that *only* those two participants may put on the items.

Our goal with this activity is to bond two partymembers who didn't know each other before coming to Otherworld. This is the reason Al and Irena won't give the items to just anyone in the party. Staff should please keep track of who they give the items to!

(Sometimes, Otherworld parties are comprised of three pairs of people, where each couple knew each other before the weekend, and they tend to communicate primarily with each other. This activity is an attempt to create a new pairing within the party. In some cases, the EMs may specify who the items should be given to; if not, staff should watch the Companion for clues and use their own judgment.)

Note that Al and Irena will only give one pair of items to any given party.

Educational Goal(s): to blur the existing allegiances within the party and open up new lines of communication.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the paired magic items

Solomon Stillwater -- Nadav Barkaee

Age: 47

Usually found: in the Inn at World's Edge/wandering

Secret Info:

Solomon knows his wife Bonnie's secret, explained on page 430.

A description of the Memorial Challenge appears on page 449.

Sythwan

When to approach a party: on Friday night

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Solomon should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Solomon needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Solomon doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party!

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: Solomon is assigning this party's charge. He is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, Solomon approaches the party and asks them to please investigate the charge that has been leveled against Huxley and Quinoa. Solomon tells the party that the pair has only arrived in town yesterday - that is, Friday - so Solomon really hasn't known them for very long. He himself had just returned home after a trip, and there was a lot to be done in the tavern, even before he learned that so many parties of visiting adventurers would be coming. Solomon explains that Huxley and Quinoa asked him for jobs and when he hired them, they both rolled up their sleeves and went right to work. Now apparently some people are saying the pair aren't who they claim to be. Solomon doesn't really care *who* they are so long as they show up for their tavern shifts and work hard. They have been, which doesn't seem like the kind of thing thieves would do. Solomon tells the party that he'd be very appreciative if they could please look into the charge that has been leveled again Huxley and Quinoa.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Waylon

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the memorial challenge

Info to give the party directly: Solomon tells the party that he does not in fact have a jade egg... but that he thinks he knows how they can find one. He explains that people leave belongings behind in the tavern all the time. The scarves and mittens and hats all go in to a big box, but he reads the papers people leave behind to see if he can figure out who to return them to. There was a letter - he never did manage to track down the customer who lost it - that mentioned finding a jade egg. The letter's been in his lost-and-found box for more than a year now, so Solomon is guessing this Englebert fellow isn't coming back in. The party is welcome to take the letter with them, and hopefully they'll have more luck with it than Englebert did!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the jade egg

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Solomon tells the party that almost two weeks ago, he got a surprising letter in the mail. It was sent from Windsor-by-the-Bay, in Keer, from a man who said he owned the shop next to Solomon's father's house. The man said he was very sorry to be writing with bad news, but that Solomon's father was dying. The letter stressed how much Solomon's father wanted to see him one last time. Solomon tells the party that the letter came as a real surprise, mostly because he and his father don't get along well and hadn't spoken in several years. Solomon tells the party that he hadn't known what he should do, but that Bonnie ultimately convinced him to make the trip, telling him that he'd regret it if he didn't go. Solomon says that he felt bad leaving all the work of the tavern to Bonnie and their staff. That artist Jpeg was in the Inn that night, and Solomon got him to sketch a quick picture of Solomon to pin to the bar so everyone would see it and remember to behave themselves while he was away. Anyway, Solomon says, he made the long trip over land and sea to Keer and then back again to World's Edge. The good news is that his father is in fact not dying at all. The bad news is that his father is still a very difficult man who was not terribly pleased to see Solomon. And the very strange news is that no one Solomon talked to admitted to writing the letter. So it was a very long trip with not much purpose to it, except that it made Solomon appreciate being back in World's Edge when it was over. *If the party asks prior to Saturday at 4pm*, Bonnie is somewhat concerned about the rumors surrounding Solomon being Jack Brigham, not because she even remotely believes these rumors but purely because she doesn't like anything negative being said about her husband. Solomon finds the whole thing ridiculous and a little amusing. They can answer any questions the party has. *If the party asks after Saturday at 10pm*, either of the Stillwaters can show somewhat more concern.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Solomon tells the party that he is *this* close to barring Edwin Davies from coming into the tavern. Nothing is ever good enough for Edwin! His tea is too cold or too hot or not in the sort of cup he likes! Patrons at another table are making too much noise for Edwin's liking! The girl who brought him his stew didn't smile at him, or maybe she smiled too much... and never mind that "the girl" in question is Pansy Golden who cleaned his mother's house for years, and surely Edwin could have learned her name by now! Edwin is never satisfied. And he when he's not satisfied - which is always - he snaps his fingers. Solomon loves his customers but Seasons save him, he cannot stand a finger-snapper!

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Bonnie Stillwater -- Julie Gruszynske

Age: 43

Usually found: in the Inn at World's Edge/wandering

Secret Info:

Bonnie speaks little of her past, but people in World's Edge know she grew up near the coast of Keer. This much is true. Is it her fault if people think she means on the *land* side?

Bonnie isn't her real name, and she hasn't been human for very long. She was born a mermaid, and she's still one some of the time. Until she met Solomon Stillwater, she lived happily in the waters of the Talian Sea.

One warm summer night, Solomon leapt from his ship to cool off in the ocean. He was surprised when he realized that someone else was swimming beside him, and far more surprised when he saw the glistening green scales of her tail. They spoke to each other for a time, and on nights that followed, he would again slip into the calm waters to meet her. Eventually they fell in love.

Still, Bonnie (her name at that time was a sound unpronounceable by humans) believed they could never be together. Although she was fascinated by humans, she could not leave the sea.

Solomon, however, was not one to give up easily. In a dusty old curiosity shop on the waterfront in Uri-Kesh, he found an item called the Crystal Chalice. The shopkeeper claimed it was magical, that it had transformative powers. He saw Solomon's much-too-keen interest and proceeded to charge him a small fortune for the cup. It didn't matter. Solomon would have paid ten times as much.

Bonnie drank from the cup, and it did in fact turn her human.

Using the cup's magic, Bonnie found that she could turn human for a while, after which she would return to her mermaid form. After some time had passed, a sip from the cup would make her human once more.

Delighted that they could now be married, Solomon gave the cup to Bonnie as his wedding present.

Now living in World's Edge, Bonnie adores her new husband as well as her new home. She was born to be an innkeeper, everyone says, and they are right.

No one knows that, periodically, she sneaks away to the Lake of Songs, where she swims and plays beneath the water till a drink from the chalice turns her human again. No one knows that, and no one ever will.

A description of the Memorial Challenge appears on page 449.

A description of the Soul Speaking Challenge appears on page 484.

(Bonnie will be shuttling parties to one of the Soul Speaking locations on Saturday night.)

Noctara

Approximately when: Friday night (Bonnie is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Bonnie tells the party that, yes, she does indeed have a Crystal Chalice, and yes, it came from Uri-Kesh, so it's very likely the one their Duke is looking for. The Chalice was her wedding present from her dear husband Solomon. Bonnie says that she understands that their mission is a very dire one, but at the same time, she is struggling with the idea of giving the Chalice away.

After a moment of thought, Bonnie tells the party that she believes she might have a solution. It will require the party to talk to someone who knows more than Bonnie herself does: Aleeya Witchborn, a member of the local Roamer clan.

Aleeya doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Bonnie says. Bonnie writes a short note on a piece of paper, which she then folds up, writing "Aleeya Witchborn – confidential" on the outside. Bonnie tells the party that she herself cannot leave at the moment, but she brings the party over to Natasha and asks her if she would be willing to walk the party to the Roamer camp, delivering her note to Aleeya at the same time. Bonnie tells the party that she is very hopeful that a successful compromise can be reached such that she will indeed be able to give them the Crystal Chalice. She wishes them the best of luck.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none (but Bonnie gives Natasha the note she's written to Aleeya. She doesn't give it to the party lest they be tempted not to respect the confidentiality of it.)

Sythwan

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the memorial challenge

Info to give the party directly: Bonnie tells the party that it's so odd, them asking her about a riddlestone ring. She doesn't have any idea what one might be... but several nights ago, she dreamt of holding a ring in her hand, and when she woke up, there was a riddle in her head. She wrote it down, but she doesn't know what it means. The party is welcome to it, and she hopes it lets them find what they need.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the riddlestone ring

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time Friday night or Saturday morning, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Brimstone is giving out similar information from a different perspective. It's awesome if you manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if you don't, and it's fine too if you overlap!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bonnie tells the party how proud she is of her friend Brimstone for making the big adjustment to living in World's Edge. She explains that Brimstone is an imp. Up until this past spring, he was the minion of a sorcerer named Maledicto who lived in a castle high in the hills above World's Edge. Bonnie explains that she herself never met Maledicto, but he was apparently quite awful.

After Maledicto died, Bonnie explains, all the other creatures he'd summoned disappeared back to their own dimensions... all except Brimstone. That's when she met Brimstone, she says: when he came down out of the hills. Bonnie tells the party Brimstone later told her that he was going to set himself up as a wicked master and take his own minions, but she finds that very hard to picture. Poor Brimstone, all he needed were some friends to help him find his way. He has that now in World's Edge, and he's doing so well here!

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for Brimstone's Saturday lunchtime scene

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Saturday between 12noon-2pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bonnie asks the party if they've seen Katherine Carmichael recently? Bonnie explains that Katherine was sitting with Electra in the tavern earlier when Electra got a nosebleed. It happens sometimes, Bonnie says, and so she was prepared with a cloth to bring to Electra. Bonnie tells the party that, at the sight of the blood, Katherine turned extremely pale and came very close to passing out. Bonnie confesses that she was mostly focussed on helping Electra - it is lots of work to get blood out of the tablecloth! - and even after Electra had the bleeding stopped, Katherine was still very shaky. Bonnie feels awful about this and she just wants to be certain Katherine is all right.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bonnie tells the party that she just feels terrible for that man Bane. Someone needs to purchase him some eyeglasses. Bonnie explains that she can't count how many times she's seen Bane walk into chairs or tables because he can't see them. Just a few days ago, he nearly picked a fight with a hat-rack because he couldn't see it wasn't a person.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bonnie tells the party that it's been a very dramatic couple weeks. First, Mr. Cal Coleman came to town - he's here looking into Inspirations Unlimited, as the party probably already knows, but it seems he's interested in business opportunities of all kinds - and offered to buy the Inn at World's Edge. She tells the party that this is very flattering, but as she and Solomon explained to Mr. Coleman, they are very happy in town and have no intention of selling. Then Solomon got the letter about his father being ill and traveled back to Windsor-by-the-Bay, where he grew up. Bonnie tells the party that while Solomon was away, they found a piece of jewelry wedged into the bottom of a drawer, and she's wearing it right now. Some people thought it looked like a famous pendant belonging to Jack Brigham, but Bonnie doesn't see how that could possibly be. It seems more likely that some travelers didn't have enough money to pay for dinner and one of the servers took the jewelry in lieu of payment. Several days ago, Mr. Coleman came to speak with her again, offering her an even larger sum to sell the tavern. Since they weren't interested in selling the tavern two weeks ago, this seemed a bit foolish on Mr. Coleman's part, but clearly he has all sorts of business expertise that Bonnie does not, so probably this is some sort of standard practice. Nevertheless, she would never sell the tavern without Solomon being there even if she wanted to sell, which she does not. That's a lot happening in a small amount of time, Bonnie says, and doesn't even count all these visiting groups of adventurers who've recently arrived. *If the party asks prior to Saturday at 4pm*, Bonnie is somewhat concerned about the rumors surrounding Solomon being Jack Brigham, not because she even remotely believes these rumors but purely because she doesn't like anything negative being said about her husband. Solomon finds the whole thing ridiculous and a little amusing. They can answer any questions the party has. *If the party asks after Saturday at 10pm*, either of the Stillwaters can show somewhat more concern.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Noctara, again

Time: 9:30am Sunday (Bonnie is the final step on the party's party path.)

Signal to appear: Aleeya's letter to the party instructed them to go to Serenity Point to meet Bonnie. When the party gets there, Bonnie will already be seated (wrapped in her cloak) on the rock that rises up out of the Lake of Songs. (Bonnie will have a staff helper who will help her get into costume and set up on the rock. This helper will also shoo away parties who come into the area before Bonnie is fully costumed and cloaked. Lastly, he will need to get the Crystal Chalice hidden in the underbrush at Serenity Point before Noctara arrives.)

Activity/Direct info: When the party arrives, Bonnie asks if they've collected the items. Assuming they have, they can show her all the items.

Once she's seen everything, Bonnie tells the party that she's sorry she put them to so much trouble, and sorry that she couldn't just give them the Crystal Chalice right from the start. She explains that the Chalice does indeed have transformative powers, just as Duke Crumbert hoped it did. Bonnie tells the party that the items they've collected can be used to cast a spell that is also transformative in nature; she says that now that she has the items they've collected, she is happy to give them the Chalice.

Bonnie then says something like "I couldn't just give away the Chalice until I had something to replace it with. You see, I need to use its magic as well." She then takes off her cloak, revealing that she's a mermaid.

After the party has had a minute or two to (hopefully) be surprised by this revelation, Bonnie tells them her whole story: how she and Solomon met, how the Crystal Chalice has allowed her to turn human for a portion of each day, and how she has needed to keep this secret from everyone but Solomon.

Bonnie tells the party to look in the underbrush at their feet, where they will find the box containing the Chalice. (Ideally the Chalice should be hidden pretty close to the water, since Bonnie would theoretically need to access it when she's a mermaid. And it should be well-enough hidden that the party doesn't see it until she tells them where to look.) Bonnie asks the party to lay the items they collected on the ground at Serenity Point; this way, she'll be able to use them later to turn human again. (Bonnie doesn't need to go into any specifics about how this other spell works.)

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the crystal chalice, in its box

Pansy Golden -- Henny Admoni

Age: 29

Usually found: in the Inn at World's Edge/wandering

A description of the Cheer Up, Ned! Challenge appears on page 450.

Dolorón

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cheer up, Ned! challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: seafoam sphere

Glendeep

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the cheer up, Ned! challenge

Info to give the party directly: Pansy tells the party that she heard they were looking for a shadow ward. She has one, and she's happy to tell the party about it.

Pansy tells the party about the shadow ward, which is a pendant. Her mother gave it to her when she was just a little girl. It was kind of a crappy consolation prize, Pansy says. After it was obvious that her sister Poppy was special and important and magically gifted and Pansy was 100% not, their mother gave her the shadow ward pendant, so that she wouldn't feel like a complete loser. Pansy knows it was only because her mother felt sorry for her, but still, she's never taken it off. (Pansy doesn't know it, but this is fortunate for the party, because they need someone to put on the shadow ward and wear it for at least a year before they can do their ritual. If the party seems to have forgotten this fact – if they just ask her to give them the shadow ward – she should ask more questions and encourage them to read her their letter about the ritual so that they remember this important fact! Clearly, she shouldn't just give them the pendant.)

Pansy tells the party that she wants to help them; it's clear this ritual is very important to them. She asks them to tell her as much as they can about the ritual (if they haven't already done so) and tells them she needs some time to think about it. She arranges to meet them in the tavern tomorrow morning at 9:30am to give them her answer.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none (but she should make sure that she is wearing the shadow ward, both on Saturday and when she meets the party in the tavern at 9:30am Sunday)

Clairia, P'loa and Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time after the 4th Friday encounters and before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pansy references the golden page she carries from Nemaia's book. Although this paper (which she DOES show the party but DOES NOT allow them to read) reminds her of a good memory, she also vividly remembers the difficult memory she shared with Nemaia, where she described her sister, Poppy Golden, as having "never done a real day of work in her life."

Reason this info matters: Please read the Changed World section, beginning on p. 158, for the context of this info and answers to a bunch more questions!

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pansy tells the party that, when the Sprinks first arrived in World's Edge, Angelica Sprink didn't have the first idea how the world worked. One time, Pansy brought her a bowl of hot soup - it was very obviously hot, with steam rising up and everything - and Angelica'd cried after putting a spoonful in her mouth. Pansy acknowledges that sometimes she herself finds it hard to wait when Solomon makes stew, because it's her favorite and sometimes she takes a bite even though she knows it'll burn her mouth. But Angelica cried as though she were 3 years old, as though there was no possible way anyone could have anticipated the situation. There were lots of situations like that. It must be nice to be rich, Pansy thinks. Never having to learn to do anything for yourself. Still, Pansy tells the party, Angelica is okay. Lately she's been a lot better. Just yesterday she asked Pansy if she needed help carrying dishes back to the kitchen! Pansy didn't need help, but still. That's huge, for Angelica to even think of that.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pansy tells the party about a strange thing that happened early this week. It was busy in the tavern, Pansy says, because it was the tail end of lunchtime and Solomon wasn't there because he was still visiting his father in Keer, or maybe was already on his way back to World's Edge. It doesn't really matter which, of course; the point is that they were a little shorthanded. They were just about done bussing the tables when a customer - goodness only knows how - knocked over the big waterjug that sits on the bar. Pansy ran behind the bar to grab a stack of towels from the drawer and when she did, she cut her hand on something sharp that was under the towels. Pansy tells the party that the something in question turned out to be a piece of jewelry, a large and honestly kind of gaudy one. After they'd gotten the water mopped up and she'd bandaged her hand, she'd gone back to the drawer and gotten the jewelry to bring it to Bonnie. It was really distinctive: a gold pendant with a big opal in the middle, and pink gems set all around it. It wasn't the kind of thing that would fall into a drawer without someone noticing it happening. Pansy says that the customers who were still in the tavern clustered around, and someone said "That looks like the Dawn Star!" and then more people agreed. The Dawn Star is apparently some famous pendant that belonged to Jack Brigham, the pirate. Pansy tells the party that her heart sank when she heard that, because there's been a stupid rumor lately connecting Solomon to Jack Brigham, and this similar-looking piece of jewelry turning up now is basically the last thing anyone needs. Pansy says that Bonnie didn't seem worried by this; she'd put the pendant on. Still, Pansy will be happy when this dumb rumor blows over. *If and ONLY if the party asks*, Pansy tells them that she thinks it was Cal Coleman who knocked over the water jug. She isn't certain, though, and she doesn't know which customer identified the pendant.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pansy tells the party that Quinoa and her boyfriend Huxley showed up in town Friday morning. Bartleby Sprink has been losing his mind all week preparing for Lord Huxley's visit, even hanging that Huxley family banner up in the tavern "so the Lord will feel at home as soon as he arrives!" Whatever. Pansy tells the party that Friday morning was crazy in the tavern. Solomon had just gotten back from his trip, and he started fussing as soon as he got in, because it sounded like a whole lot of people were scheduled to arrive in town and he was short-staffed. When Quinoa heard that, she said "I guess that's our cue!" and she and Huxley went behind the bar and started working. Pansy says she's not sure what she expected from a visiting lord, but it wasn't that. Quinoa and Huxley are a little odd, but no odder than anyone else who works there. And it's good to have some extra help.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pansy tells the party that she worked cleaning house for Miss Dora, before she died. Pansy clarifies that it was only a paid job for the final 18 months of the older lady's life, but that for years before that, Pansy used to stop by once a week or so to handle any jobs that were too heavy for Miss Dora. You'd think maybe that useless son of Dora's could've helped out, but no, apparently not. Pansy tells the party that she never minded helping, but it was the principle of the thing: her and the elderly woman cleaning while Edwin sat around doing nothing. A waste of space, that man. But anyway. Before the final year and a half or so, Miss Dora would bake her cookies or whatever as a thank you for helping out, and then at some point it had turned into a paid job, and one that paid very nicely. It was funny, Pansy tells the party: Miss Dora was frugal her whole life, but then once she decided she might as well start spending money, she started buying all sorts of things. Near the end of her life, Miss Dora was always buying presents for people: fancy earrings for her sister Eugenie, or a bracelet for Pansy, even when it wasn't her birthday. Most of the money got spent on other people, but there were a few indulgences she'd buy herself. Pansy tells the party Miss Dora had rosebushes that cost more than some people make in a month. Oh, and then there was the fancy perfume the old lady would buy. The thing that made it funny is that Miss Dora had no sense of smell; she'd lost it when she had pneumonia one time and it never came back. That didn't stop her from buying perfume, though. She always told Pansy it made her feel so elegant, having those beautiful glass bottles on her vanity table. Pansy laughs that, because Dora couldn't actually smell the scent herself, she'd slather so much of it on that you couldn't hardly breathe around her. There were a couple times Pansy had to put a clothespin on her nose while she was cleaning the house, just because the smell was so strong. But that was Miss Dora: full of joy and life. She was a character for sure, and so generous and fun. Pansy misses her a whole lot.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Glendeep, again

Time: 9:30am, Sunday (Pansy Golden is the penultimate step for this party)

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pansy tells the party that she's real sorry, but she's decided that she just can't help them with their ritual. The more she thinks about this ritual they plan to do, the more obvious it is that she's not cut out for this kind of thing. Her sister is the special one, not her. Can the party just put the pendant on Poppy? (Note, of course, that this won't work and that Pansy is going to have to backtrack if the party starts actually considering this!) Pansy tells the party she's sorry, but they'll just need to find Lorelei's sword some other way.

Hopefully the party will encourage Pansy to reconsider this decision! (If it seems like they're not going to, she can move away from them and sit alone in the tavern, looking angry and bitter. She does, after all, feel truly terrible about letting them down. She's disgusted by herself but also by her lot in life. Hopefully this will buy time for the party to decide to try again!)

Ideally, it should take some real effort on the party's part to convince Pansy to be part of their ritual. Hopefully the party can encourage her in a way that's emotionally satisfying when they eventually succeed. Pansy finally agrees to go along with the party's plan, although she will still be frequently looking to the party for reassurance.

Item(s) to give this party: none (although Pansy will of course be wearing the shadow ward)

Glendeep, once more with feeling

Time: 9:45am Sunday (Pansy is part of the final step on the party's party path, accompanied by the statue of St. Lorelei.)

Where: Pansy accompanies the party to Fern Grotto, where they begin their ritual. The ritual takes them into the Shrine of AllSeasons

Signal to appear: --

Activity/Info: Once the party has done a good enough job of encouraging Pansy, she accompany them to Fern Grotto to begin their ritual. The instructions for the ritual are as follows:

Once you're ready to begin (if you haven't already died of old age) gather together seven people: the one who's got the shadow ward on, plus six others. None of them need to be keepers, though it doesn't hurt if they are.

Pour the devil's-fire into your revel's cup; have one person carry the cup. Have another one hold the rose-quartz, another the brimstone egg, another the ghost key, another the folly dust. Put the viper's-eye pendant on another. Give the tambourine to the person with the shadow ward. Start your ritual in holy ground BUT (more pain in the ass) NOT the holy ground where you'll complete the ritual. Here in World's Edge, I'd choose Fern Grotto, for reasons that'll be clear in a minute.

All together, the seven people speak these words: "The bound shall be free. The weak shall be strong. The lost shall be found." Then they form a line with the ward-wearer first. She shakes the tambourine while the whole group walks to holy ground. (See, if you took my advice and started in the Grotto, you only have to listen to the damn tambourine while you walk to the Shrine of AllSeasons. You're welcome.)

No one but the ward-wearer may speak. As they enter the holy ground, she alone repeats the words: "The bound shall be free. The weak shall be strong. The lost shall be found."

And then presto, I guess, the ward-wearer can do... something? Find a lost thing, presumably? It better be something really great, if you've spent "preferably five years or longer" getting ready for the ritual. But hey, what do I know?

The party needs to follow these instructions, ideally with Pansy not seeming like she's directing (unless the party is about to do something wrong, in which case she'll have to gently correct them.) When the party is walking from the Grotto into the Shrine, Pansy should be shaking the tambourine reasonably loudly, since this lets Lorelei know the party is coming!

Once the party is all in the Shrine (but hopefully before they have a chance to look too closely at the statue!) Pansy repeats the ritual words: "The bound shall be free. The weak shall be strong. The lost shall be found."

<Momentary dramatic pause>

Immediately after that, Pansy announces, bitterly: "Well, it didn't work! Big surprise. I'm not magic; I still don't have any idea where Lorelei's sword is! It didn't work!"

That's when St. Lorelei's statue says, "Oh, it worked." And then she rises from her chair.

The statue looks with interest at the people in the Shrine. She asks, "Who are you? What brings you to this place?" Presumably the party tells her why they're there, that they're looking for her sword.

Lorelei listens to this intently but with some confusion. She's very sorry, she tells the party. She wishes she could help them, but she never used a weapon of any kind.

Except... Lorelei pauses to consider. She asks the party to tell her again exactly why they've come. Hopefully they'll read her a portion of the letter from their Duke, or at least refer to the item they seek as the "sword of Lorelei." Once they do – or just after she has a sudden realization, if they don't happen to refer to it like that – the statue smiles. It's true what she told them, she says: she never used a weapon.

But when she came to World's Edge, she explains, she was not terribly welcome here. This was in the time before the village was settled, she says. It wasn't yet part of the Lyrian kingdom, and the people living here weren't protected by any Lyrian laws. Certain immoral people, blinded by greed and selfishness, arrived to take slaves from among the folk who lived here. Today, Lorelei tells them, she is considered a hero because she spoke out against that slavery. But at the time, hers was not a popular opinion. She certainly wasn't called a saint back then. More like a troublemaker.

Lorelei tells the party that yes, she was able to change the minds of some people, that she was able to help disable an evil system. But she didn't do it alone.

Instead, she explains, her sister Annika came with her. Annika had worked as a mercenary, and she took it upon herself to protect Lorelei... something that was often necessary. Slavers didn't want their profitable system shut down. First they tried to bribe her, and when that didn't work, they tried to kill her. More times than she could count, they sent armed thugs to silence Lorelei's words. The only reason Lorelei survived was because Annika worked tirelessly to protect her.

Lorelei tells them that, just as much if not more than she, Annika is responsible for dismantling a cruel and unjust system. But Annika never wanted attention for what she did. Many people in World's Edge – the same people who called Lorelei a hero, the ones who later made her a Saint – never even learned Annika's name.

Instead, the statue explains, they referred to Annika as the Sword of Lorelei.

That, she thinks, must be what the Duke of Glendeep has need of: not a physical sword. But a person, a person sworn to protect another.

Of course, Lorelei says, Annika lived a very long time ago, just as Lorelei herself did. But the statue thinks the party has not come to World's Edge in vain: there is someone here who is marked by shadows. She gestures at Pansy's shadow ward pendant. "If you wish it, I believe you have the power within you. Will you become my new Sword?"

Pansy is startled by this. Didn't the statue hear her before, she asks? The ritual didn't affect her! She's not transformed into any sort of magical anything!

The statue shakes her head. "Most of us aren't transformed by magic, young one. Some of us are given magic, it's true. But some of us have something else. Something stronger. We transform ourselves. It's an act of will. But only if we are willing..." She looks at Pansy.

Pansy looks at the party. She is a little bit disbelieving, but she's excited as well. What, she asks them, should she do?

Again, hopefully, the party will encourage and support her! After a few minutes of this (enough to be satisfying/not so much it gets tedious) Pansy turns to the statue. "All right," she says.

"In that case..." says Lorelei, "You will have much work to do. Like I said, transforming ourselves is an act of will." She smiles. "And, perhaps, a little magic..." She touches Pansy lightly on her forehead, her sword hand and her chest while saying "Pansy Golden, through the strength of your head, your hands and your heart, let you be known henceforth as the Sword of Lorelei. Go, my child. Protect those who need it."

Pansy's eyes open wide as some sort of power comes into her. She feels... different, she tells the party. She has a lot of work to do. So much to learn! But she is on her way. Pansy thanks Lorelei.

Lorelei turns then and quietly leaves the Shrine, heading through Hillcrest and down River Run. (This is because the party is about to have a charge revelation scene in the Shrine and otherwise Lorelei will be trapped there a while. She also can't go in another direction because she'll encounter other parties.)

Item(s) to give this party: herself!

Glendeep, oh god seriously?

When to approach a party: Sunday around 9:45am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: The party will complete their party path in the Shrine of AllSeasons. After they have fully finished this scene, Saint Lorelei leaves the Shrine. Pansy Golden is still with the party and will stay with them throughout this scene to assist as needed. Once Lorelei has gone, Frost tentatively enters the Shrine. He doesn't tell the party his name (until/unless they ask) and he is hesitant and deferential with them. He apologizes for interrupting them, but he's wondering if anyone has seen Aesthetika?

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

Since Aesthetika will not be out Sunday until the trial, the party will theoretically tell Frost that they haven't seen her. When he hears this, he is clearly unsure what to do next. He's looked for her at Inspirations Unlimited and the tavern, but he can't find her anywhere. He really needs to speak to her, he says. He sits down on a pew, clearly upset.

Hopefully Frost's mention of Aesthetika and/or their vision and/or his distress will be enough for the party to question him. If it's not, however, then Pansy needs to step in and help move this scene forward, questioning Frost herself and/or prompting the party (e.g. "He seems really upset...")

Once asked, Frost tells the party that he can't tell them the story, but that he's done something very bad, and that he really needs to speak to Aesthetika.

Only after the party has made Frost feel safe will he gradually reveal the following information:

- Back in July, Lady Carmina Bordeaux instructed him to paint a picture of Crabtree and Evelyn, in a style like Aesthetika's own work. She gave him a very nice set of paints to use.
- After the painting was done, she told him to deliver it to Crabtree and Evelyn's shop and take the money they'd paid for the picture from their cashbox. He did this.
- Lady Bordeaux sold multiple additional pictures to people in town: Angelica Sprink, Ursula Smirch, Elliott Peacock and others. In each case, she instructed Frost to paint the picture, deliver it and collect the money from a cashbox or purse, always without letting the purchaser see him.
- Frost knows these are unusual instructions, but it's not his place to question the orders that are given to him. Lady Bordeaux made it clear these "sales" were to remain their little secret. She reminded him that he accepted the gift of the fancy paints from her, which was unethical unless he was prepared to uphold his end of the bargain.

- At some point, Frost realized these secret painting sales were making Aesthetika look bad. In an attempt to make things right, he started using his own money to “pay back” Aesthetika, secretly leaving her the same amount he’d collected. [This is of course making Aesthetika look more guilty, but that hasn’t occurred to Frost and is absolutely not his intent.] Paying back this money has taken all his savings and required a loan from Baroness Adina.

Throughout this scene, Frost is focused on himself and his own guilt. The fact that Carmina Bordeaux is manipulating him has not fully occurred to him. He is a child and a servant and he was given orders. Note that although he realizes this is making Aesthetika look bad, he does NOT know that Carmina Bordeaux is doing this specifically *in order to* make Aesthetika look bad.

After the party knows all of the above, they’ll again need to reassure Frost before he’ll agree to testify at the trial. This is a very scary prospect for him. He should make it clear to the party that *they* need to tell most of the story and that then he’ll confirm it.

Once the above has happened, Frost promises to meet the party at the trial. He and Pansy can then return to the Basement.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika’s, see page 120 for the whole story

Ned Crochett -- David San Clemente

Age: 60

Usually found: in the Inn at World's Edge/wandering

A description of the Memorial Challenge appears on page 449.

Ned should also read through the Cheer Up, Ned! Challenge, on page 450.

P'loa

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the memorial challenge

Info to give the party directly: Ned promises to loan them the cedarwood box they need, but not until Sunday. He can't give it to them permanently, because it's the right size to hold paperwork behind the bar, but he's happy to let them use it for a while. Ned arranges to meet them in the tavern at 10:15am Sunday to give them the box.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Ned assures the party that the box isn't worth anything. It's just one of the many worthless pieces of junk Scarlet left behind when she sold the bar. She always used to say it was a present from her boyfriend. Ugh, Ned says. Scarlet always wanted to talk about her boyfriend. It was apparently some rich guy she was very secretive about but also she wanted everyone to ask her questions which she'd then refuse to answer. Ned tells the party how glad he is that Scarlet is gone. The fact that the box was a present from her mystery boyfriend but then she left it behind when she sold the bar? That tells you everything you need to know about how sentimental Scarlet was. Scarlet was always leaving others to clean up her messes, Ned says.

Item(s) to give this party: none (he'll meet them Sunday at 10:15am in the tavern with the cedarwood box)

any parties encountered (ideally at least 6)

When to approach a party: any time after the 4th Friday encounters and before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Ned references the golden page he carries from Nemaia's book. Although this paper (which he DOES show the party but DOES NOT allow them to read) reminds him of a good memory, he also vividly remembers the difficult memory he shared with Nemaia, where he described his employer at the time, Scarlet Billows, saying "She's always mad about something and you just can't get away from her."

Reason this info matters: Please read the Changed World section, beginning on p. 158, for the context of this info and answers to a bunch more questions!

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Ned tells the party that Solomon has been letting Danny Donovan sleep in a back room of the tavern for the past 8 or 9 months or so. It's a space Solomon and Bonnie weren't using for anything, and it helped Danny out. He tells the party that, on Friday morning, he came into work to get breakfast going. He couldn't remember what had happened Thursday night, but to be honest, he'd just assumed that he'd had a really good time at the party the night before. He felt fine, though. He was starting the water for oatmeal when Danny'd come out of the room where he sleeps. He smelled like a bonfire and his face was all soot-smudged. Ned tells the party he'd come in through the back door and hadn't seen the poor smoldering Morg yet, so he had no idea how Danny had gotten all smoky. Neither, it seemed, did Danny. Ned explains that of

course then later he learned that nobody remembered anything, but still, it was just the oddest thing, Danny coming out of his room and saying "What happened to me?" with no idea at all.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Ned tells the party that he is doing his best to make everybody happy and insure everybody gets their meals in a timely fashion, despite the unexpectedly large volume of customers this weekend and the holiday wrapping up and the trial *and* the wedding happening on Sunday. Ned explains that what he *cannot* do is verify that everyone's packages arrive safe and sound. That is beyond his control. Ned tells the party that Tanya Peacock, one of those Peacock Family Singers, ordered a crown from some mail-order catalog. Ned doesn't have a terribly high opinion of any crown you can order through the mail, but since no one asked Ned's opinion on the subject, he will keep that information to himself. Regardless, Tanya received a notice telling her that the crown had been delivered. This, Ned tells the party, is where this becomes a problem. Suddenly Tanya was very upset because apparently it was Ned's job to make sure that every package that arrives in town gets delivered to the correct person. Ned tells the party that it is in fact *not* his job to do this. Tanya made a series of accusations about "porch pirates" and et cetera. Ned does not like pirates of any sort, porch or otherwise, but there is only so much he can do here. He was hoping that this matter would die down, but then on Friday, the Makai arrived in town and one of them came into the tavern wearing exactly the sort of gaudy tiara a person might expect from a lousy mail-order catalog. Ned tells the party that he has no opinion as to the rightful ownership of the tiara but that it would make it easier to serve lunch if tavern patrons were not accusing each other of theft when everyone is just trying to eat lunch in peace.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

P'loa, again

Time: 10:15am, Sunday (Ned is the penultimate step for this party and goes with them for their party path ending)

Item(s) to give this party: Ned meets the party in the tavern and has the cedarwood box with him. He informs them that he's happy – well, not *happy*, but willing – to let them use it for this ritual of theirs, but wants it back again when they're done, and he's keeping charge of it.

P'loa, continued

Time: 10:30am Sunday (Ned is part of the final step on the party's party path.)

Where: Ned meets the party in the tavern, then walks with them to Hillcrest to start their ritual

Activity/Info: Ned insists on remaining in possession of the cedarwood box, in theory because he wants to make sure its take care of, and in actuality because the ritual only works, of course, if Ned is holding the box.

After meeting them in the tavern, Ned asks where they're headed. If the party has no idea, Ned can suggest that they check the page they have with information about the ritual. Sure enough, it instructs them to go to the last known location of the person they're looking for. Obsidian told the party on Friday night that Lady Elani was last seen on the Silverspan Bridge, but they may well not remember this. If they don't, then Ned can contribute this fact.

The Silverspan itself isn't accessible at the moment, but Ned tells them they should just get as close as they can. On the Hillcrest side of the span, he says, you can get quite close. (This is important because the party path ending will be along River Run, so if the party started on the tavern side of the Silverspan, it'd be a much longer walk. Not that Ned knows where they're going yet, of course.)

While walking to Hillcrest, Ned can ask the party to tell him a little more about the ritual and Elani Edgewater. Given that Elani would be 95 years old today, it seems reasonably likely Elani is already dead, even if she didn't jump off the bridge. Ned wants to know what's going to happen with the Ritual of Togetherness if Elani is dead. Will it take them to her grave? And if so, what is the party's plan at that time? Will they be exhuming Elani's body? What will the party do if they find her grave and the Jewel of the Waves isn't there? Mostly, these questions serve to set the stage: it would be great if the party is expecting to find a couple bones, because it will make the surprise of finding a live Elani that much cooler.

When they reach Hillcrest, Ned holds the box open for them to place the items in. He closes the box, holding it, and asks “Did your research indicate how long it would take for the ritual to work?” He is, of course, 2-3 words from the end of the sentence when the box jerks suddenly in the air.

The box pulls Ned along in much the same way that Inigo Montoya’s sword leads him to find the Pit of Despair. It’s not all in a straight line; there are wobbles to the left and right, with the box obviously seeming to have a mind of its own. Ned should make the walk long enough to allow the participants to process what’s happening, but not so long that it grows silly and tedious.

The box leads them up into Hillcrest and then down the River Run trail. It continues until they are relatively near the low bridge (on the Hillcrest side). Abruptly, the box jerks to the ground, where it remains completely still. Clearly it’s not going any farther.

Hopefully the party will start looking under the box (another useful by-product of Ned’s will-you-be-exhuming-the-body maybe-we’ll-need-to-dig-her-up questions) because we want them looking at the ground, not looking around. (If they’re not looking there, Ned can say “is there anything underneath?” or whatever.) If they’re looking down, and if the brook is making noise, maybe the party won’t notice the approach of some people who come out of the woods…

See p. 566 for a description of this encounter. Ned stands quietly by while the party interacts with Elani Edgewater and the Fae.

Item(s) to give this party: Ned continues to have the box with him

P’loa, continued still more

Time: soon after 10:30am Sunday (Ned is also part of the party’s charge revelation)

Where: on the River Run trail, right where we left off

Signal to appear: Ned is still (still!) with the party, but he should wait until Elani Edgewater and her Fae have moved a decent way off, without requiring them to go absurdly far into the woods.

Activity/Info: After their encounter with Elani and the Fae, Ned picks up the box (which still has the ritual items inside it.) He says something about how he can return the box to the tavern… and then the box jerks suddenly in his hands. (Just as with the party path ending, of course, Ned needs to make it appear that the magically enchanted box has a mind of its own and that it’s pulling him around.) The box leads Ned (and the party, we certainly hope!) back up the River Run trail toward Hillcrest.

While being pulled along, Ned frets aloud what could possibly be causing this strange behavior. The party collected those necessary items for the ritual, he says, plus an item that belonged to the person to they’re trying to locate. They’ve already found Elani, obviously. Where in the world could they be going now?

If it occurs to the party that the one other component present is the box itself, great. If they seem bewildered, Ned points this fact out, saying that the box belongs to Bonnie and Solomon and asking rhetorically if the ritual is going to summon them next. Ned reminds the party that the box previously belonged to Scarlet. He certainly hopes it isn’t going to summon her, since he has absolutely no desire to see her again! Of course, Ned says, Scarlet always claimed the box was a present from her rich boyfriend. He asks dismissively and rhetorically if maybe the box is summoning *him*.

(Again, the box doesn’t pull Ned along in a totally straight line, or super-quickly. He needs to make the walk back to Hillcrest take long enough that the party has a minute or two to process what’s happening, but not so long that it gets boring.)

Coming into Hillcrest, there is indeed someone there. Ned doesn’t know it yet, but it is indeed Scarlet’s ex-boyfriend: Jack Brigham. Jack has a hand on the hilt of his sword, though he hasn’t drawn it. He looks vaguely hostile and slightly cautious… which isn’t bad, considering that a minute ago, he was hundreds of miles away, standing on the deck of his ship. Most people would be panicked in such a situation, but Scurvy Jack isn’t the panicking type.

If the party asks Jack who he is, he doesn’t answer; instead he wants to know who they are and what they want. Hopefully the party can piece together how the ritual summoned a second person and explain it; if they’re at a loss, Ned can provide nudges until everyone gets it.

Very soon after they encounter Jack, another person comes hurrying into Hillcrest: Scarlet Billows. Unlike Jack, she hasn’t been magically summoned; she traveled here by mundane means. The party will have met Scarlet the day before during the alternate timeline, but although they remember Scarlet, she doesn’t remember them. (Hopefully this won’t be confusing for the party; Scarlet shouldn’t let them get sucked into a conversation about yesterday’s magical hijinks.)

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they’re not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party’s interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible! This revelation is even trickier than some others because Scarlet is going to give (or confirm) information that incriminates her. We’ve tried to make suggestions here of ways she can do this without it seeming weird.]

When Scarlet catches sight of Jack, she is completely shocked and very, very unhappy. Although the party doesn't necessarily know it, Scarlet and Cal are framing Solomon for piracy by making him appear to be Jack Brigham. The presence in World's Edge of the real Jack Brigham is an extremely unwelcome wrinkle in this plan!

Scarlet and Jack have a heated exchange during which they utterly ignore the party. Although exact wording is not at all important here, this might look something like:

Scarlet: You! What the hell are you doing here? *[This is the first indication Scarlet has met Jack before, a fact they haven't heard yet.]*

Jack: What the hell am I doing here? I have no idea! I don't even know where 'here' is!

Scarlet: You can't be here!

Jack: I have no desire to be here! I was onboard my ship and then I was suddenly here! I'm trying to get back there!

Scarlet: Well, you have to go! You'll ruin everything! *[Other than the vision, this is the first indication that Scarlet is also in on the plan to frame Solomon.]*

Jack: Don't tell me what to do, Scarlet.

The two continue to bicker until the party (hopefully) intervenes to get them to calm down. If they do, or if enough time has gone on without the party stepping in, Jack takes a second to stop and look around.

Jack: Hey, wait. Is this that little town where you owned the bar?

Scarlet: Shut up, Jack.

Jack: <amused> I still can't believe you sold it without knowing! *[Other than the vague reference in the vision, the party doesn't yet know anything about the buried treasure. They hopefully know that both Scarlet and Cal have tried to buy the bar, but they don't have any idea why. Hopefully they will question Jack; if not, he can repeat variations on this line. Again, it's better if they draw the info out of him instead of him just announcing it.]*

Scarlet: Shut. Up!

By the time the scene ends, the party needs to know that:

- Solomon isn't Jack Brigham.
- There's pirate gold buried under the tavern floor, hidden there by Jack while he and Scarlet were lovers. Scarlet only learned about the gold after selling the tavern.
- Now Scarlet and her current boyfriend Cal are trying to buy the tavern back.
- Since buying the tavern will be easier and cheaper if Solomon is locked up, Cal is using lies and subterfuge to make it appear that Solomon is Jack.

Since it shouldn't look like Scarlet is knowingly incriminating herself, Jack needs to keep moving this scene forward. He can ask the party what's going on, since he doesn't know anything about Solomon being framed. (If the party, for instance, says "Oh, you're the real Jack Brigham!", Jack says "I'm the only Jack Brigham! What the hell are you talking about?")

If the party is talking in front of Scarlet and Jack about Cal framing Solomon (but not acknowledging or realizing that Scarlet is in on this), then Scarlet can just go along with it.

If, however, the party acknowledges/implies/questions that Scarlet and Cal are working together or if they think Scarlet is acting alone, Scarlet should throw Cal under the bus. If the party hasn't already used Cal's name, she should do this at first simply by referring to Cal as "him", so she's not doing too much of the party's job for them. She might say "this is all his fault for being so sloppy" or "I told him some things I shouldn't have! Then he stole my Dawn Star and brought it here to do illegal things with it!"

Ultimately, Jack, Scarlet and Cal will be at the trial. (If the party is stressing because they're not sure Cal will be there, Scarlet can tell them she's pretty sure he will be. There's no real reason for her to say this, but we don't want the party fretting about it needlessly.)

If the party convincingly tells Scarlet that Cal is planning on double crossing her and taking the tavern for himself, she is furious. (This shouldn't be too hard a sell; Scarlet already knows Cal stole the DawnStar and she is by nature a suspicious person.) She is willing to go to the trial with the party, even if it means she goes down for this, if it means Cal also takes the fall.

Jack shouldn't distract the party while this complicated scene is happening, but at some point before this all ends, he needs to ask the obvious question: how is he supposed to get back to the ship? When Jack asks, Ned tells everyone that, when the party asked him for the cedarwood box yesterday, he did a little bit of reading about the Ritual of Togetherness. Apparently, summoned individuals will be magically returned to their place of origin approximately 3 hours after the summoning occurs. So Jack will be around for the trial without worrying that he'll be imprisoned by Justice Wilde for piracy.

444 - Staff Challenges and Encounters - Tavern Staff

Note: Because of camp construction and the Silverspan being inaccessible, this party's path-ending-plus-revelation-scene involves a bunch of walking: tavern to Hillcrest to Low Bridge to Hillcrest, then theoretically back to tavern. Doing the revelation scene in Hillcrest is more private and cooler, but if someone in the party is having mobility issues, we could move the revelation scene to the parking lot end of River Run. Hopefully this won't be necessary but it's noted here in case it's needed.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Scarlet Billows -- Gretchen Albright

Age: 50

Usually found: Who knows where Scarlet's been in the two years since she sold the tavern to the Stillwaters? Probably causing trouble back in Keer. On Sunday morning, she'll return there to resolve some Unfinished Business.

Oh, and from 4-8pm on Saturday, the timeline is going to shift and Scarlet has never sold the Inn at World's Edge.

Secret Info:

Son of a godsdamned bitch, she is so fucking pissed. This is Scarlet's secret.

To understand, you have to go back a ways, to a shitheap podunk town she never should've set foot in: World's Fucking Edge.

Seven years ago, she bought a bar - actually *the* bar, which tells you what a backwater it was - in the town. She sold her belongings in Keer and moved inland, all the way to Moreth.

It was awful right from the beginning. The only good times were when her lover visited her there. This wasn't often, because her lover was Jack Brigham, and he was a busy man. But he was also a very powerful man and a very, very rich man, and Scarlet liked both those things. He'd visit her in secret because there was a bounty on his head, which meant she didn't have the satisfaction of telling everyone who her mystery man was, but that was all right. Jack would visit her and bring her presents, including a pendant called the Dawn Star. For a time, things in World's Edge were tolerable. Barely.

But she wanted to see Jack more often. She wanted more presents. She wanted to be away from the godsdamned little town at the edge of the world, so she'd put out the word, in Moreth and Keer as well, that the bar was for sale. Surprisingly, it was in Keer that she found a buyer: some dipshit captain named Stillwater and his new wife. Scarlet took their money and got herself back to the more civilized part of the kingdom.

But there were several ugly surprises in store. The first was that Jack Brigham had moved on. Fuck him, that was his loss. But the second surprise was more cutting. Jack had laughed at her - *nobody gets away with laughing at Scarlet!* - and told her that on one of his secret visits, he'd buried treasure under the floorboards of the Inn at World's Edge. Not just a little treasure, either. Treasure worth tens of thousands of royals! On property *she* had owned but now owned no longer! Godsdammit all to hell!

She'd written to the new owners, the Stillwaters, offering to buy the bar back, but they refused to sell, even after she offered more and more money. It made Scarlet crazy to think of that treasure - rightfully *her* treasure! - sitting there in the dark. But the time wasn't right to try again to claim it. Months and months passed.

Scarlet met a new man, a better man, not like Jack Fucking Brigham. This new man was also rich and powerful, but instead of a godsdamned pirate, he was a *legitimate* businessman. An *entrepreneur*, even. His name was Cal. Cal Coleman.

After they'd been together a while, she'd told Cal about the Inn at World's Edge and the treasure beneath the floorboards. She didn't know exactly where it was, so there was no way to find it unless you owned the damn building and could pull it apart looking. Scarlet told him how the new owners refused to sell, but that if she had a partner, she had an idea about how it might be possible to buy back the tavern, and cheaply, too.

At first, it was a little hard for Cal to actually believe her story. Probably lots of women claimed to have been the Pirate King's lover, but Scarlet proved it to Cal, modeling the Dawn Star for him. She'd made it even more convincing by not wearing anything else at the time.

Scarlet could be very convincing when she wanted to be.

Ultimately, she and Cal worked out a solid plan. Since no one in World's Edge knew him, he'd travel there, claim to be investigating another business opportunity. While there, however, he could frame the new owner, Solomon Stillwater, for piracy. Hell, he could make it look like Stillwater was Scurvy Jack Brigham himself! The ruse wouldn't have to hold up terribly long, just enough for the man to get arrested. His bride Bonnie seemed like the innocent type, quick to panic when her husband wasn't around. Once her husband was out of the picture, she'd be all too willing to sell the tavern to the first person who offered. And that person would be Cal.

Once the tavern was theirs again, Scarlet would join him in World's Edge, and they'd pull the building apart until that treasure was found. They hadn't worked out the exact ratio yet, but Scarlet figured a 70/30 split would be fair, since she was the one who'd come up with most of the plan.

Cal packed his bags and headed off to Moreth to put the plan in place, and everything was right in the world

...until this morning, when Scarlet opened the hidden compartment of her jewelry box and the Dawn Star was gone.

Son of a motherfucking bitch! The only person who knew she had the Dawn Star hidden there - the only person who could've taken it - was Cal. If he'd stolen her prize possession, Scarlet was suddenly all too certain he *also* planned to steal *her* treasure!

She's made her way to the mainland and come as fast as she could to Moreth. She's going to arrive mid-morning on Sunday. The first priority, when she gets there, is to make sure that the plan is still proceeding. She wants the Dawn Star back, and she wants to kick Cal repeatedly in the balls, but those can both wait. The most important thing is Solomon Stillwater getting arrested for piracy and Bonnie Stillwater signing off on selling the bar. After that's accomplished, then she will get back what is hers.

And to think she was going to give that little rat-bastard 30% of her treasure! Cal will be lucky if she lets him keep his scalp! But one thing at a time. She is almost to World's Edge. She will have her treasure and then she will have her revenge. She can be patient when she needs to.

But son of a godsdamned bitch, she is So. Fucking. Pissed.

P'loa

When to approach a party: between 4-8pm Saturday

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Scarlet should be sure to meet this party. In addition to demonstrating her delightful personality, Scarlet tells the party (or tells others where the party can overhear) that she has a boyfriend who's very rich and very powerful. She won't divulge his identity, although she clearly wants people to wonder.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

P'loa

Time: soon after 10:30am Sunday (Ned Crochett, Jack Brigham and Scarlet Billows are all part of the party's charge revelation, albeit not all there for all of it)

Where: on the River Run trail

Signal to appear: Ned is already with the party, having just completed their party path ending. He should wait until Elani Edgewater and her Fae have moved a decent way off, without requiring them to go absurdly far into the woods.

Activity/Info: After their encounter with Elani and the Fae, Ned picks up the box (which still has the ritual items inside it.) He says something about how he can return the box to the tavern... and then the box jerks suddenly in his hands. (Just as with the party path ending, of course, Ned needs to make it appear that the magically enchanted box has a mind of its own and that it's pulling him around.) The box leads Ned (and the party, we certainly hope!) back up the River Run trail toward Hillcrest.

While being pulled along, Ned frets aloud what could possibly be causing this strange behavior. The party collected those necessary items for the ritual, he says, plus an item that belonged to the person to they're trying to locate. They've already found Elani, obviously. Where in the world could they be going now?

If it occurs to the party that the one other component present is the box itself, great. If they seem bewildered, Ned points this fact out, saying that the box belongs to Bonnie and Solomon and asking rhetorically if the ritual is going to summon them next. Ned reminds the party that the box previously belonged to Scarlet. He certainly hopes it isn't going to summon her, since he has absolutely no desire to see her again! Of course, Ned says, Scarlet always claimed the box was a present from her rich boyfriend. He asks dismissively and rhetorically if maybe the box is summoning *him*.

(Again, the box doesn't pull Ned along in a totally straight line, or super-quickly. He needs to make the walk back to Hillcrest take long enough that the party has a minute or two to process what's happening, but not so long that it gets boring.)

Coming into Hillcrest, there is indeed someone there. Ned doesn't know it yet, but it is indeed Scarlet's ex-boyfriend: Jack Brigham. Jack has a hand on the hilt of his sword, though he hasn't drawn it. He looks vaguely hostile and slightly cautious... which isn't bad, considering that a minute ago, he was hundreds of miles away, standing on the deck of his ship. Most people would be panicked in such a situation, but Scurvy Jack isn't the panicking type.

If the party asks Jack who he is, he doesn't answer; instead he wants to know who they are and what they want. Hopefully the party can piece together how the ritual summoned a second person and explain it; if they're at a loss, Ned can provide nudges until everyone gets it.

Very soon after they encounter Jack, another person comes hurrying into Hillcrest: Scarlet Billows. Unlike Jack, she hasn't been magically summoned; she traveled here by mundane means. The party will have met Scarlet the day before during the alternate timeline, but although they remember Scarlet, she doesn't remember them. (Hopefully this won't be confusing for the party; Scarlet shouldn't let them get sucked into a conversation about yesterday's magical hijinks.)

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible! This revelation is even trickier than some others because Scarlet is going to give (or confirm) information that incriminates her. We've tried to make suggestions here of ways she can do this without it seeming weird.]

When Scarlet catches sight of Jack, she is completely shocked and very, very unhappy. Although the party doesn't necessarily know it, Scarlet and Cal are framing Solomon for piracy by making him appear to be Jack Brigham. The presence in World's Edge of the real Jack Brigham is an extremely unwelcome wrinkle in this plan!

Scarlet and Jack have a heated exchange during which they utterly ignore the party. Although exact wording is not at all important here, this might look something like:

Scarlet: You! What the hell are you doing here? *[This is the first indication Scarlet has met Jack before, a fact they haven't heard yet.]*

Jack: What the hell am I doing here? I have no idea! I don't even know where 'here' is!

Scarlet: You can't be here!

Jack: I have no desire to be here! I was onboard my ship and then I was suddenly here! I'm trying to get back there!

Scarlet: Well, you have to go! You'll ruin everything! *[Other than the vision, this is the first indication that Scarlet is also in on the plan to frame Solomon.]*

Jack: Don't tell me what to do, Scarlet.

The two continue to bicker until the party (hopefully) intervenes to get them to calm down. If they do, or if enough time has gone on without the party stepping in, Jack takes a second to stop and look around.

Jack: Hey, wait. Is this that little town where you owned the bar?

Scarlet: Shut up, Jack.

Jack: <amused> I still can't believe you sold it without knowing! *[Other than the vague reference in the vision, the party doesn't yet know anything about the buried treasure. They hopefully know that both Scarlet and Cal have tried to buy the bar, but they don't have any idea why. Hopefully they will question Jack; if not, he can repeat variations on this line. Again, it's better if they draw the info out of him instead of him just announcing it.]*

Scarlet: Shut. Up!

By the time the scene ends, the party needs to know that:

- Solomon isn't Jack Brigham.
- There's pirate gold buried under the tavern floor, hidden there by Jack while he and Scarlet were lovers. Scarlet only learned about the gold after selling the tavern.
- Now Scarlet and her current boyfriend Cal are trying to buy the tavern back.
- Since buying the tavern will be easier and cheaper if Solomon is locked up, Cal is using lies and subterfuge to make it appear that Solomon is Jack.

Since it shouldn't look like Scarlet is knowingly incriminating herself, Jack needs to keep moving this scene forward. He can ask the party what's going on, since he doesn't know anything about Solomon being framed. (If the party, for instance, says "Oh, you're the real Jack Brigham!", Jack says "I'm the only Jack Brigham! What the hell are you talking about?")

If the party is talking in front of Scarlet and Jack about Cal framing Solomon (but not acknowledging or realizing that Scarlet is in on this), then Scarlet can just go along with it.

If, however, the party acknowledges/implies/questions that Scarlet and Cal are working together or if they think Scarlet is acting alone, Scarlet should throw Cal under the bus. If the party hasn't already used Cal's name, she should do this at first simply by referring to Cal as "him", so she's not doing too much of the party's job for them. She might say "this is all his fault for being so sloppy" or "I told him some things I shouldn't have! Then he stole my Dawn Star and brought it here to do illegal things with it!"

Ultimately, Jack, Scarlet and Cal will be at the trial. (If the party is stressing because they're not sure Cal will be there, Scarlet can tell them she's pretty sure he will be. There's no real reason for her to say this, but we don't want the party fretting about it needlessly.)

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If the party convincingly tells Scarlet that Cal is planning on double crossing her and taking the tavern for himself, she is furious. (This shouldn't be too hard a sell; Scarlet already knows Cal stole the DawnStar and she is by nature a suspicious person.) She is willing to go to the trial with the party, even if it means she goes down for this, if it means Cal also takes the fall.

Jack shouldn't distract the party while this complicated scene is happening, but at some point before this all ends, he needs to ask the obvious question: how is he supposed to get back to the ship? When Jack asks, Ned tells everyone that, when the party asked him for the cedarwood box yesterday, he did a little bit of reading about the Ritual of Togetherness. Apparently, summoned individuals will be magically returned to their place of origin approximately 3 hours after the summoning occurs. So Jack will be around for the trial without worrying that he'll be imprisoned by Justice Wilde for piracy.

Note: Because of camp construction and the Silverspan being inaccessible, this party's path-ending-plus-revelation-scene involves a bunch of walking: tavern to Hillcrest to Low Bridge to Hillcrest, then theoretically back to tavern. Doing the revelation scene in Hillcrest is more private and cooler, but if someone in the party is having mobility issues, we could move the revelation scene to the parking lot end of River Run. Hopefully this won't be necessary but it's noted here in case it's needed.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

the Memorial Challenge

Activity: Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater and Ned Crockett will be sharing this challenge activity, but they do not need to be together when the party arrives in order to do it, although they certainly can be.

Solomon recently went on a trip back to his native Keer because (he thought) his father Samuel was dying. Solomon's relationship with his father is complicated, but he had a long time on the trip there to think about how his father would want to be remembered. Solomon is doing reasonably well financially, so he could afford to have a memorial constructed that would suit his father. The challenge was figuring out what sort of memorial that would be.

As it turned out, reports of Samuel Stillwater's death had been greatly exaggerated. Solomon's father was fine, although still as difficult as he'd always been.

Still, it got Solomon - and Bonnie, now, and Ned - thinking about themselves: if money were no object, what kind of memorial would they themselves want. They ask the party this question now:: if the party could design their *own* memorial – some physical object which would represent them, their accomplishments and their legacy – what would it look like? Where would it be? What would it be made of? How do they most want to be remembered?

Just so the party has some ideas to spark their thought process, Bonnie tells them that, while Solomon was away, she read some things on the subject of memorials. She learned that these monuments sometimes include fountains, or elements designed to make some sort of music, or plants and flowers of various sorts, or inscriptions of important words. Some are made of precious minerals or gemstones, and some have been magically enchanted so that they move or speak.

Bonnie (or whoever) should continue to ask more probing questions; the hope is that the party will really get creative in considering their own monument and clearly articulate the way they would like to be remembered.

Many of the Otherworld challenges are designed to be somewhat lighthearted. This challenge will hopefully have a different feel to it. It shouldn't seem ghoulish or depressing, but rather should come across as a thoughtful look at who the party is and what's important to them. If the moment seems right, it might work well for Bonnie to ask the party to sit someplace slightly quiet/secluded with her, just to that they have a chance to really answer her questions without getting distracted.

Educational Goal(s): to help the participants develop a sense of party identity. to encourage participants to articulate who they are, how they want the world to remember them, and what they value as a party. to allow the party to be creative.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none

the Cheer Up, Ned! Challenge

Activity: Pansy tells the party that she likes her coworker Ned Crochett, she really does, but that sometimes she'd just like him to be in a *slightly* more cheerful mood, you know? And sure, she could try being nicer to him, but that invariably ends up irritating her. She snaps at Ned and then everyone is in a foul mood. So that's no good.

She tells the party that she's happy to give them the thing they need. Right after they get Ned to cheer up. Not a lot. That would be weird. But a little. Just a very little bit.

After Ned has confirmed that yeah, sure, *fine*, he was cheered up, Pansy will give them the item.

The following is stuff Pansy *doesn't* tell the party. It's also mostly stuff *Ned* doesn't tell the party (unless otherwise specified below) but it's certainly info he should know.

There are a few things Ned for sure *doesn't* like. He doesn't like being sung to, and he doesn't like jokes. Ned doesn't announce these things, although he'll tell the party if they actually ask what things he doesn't like. If they don't ask and simply launch into either of those, they'll need to do an even better job after that.

He doesn't need to mention this outright, but if the party offers him money - which would be a weird take on this, but so it goes - he won't accept it *and* he's a little creeped out by it. And *not* cheered up.

Ned likes compliments, but only if they're sincere.

If the party walks up and asks him what things he likes without any precursor or conversation, Ned is a little taken aback, but he answers them: He likes normal things, he says. He likes playing cards with his friends. He likes when all his work is done. He likes watching bullies get put in their place.

If the party follows up on any of these - we'll have a deck of cards behind the bar, if that's the thing they focus on - Ned still gets to decide whether or not he's "cheered up enough." A silent game of 5 Card Stud is *not* playing cards with friends. Etc.

There are surely other things that will cheer Ned up and these are left to Ned's discretion. (If it's between 4-8pm on Saturday and they tell Scarlet off, that will almost certainly do it.)

Educational Goal(s): to force the party to answer an open-ended question, make a plan and execute it; to encourage them to ascertain and consider someone else's feelings

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a deck or two of cards behind the bar

Obsidian -- Brian Scassellati

Age: 81

Usually found: wandering

Traveler Lore concerning Obsidian appears on page 204.

A description of the Philanthropy Challenge appears on page 483.

A description of the Soul Speaking Challenge appears on page 484.

P'loa

Approximately when: Friday night (Obsidian is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Obsidian tells the party that yes, he remembers Elani Edgewater. He was only 12 or 13 when she came to World's Edge; he was just starting to notice girls, and Lady Elani -- who at 28 was a woman, not a girl, of course -- was very beautiful. Beautiful... but also very sad.

Obsidian says he would like nothing better than to tell the party that she is alive and well and living just down the street, but he's afraid it isn't so. Lady Elani was only in World's Edge for 3 or 4 months, he says. People saw her one day, standing on the Silverspan Bridge; there had been lots and lots of rain, and the falls were up very high. She was there... and then suddenly several days had gone by and no one had seen here. People just assumed, given that her fiancé had been killed falling at a waterfall in P'loa, that she had given in to her own grief. They never found her body, although they looked for a long time. Obsidian says he always hoped that she'd just decided to move on. Maybe she did. He likes to think that, at least.

The news for the party isn't entirely bleak, however. Obsidian says that he was recently talking to Joni Peacock, one of those Peacock Family Singers, who mentioned something about a spell or a ritual or some way to locate a missing person, even if that person was already dead. Obsidian isn't sure of the specifics.

Joni doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Obsidian says. He himself cannot leave at the moment, but he brings the party over to Stevie Peacock, asking if she would be willing to walk the party to the Peacock camp. Obsidian wishes the party much luck in World's Edge.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Arden

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the philanthropy challenge

Info to give the party directly: Obsidian is willing to give the spiritstone to the party, but he asks them to please do him a favor. He's concerned about Stevie Peacock. From what Obsidian hears, Stevie has debts from before she joined the Peacock Family Singers. There are difficult things in Stevie's history, Obsidian says. He doesn't know what they are and it's none of his business, but he thinks Stevie is a person who's had to overcome more than her fair share of obstacles in life. He doesn't think that being in debt should be another thing weighing her down. Probably Milton Peacock would give Stevie an advance if he knew, but Stevie isn't the sort of person to ask for help.

He gives the party a pouch containing 100 royals. He asks them to find a way to give Stevie the money without embarrassing her.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: spiritstone (and the 100 royals for Stevie Peacock)

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the philanthropy challenge

Info to give the party directly: Obsidian is willing to give the sterling silver heart box to the party, but he asks them to please do him a favor. He's concerned about Stevie Peacock. From what Obsidian hears, Stevie has debts from before she joined the Peacock Family Singers. There are difficult things in Stevie's history, Obsidian says. He doesn't know what they are and it's none of his business, but he thinks Stevie is a person who's had to overcome more than her fair share of obstacles in life. He doesn't think that being in debt should be another thing weighing her down. Probably Milton Peacock would give Stevie an advance if he knew, but Stevie isn't the sort of person to ask for help.

He gives the party a pouch containing 100 royals. He asks them to find a way to give Stevie the money without embarrassing her.

Note: yes, Obsidian is doing the same challenge with the same recipient with two different parties. Neither he nor Stevie needs to mention this to either of them, but it's not a problem if they find out.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: sterling silver heart box (and the 100 royals for Stevie Peacock)

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday night, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Obsidian tells the party about an ancient and beloved ritual that takes place on Saturday night: Soul Speaking, a sacred tradition at the end of the Rites of Remembrance where groups of friends and family gather to speak for each other, ensuring the Seasons are reminded of the goodness of the living as well as the dead

Reason this info matters: this allows participants to begin thinking about Soul Speaking before it happens

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Obsidian tells the party about something that happened about a month ago. Apparently, Ursula Smirch read a news article about some sort of amazing new device - the GODBOX3000 or somesuch - that can restore keepers' prayers. News reports like this come out every few years, Obsidian says, and they're always a lot of hysteria about nothing. Obsidian tells the party that, of course, that's not how Ursula saw it. She did a lot of loud talking in the tavern about how she was going to acquire one of these GODBOX things and keepers could just visit the shop for prayer renewals instead of "wasting time going to Crabtree." Several people pointed out that the device wasn't going to work, but Evelyn was upset by the very idea. She was saying that the machine would take people's jobs, especially Crabtree's, and feathers got ruffled. Of course Ursula doubled down on this nonsense and ultimately, Evelyn was worked up enough that she yelled at Ursula, something about not resting until Ursula was driven out of business. Obsidian tells the party that honestly, it's a wonder more people don't yell at Ursula. Still, this was a very public argument, and from the sound of it, Ursula now claims Evelyn is actively working to sabotage the Smirches' business. That doesn't sound like Evelyn, Obsidian says. Some people might point out that sabotage is more the sort of thing Ursula might do, but the party didn't hear that from him.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Obsidian tells the party that he's worried about Aesthetika. She's a tender-hearted person, and sometimes people like that get hurt. She's trying to open an art school for the children of World's Edge, which is an ambitious goal given what such a school would cost. He tells the party that, even with this need to raise money, Aesthetika continues to be a scrupulously ethical person. Several months ago, he says, she took on Carmina Bordeaux as a private client, and

when she learned her client wasn't satisfied with her services, Aesthetika refunded every royal of the woman's money, despite having spent several weeks trying to assist her. Obsidian tells the party that he personally would've chalked this up to Lady Bordeaux being impossible to please, but that's just him. Still, Obsidian tells the party, it just goes to show that Nemaia knows her business. If she refuses someone as a client - just as she did Carmina Bourdeaux, which apparently led to a whole lot of loud crying on Lady B's part - there's a reason why. It's lovely that Aesthetika wanted to help, but with some people, no good deed goes unpunished, and he suspects Carmina Bordeaux is one of those people.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Obsidian tells the party that he doesn't know what's in Stevie Peacock's history and he doesn't need to know, but it's clear she has reasons to be slow to trust people. He's glad she's found herself a group of people who'll have her back. He doesn't know the specifics of her joining the Peacock Family Singers - the band has been around for almost 25 years, but she's only been with them for the past 2 or 3 - but she told him "Milton Peacock gave me music and it's the only thing I found better than booze to shut up the voices in my head." Obsidian says he hadn't expected the Peacock Family Singers to stay around as long as they have, but it's been nice having them in town, which is not something he says about just anybody.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Electra -- Abigail Vargus

Age: 51

Usually found: wandering

A description of the Philanthropy Challenge appears on page 483.

A description of the Soul Speaking Challenge appears on page 484.

Elsewhich

Approximately when: Friday night (Electra is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Electra asks the party to tell her all about their mission.

Electra tells the party that she is so very sorry to hear about the illness that has befallen Lilith Silver, but she's not sure there is anything she can do to help them. Electra is sure that many Elsewhichian keepers have already tried their healing prayers on the Duchess's young daughter, so there is no reason to think that Electra's own healing would do what none of the others could. She doesn't know about any sort of healing cup as is mentioned in their letter. Electra tells the party that Ember, a relatively recent visitor to World's Edge, has traveled much more extensively than Electra herself has. Perhaps Ember knows of something that might help? She brings the party to speak with Ember.

Sometime during the conversation, Electra introduces the party to their Companion. Electra says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Elvie, who has been sitting at the same table. Elvie quietly lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Electra tells the party that it truly is the oddest thing, the way no one who was in town yesterday has any recollection of last night. There are all different theories circulating about why this might be the case, but Electra doesn't think any of them really explain what has happened. She feels like she should be doing something to resolve this matter but she has no idea where to even begin.

Item(s) to give this party: none

Keer

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the philanthropy challenge

Info to give the party directly: Electra is happy to give the nightstone ring to the party, but she asks them to please do her a favor. She's concerned about Bracken. He grew up in the local orphanage after his grandfather died, and now that he's 17, he's on his own. The Western Moreth Home for Children is shamefully underfunded, Electra says, and it's a rough place, but that's not Bracken's fault. She has a little money set aside that she's sure Bracken needs more than she does, but she knows he's very proud and independent, just like his grandfather Reynaldo was.

She gives the party a pouch containing 100 royals. She asks them to find a way to give Bracken the money without embarrassing him.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: nightstone ring (and the 100 royals for Bracken)

any parties encountered (ideally at least 6)

When to approach a party: any time after the 4th Friday encounters and before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Electra references the golden page she carries from Nemaia's book. Although this paper (which she DOES show the party but DOES NOT allow them to read) reminds her of a good memory, she also vividly remembers the difficult memory she shared with Nemaia, where she described Obsidian, saying "He's not doing enough because he's afraid."

Reason this info matters: Please read the Changed World section, beginning on p. 158, for the context of this info and answers to a bunch more questions!

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Electra asks the party if they'd like to know what pisses her off. Too bad; she's going to tell them anyway! It's the absolutely pathetic state of addiction treatment in Lyria. And they call themselves a civilized kingdom! Electra tells the party that she is concerned about everyone with substance abuse issues but that right now she is worried first and foremost about her friend Danny Donovan. Electra isn't sure exactly *when* Danny started using White Noise, but she can take a guess *why*. This, she reassures the party, is not a breach of confidence. She hasn't discussed it with Danny, but she knows enough to have seen commonalities among those who grow addicted to the drug: they're usually poor but not impoverished, because Noise is on the lower end of drugs, price-wise, but far from free. There's often emotional trauma or physical pain in an addict's history, because what White Noise does is blur the edges and mute pain, at least temporarily. And they're often easy-going, because depressingly, Noise is sadly easy to acquire. Electra tells the party that Danny was that rare success story who went from using Noise to giving it up and staying clean for at least six months. After that, she says, it should have gotten easier. He shouldn't have started again. Electra tells the party that Aria Morgan gave Danny a job back in the early spring after Honoré Valerius encouraged her to. Electra can't blame Aria for being trepidatious about hiring Danny, because he hadn't been clean for terribly long, and it was a risk. She tells the party that Aria was perhaps just waiting for Danny to screw up again, and yet the fire was a bigger screw-up than any of them were expecting. The whole thing is heartbreaking, Electra says.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Saturday between 4-6pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Electra asks the party if they've seen Katherine Carmichael recently? Electra wants to make certain Katherine is feeling all right again. Electra explains that she - that is, Electra - is prone to nosebleeds, especially if she doesn't get enough sleep, which has been the case for the past several nights. Electra tells the party that she got a nosebleed at lunch, which is unpleasant but not dangerous. She was sitting with Katherine at the time, and at the sight of the blood, Katherine turned extremely pale and came very close to passing out. Electra confesses that she was mostly focused on not making a mess of the tavern and even after she'd stopped the blood and cleaned off her hands, Katherine was still very shaky. Electra feels awful about this and she just wants to be certain Katherine is all right.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: Saturday between 4-8pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Electra tells the party that she was at the séance Eugenie Bright held at the beginning of June. Electra isn't sure if it's actually possible - or a terribly good idea - to speak to the spirit of someone who's died, but it was important to Eugenie, so she went. Electra tells the party that Eugenie had asked any spirits present to speak to her, and all of a sudden there was a bang and the smell of smoke. Electra opened her eyes to find a demon in the room. She knew what it was because she'd heard Brimstone talking about demons, and just as he said, it was very tall, with mottled greenish skin. She remembered what Brimstone had said about demons being drawn to anger. Good thing they're not strengthened by fear, because

Electra assures the party that she was very afraid. It smashed a hand down on the table and then ran from the room. Electra says that Eugenie looked like she might faint and she and Belle Bishop had gone to make sure she was all right. That was the end of the séance, of course, and maybe foolishly, they all assumed it was the end of the demon as well. That seemed to be the case for almost four months, and then last Saturday, they'd all gathered to set up wayshrines. She'd seen Eugenie that morning, setting items into Dora's shrine. It was late on Saturday night and Electra was sitting in front of the tavern when she'd seen a figure moving through the darkness. It almost looked a little unsteady on its feet and she wondered if maybe someone needed help, but then she saw it go to one of the wayshrines and shoved items out of it! Electra tells the party that she'd run over. She's seen some things in her life, but she never thought she would see someone disturbing a wayshrine. But that's exactly what was happening. Electra heard a smashing sound that she only later learned was Terese O'Dell's teapot, the one Matty gave her when they got married that she loved so much. By this point, she was close enough that she could see the figure in the shadows. Even in the dim light, she could tell it was the demon. There was no mistaking its strange, stilted walk. It had moved to Matty O'Dell's wayshrine and again, it shoved at the items within. Electra tells the party she held up her Sacred Shield and placed her hand on the maple-leaf pendant she wears, waiting to feel the power of Autumn flow through her and drive the demon back. But... there was nothing. The demon moved toward Dora's wayshrine. Electra tells the party that she knows what Brimstone says, about anger strengthening these creatures, but right at that moment, she just... couldn't help herself. These lovely people, Terese and Matty and Dora, the people in town just wanted to remember them and honor them, and here was this disgusting *thing* breaking and ruining the pieces of their lives that were left. Electra says that she was so, so angry that she just... ran at the demon. Ran at it and punched it and kicked at it. If her anger made it stronger or fiercer, she didn't notice. It certainly made *her* stronger. The demon was at least a foot and a half taller than her, but it fell back as she punched at it. She kicked it several times, as hard as she could, and she thinks she heard it made a pained noise. Eventually it moved away from Dora's wayshrine and then stumbled away. Electra tells the party she's glad it didn't manage to destroy any more of the shrines.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Crabtree -- Melissa Crouch Chang

Age: 49

Usually found: in Crabtree & Evelyn's

A description of the Perfectly Good Bucket Challenge appears on page 485.

A description of the Arbitration Challenge appears on page 486.

A description of the Soul Speaking Challenge appears on page 484.

Crabtree will be doing the Perfectly Good Bucket challenge with the party who is coming to her for a party-path item. She and Evelyn can do the Arbitration challenge with any parties they encounter when they're out together. Crabtree will be shuttling parties to one of the Soul Speaking locations on Saturday night.

Dolorón

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Crabtree is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: You'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to walk back to your set location after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them, but back at the set location, not in the tavern.

Activity: the perfectly good bucket challenge

Info to give the party directly: Crabtree tells the party that she heard they were looking for a snake-eye talisman. She has one, and she'd be happy to let the party have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: At the very end of the encounter, Crabtree asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Crabtree could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: snake-eye talisman

any parties encountered (ideally 3-5 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday 4pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Esmerelda is giving out very similar information. It's awesome if they manage to connect with different parties but not at all a problem if they don't.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Crabtree tells the party that she's so excited for Belle and Cary's wedding on Sunday. The two of them are so, so different, but they really are good together. Belle is nearly always happy, Crabtree says, but but there is even more joy in her now and it's lovely to see.

Of course, no relationship is without struggles. Crabtree admits she's devoted to her darling Evelyn but still, there are times when Evelyn's actions drive her up the wall. Belle and Cary are no different, Crabtree says. She tells the party about an incident that happened several years ago. It was Cary's 50th birthday, and he was in World's Edge to celebrate with Belle. Belle had planned an elaborate birthday dinner, which Cary was presumably a fan of, but then she also surprised him by singing to him in the tavern.

Crabtree explains that Cary is much more reserved than Belle - as, in fact, is almost everyone - and he's also a special-forces soldier. Suddenly becoming the focus of attention is *not* something he enjoyed. At *all*. Crabtree tells the party that Belle learned her lesson from this, but because Belle is also the type of person who sometimes gets swept up in the moment and forgets important things, Crabtree tries to remind her each year before Cary's birthday. No one wants a repeat of last time!

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Big Musical Number

Arden

When to approach a party: any time this charge is not being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Crabtree tells the party that, a couple weeks ago, the Crown of St. Mora was left anonymously on the doorstep of the Valerius family house, where Santiago West Valerius, a keeper of Summer, found it. Once the Rites of Remembrance are over, Santiago will take the Crown to the cathedral in Mystal. The Crown was stolen from the cathedral several years ago, and no one has seen it in the intervening time. It's an important holy relic, and it will be good to have it restored to the church.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Crabtree tells the party that a couple weeks ago, she and Evelyn had received a shipment of spell and prayer components. They'd arrived at a time when Evelyn was away, and the boxes were all absurdly heavy. Crabtree opened up the boxes, figuring she'd carry things piecemeal into the shop, but because anything that can go wrong *will* go wrong, that was the moment it started raining. Danny Donovan was walking by at the moment. Crabtree tells the party that she doesn't normally mention anyone's physical ailments, but she knows Danny's back bothers him. He hurt it on a job a while ago, and it seems like it was never really right after that. Sometimes the pain was bad enough that... well, Crabtree shouldn't say too much, but she wonders if some of Danny's struggles with White Noise were in response to that pain. Crabtree says that because of this, she was absolutely not asking or expecting Danny to help her with the boxes. But still, he ran right over and grabbed up a box - one of the heaviest ones! - and hustled it across the clearing and into her shop. He didn't stop until all the supplies were inside, and then he wouldn't let her pay him for his help. Crabtree says that Danny isn't without his share of issues. Even sober, he can be plenty unreliable. But his heart is in the right place.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

GlendeeP

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Crabtree tells the party about a strange thing that happened back in July. She'd come back to the shop - the door had been left unlocked, which she has *asked* Evelyn one *thousand* times not to do - and there was a small painting left on the counter. It depicts her and Evelyn - her dear Evelyn looks *especially* lovely in it - and they still have it pinned to the wall of the shop. It's painted in Aesthetika's distinctive style, so even though it wasn't signed, Crabtree assumed that Aesthetika had made it as a gift for them. That wasn't strange; Aesthetika is a lovely person and this is the kind of thing she might well do. Crabtree tells the party that the strange part is that she later noticed that 75 royals were missing from the cashbox. She confesses that her first thought was that Aesthetika was fundraising for the art school she's trying to start and that she'd taken the money in exchange for the picture. Crabtree assures the party that she's happy to donate to the school but that she did wish Aesthetika had asked first. Of course, she later spoke to Aesthetika and learned that the picture wasn't painted by her at all, and of course that it wasn't her who'd taken the money. If Aesthetika says this, then it's obviously true, but the whole incident is just odd.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Crabtree doesn't need to approach parties, but she'll be in the tavern (or directly out front) Sunday morning selling merchandise. We don't want her disturbing revelation scenes or whatever, but we do want her to be noticeable

enough that parties that want to buy something can see that he's there! [Please be aware of what's going on in the tavern. If they're trying to set up for the trial, help us get parties out of the building as needed.]

Activity: -

Info to give the party directly: none

Reason this encounter matters: There are always some parties with money to burn on Sunday. We don't want them hiking to the shop, which is closed AND which will put them too near other parties' path endings. But we *do* want to let them get as much more fun adventuring as they can before things end.

Item(s) to have on hand: renewal components and a cashbox to make change (which should please not be left unattended!)

Evelyn -- Kim Ricket

Age: 53

Usually found: in Crabtree & Evelyn's

A description of the Perfectly Good Bucket Challenge appears on page 485.

A description of the Arbitration Challenge appears on page 486.

A description of the Soul Speaking Challenge appears on page 484.

Evelyn will be doing the Perfectly Good Bucket challenge with the party who is coming to her for a party-path item. She and Crabtree can do the Arbitration challenge with any parties they encounter when they're out together. Evelyn will be shuttling parties to one of the Soul Speaking locations on Saturday night.

Waylon

Approximately when: Friday (Evelyn is the party's 4th Friday encounter.)

Note: Do your challenge, but MAKE SURE the party learns what items they need AND who can supply them before they leave you. It's cooler if they ask you for the info, but if they don't, you need to give it to them anyway.

Activity: the perfectly good bucket challenge

Info to give the party directly: Evelyn tells the party that she's never actually cast the spell of Testimony – she'd never even heard of it until about a week ago – but she got a letter from an old school chum of hers just recently, and the letter mentions such a spell.

Hello, dearest Evelyn! I was so excited (and more than a little surprised) when you wrote that you had gotten married! My dear, your letter was woefully short on details. You must tell me everything! What does she look like? Is she delightful in every possible way? I hope she is not making excessive... how shall I say? ... demands upon you.

All here is well. Tabitha II has been sick with some sort of tummy trouble and Mr. Flufferman cut his poor little paw on a rough stone, but other than that, the whole family is well. Mouser McMouserson and Puffball both wanted me to ask you when their Auntie Evelyn is planning another visit?

I have been busy at work recataloging all the spellbooks, components, etc. They've hired a series of new girls to help out, but honestly, the handwriting on these younger set of casters... Well, suffice it to say that I don't know what they're doing on the weekends at school, but it's not practicing their penmanship as we used to do!

I saw an interesting spell cast last month. It lacked the finesse with the casting that they used to drill into us, but it was nevertheless very interesting. It was called Testimony, and used on someone reputed to be otherwise immune to Truth-magics. Lacking in diction the caster may have been but it certainly was effective after it was cast!

Anyway, components for the thing were

*one bottle of elderberry wine
a jade egg
a quantity of folly dust
a bit of water from the Talian Sea
a skull cup
bloodroot essence
an agate orb
a smokestone jar
an eternity mirror*

They gathered up six people for the casting, and none of them needed to be a caster, although it certainly wouldn't hurt if they were, of course. One held the egg, another the jar, a third the orb and yet another the mirror. The seawater, bloodroot essence and the folly dust were poured into the wine, and the whole group walked around the bottle, saying "Love above beauty / Faith above hope / Truth above all / Veritas veritas veritas"

That served to charge the wine, apparently, and it was poured into the cup and given to the target. Only the first person to drink it is affected by the spell. Really, it was all very interesting.

I heard from Missa and Katharina that they'll be at Reunion next year. Are you going? Let me know, because I'm not going if you're not going! I'll close now as Princess PurrPurr is asking Mommy for her supper. Please give my best to your bride!!!! Ann

Evelyn tells the party that she has some ideas about who they might be able to acquire some of these items from. She encourages them to write the names directly on the letter, since "if you're anything like Crabtree, you *think* you'll remember the names without writing them down, but five minutes from now, you won't."

- elderberry wine – Dimitri
- jade egg – Solomon Stillwater
- water from the Talian Sea – Cameron Light-Astor
- smokestone jar – Dusty Peacock
- bloodroot essence – Kable Worldwatcher
- agate orb – Geneva Sprink
- eternity mirror – Carmina Bordeaux

Evelyn doesn't know what a skull cup is or who might have one.

As for folly dust, she's not really sure what to tell them about that. There's a very old expression; probably no one ever says it anymore. But people used to say "Scarce as folly dust in the mind of a madman." It meant something that you had much too much of, something that wasn't scarce at all. Evelyn hasn't heard anyone say it in years, and it never occurred to her that folly dust might be a real substance. She's not sure what to suggest to the party about getting any.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the letter listing the items they'll need to find

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Evelyn tells the party that she and Ursula Smirch got into an altercation in the tavern, during dinnertime. Evelyn acknowledges that she shouldn't have yelled at Ursula; this was wrong of her. But also Ursula was very out of line and had no business saying all the unfounded and hurtful things she said! Evelyn tells the party that Ursula was repeating some unsubstantiated reports about some sort of machine called the GODBOX3000 which she claimed could restore keepers' prayers. This is highly unlikely for a great many reasons, Evelyn assures the party, but Ursula was uninterested in listening to facts on the subject. Instead, Ursula announced that she would likely be acquiring one of these GODBOX devices and that this would mean no one needed to "waste time going to see Crabtree"! Evelyn assures the party that Crabtree takes time to work with each and every keeper who needs her, that it is outrageous to think that a machine could ever do what Crabtree is able to do, but that of course Ursula doesn't remotely care that jobs - important jobs, of hardworking people in the community! - might be lost because of this terrible device! Evelyn tells the party that she should not have yelled at Ursula, but that someone needed to set Ursula straight about how damaging her actions would be to the town as a whole! Oh, Ursula makes her so angry! Yes, Evelyn says, she should not have told Ursula that she would drive Ursula out of business. Of course, she would never actually do anything to sabotage the Smirches' business. Evelyn is confident the Smirches' business will fail simply because Ursula is an unscrupulous and terrible person.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Evelyn tells the party that that fellow Huxley came looking for her a little while earlier. Apparently Huxley was looking for a kind of enchanted band to wear on his wrist, something to count every single step he took. Surprisingly enough, Evelyn had something just like that. It was a magical bracelet she'd forged for Crabtree, to encourage Crabtree to get in shape. Evelyn tells the party that Crabtree responded poorly to this gift, so Evelyn was happy to give it to Huxley.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Evelyn tells the party that probably all relationships look odd to the people who aren't in them. She was thinking about this just now after walking past Dora Davies' wayshrine. Dora was a great lady, just like her sister Eugenie is. But Dora's husband, Harold... well, Evelyn never understood what Dora saw in Harold. The opposite wasn't true, Evelyn tells the party. Dora was beautiful, which Harold clearly valued, and loads of fun, which... Harold tolerated, it seemed. But rather grudgingly. Evelyn tells the party that Dora was a dancer before she got married, which Harold seemed to treat as an embarrassing little secret. After Harold passed away, Dora went back to dancing professionally. As far as Evelyn knows, Dora did rather well for herself, although she stashed away most all the money she earned. Evelyn remembers Dora sewing all her own clothes, and Edwin's clothes as well, which Dora didn't seem to mind but Edwin probably did. She was frugal like that for years, only relaxing her stance on money relatively recently. It was like Dora decided that she couldn't take the money with her and she started making up for lost time. She planted fancy rose bushes that needed special care just to bloom and bought herself perfume in gorgeous cut-glass bottles, and she gave presents to all her friends, which was everybody. Harold must've been rolling over in his grave, Evelyn says, although that's not very kind of her.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Buzzkill -- Alex Sheehan

Age: 27

Usually found: in Crabtree & Evelyn's

A description of the Perfectly Good Bucket Challenge appears on page 485.

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: on Friday night

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Buzzkill should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Buzzkill needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Buzzkill doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief but positive interaction with the party!

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

any parties encountered (as many as possible)

When to approach a party: Friday in the tavern, ideally when the party isn't directly engaged / not immediately after they arrive

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: Buzzkill tells the party that Crabtree & Evelyn's is open tomorrow to renew any spells or prayers they might need! He gives them a card listing the hours and info. [Note: although the shop is also open on Friday night, Buzzkill doesn't need to mention this because we only want the one assigned party going there.]

Item(s) to give this party: the card listing the hours/info about Crabtree & Evelyn's

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: Buzzkill is assigning this party's charge. He is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, Buzzkill approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Evelyn. Buzzkill tells the party that he's worked for Crabtree and Evelyn for more than a year now, total. There was, like, a break in the middle there, because he was under the impression the world was gonna end, which made holding down a 9-to-5 type job less of a, y'know, priority. He didn't ragequit or anything, which turned out to be a good thing because as the party probably noticed, the world didn't end after all. Buzzkill says that, right around the time he asked for his old job back, there was a yelling match in the tavern between Evelyn and Ursula Smirch. To be clear, Buzzkill says, it was mostly Ursula, and not gonna lie, it was pretty great seeing Evelyn get all up in Ursula's face like that. He didn't think much of it at the time. But after he was back working at Crabtree & Evelyn's, the Smirches started bitching and moaning that someone was vandalizing their store. That was a whole pile of don't-care to Buzzkill, but then Ursula decided that yeah, someone for sure was vandalizing the store and that that someone was for sure Evelyn. Ursula being Ursula, she decided it sounded even worse than regular old vandalism if she called it "industrial sabotage" and then she estimated that it was costing her a whole giant pile of money. Buzzkill tells the party that he can't imagine Evelyn vandalizing anything, because she's a nice lady and, no offense, pretty old. Also? Buzzkill really needs this job. Where's he gonna go if Evelyn gets put in jail? He'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Arden

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the perfectly good bucket challenge

Info to give the party directly: Buzzkill tells the party that yeah, he has a chaos pendant. He bought it because he thought it made him look kinda badass, and that seemed like a good look for the endtimes. He's happy to give it to them, but he kinda wants to keep it just till tomorrow. Buzzkill says that he knows the Great Tumult probably isn't coming that day. But... just in case, y'know? He promises to meet them in the tavern at 9:45am on Sunday and hand it over.

Note: Although having a fixed time/location for this meeting may seem weird, it ensures that the party gets to the final step of their party path at the right time. Make sure the party understands when and where to meet tomorrow!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none (he'll give them the chaos pendant in the tavern at 9:45am Sunday)

Keer

When to approach a party: when/if the party visits Crabtree & Evelyn's shop

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Buzzkill asks them if they're able to read the pricing sign or if they need help with it. He tells the party that his friend Dorito is real smart but that reading is hard for her. Buzzkill says that he tried to teach her, but Dorito says that the letters look funny to her. If the party's like that, he's happy to read the pricing sign to them.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time this charge is not being discussed

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Buzzkill tells the party that one of the things he, like, totally did *not* miss when he wasn't working at Crabtree & Evelyn's is having to wait on the Smirches when they come in the shop. The Smirches aren't there to actually make purchases, of course, but they like to "check out the competition." Buzzkill tells the party that Karla Smirch is the absolute worst to deal with. First of all, Karla is - pardon him for dropping a truth bomb - dumb as a box of rocks. Okay, whatever. Buzzkill could vibe with that. But, he tells the party, the real problem is that no matter how careful he is, he'll get busted later by Ursula for being not polite enough to her quote-unquote "little princess." Pukesville. Just because Karla has gotten everything she's ever wanted handed to her on a silver platter doesn't mean Buzzkill should get reamed for not bowing in front of her. Buzzkill tells the party that, not gonna lie, it pisses him off. Ursula Smirch should get bent, and her stupid princess of a daughter as well.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Arden, again

Time: 9:45am, Sunday (Buzzkill is the penultimate step for this party. He gives them the item, but does not accompany them to do the ritual)

Item(s) to give this party: chaos pendant

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: Buzzkill is doing this party's pre-trial charge check-in. He will be in front of the tavern between 11am-noon and will approach them after they've completed their party path ending and all charge Revelation encounters. He should

check in with one of the Trial Coordinators before AND after doing this in case this encounter and/or the trial plan needs adjusting!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Sunday between 11am and noon*, Buzzkill approaches the party. He tells the party he appreciates them looking into the charge that was leveled against Evelyn. He reminds the party that the trial will start very soon. Buzzkill encourages them to present the info they've learned to him as though they were speaking at the trial. It's our hope that these Pre-Trial Check-Ins will serve as a rehearsal for each party's trial presentation. The goal is for every party to be clear (presenting all needed info and nothing extraneous), concise (presenting for 5 minutes or less) and compelling (telling the story so it's interesting.) In order to be clear, the party probably needs to touch upon these key points for this charge:

- Evelyn hasn't done anything to the Smirches' shop.
- Everything that's happened - merchandise pushed off shelves, foul globs of hair on the floor, animal carcasses left by the door - is intended not to sabotage the shop's business, but because visiting influencer Ember has been hanging out with Karmin Smirch.
- And unbeknownst to World's Edge, Ember used to be - and still essentially is - a cat.

Clearly, the party hasn't read this handbook (we hope!) and they'll present these in their own way. But if they're completely not addressing one or more of these points, it will be hard for them to be telling a compelling and clear story. If this is the case, Buzzkill can try to ask leading questions to get them there. If the party is taking significantly longer than 5 minutes to present, Buzzkill can suggest elements to trim (like not explaining their mission, not reading their vision aloud, etc.) He can also give gentle general feedback, like reminding the party they should speak up. Hopefully these pre-trial encounters help get us a trial that's brisk and interesting!

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Bailey -- Blake Geno

Age: 5 (so, mid-30's in people years)

Usually found: wandering

A description of the Curiosity Challenge appears on page 487.

Waylon

Approximately when: Friday night (Bailey is the party's 3rd Friday encounter.)

Info to give the party directly: Bailey is happy to take the party up to see Evelyn.

Before leaving, Bailey needs to do several things:

- 1) Let the party know that there's not a bathroom at Crabtree & Evelyn's, nor are there any nearby. If anyone would like to use a bathroom any time soon, they should do so before leaving the tavern.
- 2) Check in (without mentioning this to the party) with the Friday Night Fight Coordinator. Mention that this is the party from Waylon. If it's not okay to leave the tavern right then, find a way to stall the party for a little while. Don't leave the tavern till you have the okay from the FNFC!
- 3) Just before heading out, make sure the party has their gear stowed, etc. Do NOT say "you're definitely getting attacked on the walk", but you CAN say "It's not always safe out there. You want to be ready." Don't let anyone leave carrying their belongings all balled up in their arms!

During the combat, Bailey should just stay off to the side, as the Companion will. If the two of them can stay together, that makes it easiest for the monsters to avoid them!

Once Bailey has escorted the party to Crabtree & Evelyn's and said a *brief* hello to the inhabitants, he returns to the tavern.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bailey tells the party that a wedding is going to happen on Sunday! This is very exciting! Bailey loves Belle and Cary so much, and a wedding is like a very special big party. Bailey loves parties!

Item(s) to give this party: none

Noctara

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the curiosity challenge

Info to give the party directly: Bailey's got a jester's egg, oh yes he does! He found it in a place with smells! He's happy to give it to the party. Are they gonna throw it? Are they? Are they? Maybe now? Okay. That's okay. Now? Okay.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: jester's egg

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time before Sunday and repeatedly if desired

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bailey tells the party that Ember likes him. "She likes me. I know it", he says. If Ember happens to be around, she can and will deny this. This vaguely surprises Bailey but doesn't dismay him. "No," he corrects her. "You do. I know you do." And then he goes on his way.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bailey tells the party he has learned a great deal about humans since becoming one, but that sometimes they still confuse him. He explains that he was approached by those nice people, Huxley and Quinoa. They had some money with them, except that it didn't look exactly like real money. Which was probably good, because they wanted him to... bite down on the coins? Bailey tells the party that he likes helping people and that this seemed important to Huxley and Quinoa, but that it was a little strange, honest!

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: Saturday after 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Saturday after 10pm, Bailey approaches the party. He found something strange out in the woods, he tells them, and he's not sure what it means. Bailey shows the party what he found: it's a wooden box containing the following items: a tweed jacket with a little blood on it, a pair of glasses, a pouch containing around 400 royals and a copy of *Signs & Wonders: The Role of Omens, Portents and Symbolism in the Apocalyptic Mindset*, by Professor Daniel Merriweather. If the party looks, they will find the initials L.B. inside the front cover. There is a blurb about the author on the back cover but not an author photo. Bailey lets the party look through the items as much as they'd like - he will probably need to tell them on reality that the book is the book the dustjacket claims it is, since replicating an entire academic tome is a bad use of your time, Lance - but he won't let them keep any of the items. Bailey tells the party that the box smells like both Dorito and Bane. *If and ONLY if the party asks*, Bailey says there's no one else's scent on it.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: Sunday at breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bailey approaches the party. He tells them he said the wrong words when he talked to them yesterday! It's not that Ember likes him! It's that Ember *is* like him!

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Brimstone -- Zak Terry

Age: who can say?

Usually found: wandering

Secret Info:

Brimstone has never had a secret before! This is very exciting, especially because the secret itself is brand new. Here it is:

Brimstone has been so, so happy since coming to World's Edge. (This is a segue sentence, not a secret.) He loves the people of this place, and he will do anything to protect them.

Over the past week, there has been something happening in World's Edge called the Rites of Remembrance, and this is something Brimstone does not like, not one bit.

As Brimstone understands it, people sometimes die, which means to go away and not come back, not ever. This is a serious design flaw, but not something Brimstone is equipped to fix. During the Rites of Remembrance, everyone in World's Edge is supposed to remember the people who've died. That's why it's called that.

The problem here is that for a lot of people, it is sad to remember the people who died. Some people's eye-holes are leaking, and that is a thing that happens when people are very sad! Brimstone hates seeing people sad, and he started thinking about how he could fix this.

The problem, obviously, is remembering. Brimstone had the idea – and he does not mean to brag, but it was a very smart idea – that if he could take some of people's remembering away, they would have less sad.

Early this Friday morning, Brimstone felt his magic accumulating. He was so glad! He concentrated, which means to think while scrunching your face up, and then he let his chaos magic loose.

In that instant, everyone in World's Edge forgot. They forgot every single thing that had happened in the past 12 hours: all of Thursday evening and Thursday night and that piece of Friday morning.

It was a good spell. It worked on all living creatures, although Brimstone isn't actually sure if animals are included. Bailey was, but Brimstone isn't sure about real animal-type animals. Maybe the turtles and beavers and butterflies in town can remember, but since Brimstone can't ask them, it's impossible to say for sure. It worked on Brimstone himself. He remembers casting the spell, but that's it.

It was a good start if he does say so himself.

But then during the day on Friday, Brimstone saw people still walking by those terrible way-shrines and being sad all over again.

Soon his magic will accumulate again, and when it does, he knows what to do: instead of making everyone forget a period of time, he will make them forget *people*. He will take away all their pesky memories of the people who died! Then no one will need to be sad.

He will protect these people he loves so much.

A description of the One Good Sock Challenge appears on page 488.

Clairia

Approximately when: Friday night (Brimstone is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Brimstone asks the party all about their mission. He tells the party that he doesn't know anything about anyone named Ignatius, but he knows someone who does. Coincidentally enough, Lenora Graves was talking to Brimstone just the other day and *she* had asked if he knew anything about Ignatius. Miss Lenora has been cataloging old papers or something like that, and she'd found one referencing a man named Ignatius, who's apparently from the Elemental Plane of Fire. Brimstone himself is from a different elemental plane, which most people just refer to as The Bad Place, so Miss Lenora thought that maybe he and this Ignatius might be friends. That was the first Brimstone ever heard the name before, but he thinks the party should certainly talk to Miss Lenora, who seems to know a lot of things.

Lenora Graves doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Brimstone says. He himself cannot leave at the moment, but he brings the party over to Pascal Valerius and asks him if he would be willing to walk the party to the Valerius house. Brimstone wishes the party much luck in World's Edge.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Keer

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the one good sock challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: fortune's wheel pendant

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time Friday night or Saturday morning, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Bonnie Stillwater is giving out similar information from a different perspective. It's awesome if you manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if you don't, and it's fine too if you overlap!

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Brimstone tells the party that he hasn't lived in World's Edge all that long. Up until about 6 months ago, he was the minion of a foul sorcerer named Maledicto. Brimstone explains that it was pretty much your standard minion gig: him and a bunch of other corrupt creatures summoned from various evil dimension, crumbling stone castle, dark and nefarious deeds, et cetera.

After Maledicto died, Brimstone explains, all the other beasties disappeared back to their own curséd dimensions... all except him. He'd come down out of the hills, thinking that, as an imp - did he mention that he's an imp? He is. Hence the horns and tail and chaotic magical energy - he'd set himself up as his own master and find some minions of his own. Brimstone explains, though, that people here were so kind to him. He's never had friends before, but they're lots better than minions. He loves it here and he's going to stay in World's Edge forever!

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for Brimstone's Saturday lunchtime scene

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time after lunch on Saturday

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Brimstone tells the party that he now understands he did a bad thing by taking away people's memories of Thursday night. He doesn't get filled with chaos magic often, but when he does, it's powerful stuff, Brimstone says. He tells the party that the magic worked on everyone including himself. He remembers getting ready to cast the spell, Brimstone says, and then nothing until Friday morning. Theoretically the spell worked on all living creatures, he tells the party, but he's not actually sure if animals are included. Bailey was, Brimstone says, but he's not sure about real animal-type animals. Maybe the turtles and beavers and butterflies in town can remember, but since Brimstone can't ask them, it's impossible to say for sure.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Brimstone tells the party that he doesn't like to talk much about his time before coming to World's Edge. Maledicto's castle was a bad place and the plane Brimstone came from was even worse. Still, sometimes people want to hear about all that, and Brimstone tries to make people happy, so he obliges. Brimstone tells the party that shortly after he came to town, in the spring, someone in the tavern had asked him about demons. Demons are awful, Brimstone says. Very very tall, with horrible greenish skin, and always coming and going in a puff of putrid smoke. Just awful. And they're drawn to anger, Brimstone had explained. It strengthens them, makes them even more ferocious. Brimstone tells the party that he never thought a demon would be able to just walk around here, like this one that smashed up the wayshrines.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: Saturday 5-7pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: From 5-7pm, Brimstone circulates. He tells any party he encounters that something very bad and wrong has happened to the town. (Although Brimstone hasn't done the Cup of Insight, he is an innately magical being and as such, is aware that the world has magically changed.) Brimstone tells the party that he doesn't know what has caused it, but he's certain it wasn't his doing.

Reason this info matters: this primarily prevents the party from chasing after a reasonable but false idea, that Brimstone's magic is what changed the town (again)

Sythwan

When to approach a party: Saturday after 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Brimstone tells the party that this is kind of upsetting. Huxley and Quinoa were supposed to be working – it's great that all these amazing visitors are in town, but the tavern is swamped – and neither of them have shown up for their shift. He hates to complain, but that's not very responsible of them. Where could they be? They seem to have disappeared.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Eugenie Bright -- Charlotte Wilson

Age: 78

Usually found: wandering

Traveler Lore concerning Eugenie appears on page 211.

A description of the Observation Challenge appears on page 489.

Noctara

Approximately when: Friday night (Eugenie Bright is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Eugenie asks the party to tell her all about their mission.

Eugenie tells the party that they're in luck: she believes Bonnie Stillwater, the woman who owns the tavern, has a crystal chalice. She introduces the party to Bonnie.

Sometime during the conversation, Eugenie introduces the party to their Companion. Eugenie says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Nadia, who has been sitting at the same table. Eugenie quietly lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Eugenie tells the party how awfully odd it was, waking up this past morning and realizing she had absolutely no recollection of the evening before. She has a completely vivid memory of walking home yesterday afternoon, stopping by her late sister's wayshrine to make sure it was all in order, which it was. The light was shining through one of Dora's perfume bottles - Dora, that's her sister's name - and Eugenie thought how pretty it was and how pleased that must make Dora. She remembers thinking about what she might make for supper... but then everything after that is just a blank.

Eugenie explains to the party that this certainly seems to be true for everyone who was in World's Edge yesterday. Solomon Stillwater - that's Bonnie's husband - was away until midmorning today, and according to him, he remembers everything just fine. So this is really very strange!

Item(s) to give this party: none

Dolorón

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the observation challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: gemwing butterfly

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Eugenie tells the party that it just breaks her heart to walk past the burned theater. Her sister Dora danced at the Morg - that's what everyone in town called the Morgan Theater - multiple times. Eugenie tells the party that Aria did so much work trying to restore the theater. It was a labor of love for Aria, of course, because her family built the theater in the first place. Eugenie tells the party that the great actor Montgomery Morgan himself performed there. She herself was only around 8 or 10 years old then, Eugenie says, but she remembers seeing him in a show. He was just wonderful, and so handsome! He was very, very tall, with a chiseled profile, she says. Eugenie tells the party that she also saw Aria sing and dance in the theater when Aria was just a tiny little thing, just shortly before the theater closed. Aria sang a song called Spun Sugar; it was the most precious thing. Eugenie tells the party that Aria was probably only about 6 at the time. She wore a beautiful white

dress and a little white paper crown, and at the end of the song, she spun herself around in a circle, giggling. It was the sweetest thing, Eugenie says. It's so sad to think of the Morg being gone.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Eugenie tells the party that she was there in the tavern on Monday when Lenora Graves decided to use her Ouija board to contact the spirit of Professor Merriweather. She tells the party that the psychic energy of either the professor or Lenora herself must be very strong, because no sooner had Lenora touched the planchette than it started moving. It spelled out D – A – N, so Lenora had indeed contacted the professor, whose first name was Daniel! Eugenie tells the party that she was on the edge of her seat, but just then, that young woman Dorito screamed that she had killed the professor! It was all so shocking, poor Lenora had fainted dead away, and Eugenie cannot blame her!

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Eugenie tells the party that it was so foolish of her, trying to conduct a séance to talk to her sister Dora. She misses Dora so much, but surely her sister knows that already. Eugenie tells the party that her nephew Edwin tried to dissuade her from doing it - Edwin was always the voice of reason, even when he was a little boy - but she didn't listen. Edwin told her she shouldn't be playing around with forces she didn't understand, and he was completely right. Now that terrible demon is still out there in the world and it's all because of her. She had just wanted to hear Dora's laugh one more time. She tells the party how Edwin implored her to reconsider her idiotic plan, and when she'd refused, he himself had declined to attend. Edwin doesn't believe in meddling with the occult, and he's always been one to stick to his principles. If only she had listened! Eugenie tells the party that she should have stuck to simply remembering her sister as best she can. She admits that she never wore mourning clothes, because Dora loved bright colors so much that Eugenie couldn't bring herself to dress in black for her. She tells the party what fun she and Dora always had, even all the years when neither of them had any money to spend. They'd make up stories to tell each other, making jokes about every little thing. Dora's husband Harold was always scandalized at how loud she and Dora would get laughing about some silly thing or another. She misses Dora so much. It gave her great comfort to be able to set up the wayshrine with Dora's things, and then that awful demon smashed the shrines of poor Matty and Terese O'Dell. Eugenie tells the party that she'd helped rebuild those shrines, but still, it was a heartbreakingly tragic thing to have happen. She knows it is her fault and no amount of rebuilding or apologizing will change that. She is so deeply ashamed and sorry.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: on Sunday as the party is finishing breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday as the party is finishing breakfast, Eugenie approaches the party. She asks them to walk outside with her briefly. She tells them she understands they were looking into the charge against her. This is very kind of them, she says, and she appreciates it. It was so good of them to try to help her, and so good of Edwin to ask them to, but she accepts that she must pay for what she has done, being so careless with matters that are beyond her scope.

It's possible (and maybe probable) that the party will by now know what's going on, so they may well interrupt Eugenie to tell her some or all of the truth. (There are, of course, layers of truth here. Ideally the party has realized by now both that Edwin disguised himself as the demon and that Edwin poisoned Dora, but it's possible they know the former and not the latter.)

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

If the party tells her about everything including the murder, Eugenie is confused and shocked and initially doesn't believe what she's hearing.

If they tell her the demon is actually Edwin, she will have lots of questions: How do they know? How did he do that? And, more importantly, why? Why interrupt the séance? And why desecrate the wayshrines? Hopefully these questions will get the party to the point where they tell her or at least theorize that perhaps Edwin murdered Dora and concocted the demon ruse to hide this fact.

Assuming the party does eventually tell her all or most of the truth about Edwin, Eugenie takes a while before accepting this idea. By this point in the encounter, they will theoretically be near Dora Davies' wayshrine. Eugenie needs to keep the party talking about Dora until they (hopefully!) mention the poisoned sherry. When they do, Eugenie tells the party that she simply can't believe this idea. She reaches into Dora's shrine and removes the bottle of sherry. (The shrines are warded, but presumably whatever is protecting them knows Eugenie doesn't mean any disrespect to Dora's shrine.) When Eugenie has the bottle, she uncorks it. It smells very strongly of roses. Eugenie is deeply startled by this. She knows about the fertilizer her sister used on her roses, about how strongly rose-scented it is and how toxic it is to people. And, of course, she also knows her sister had no sense of smell.

Faced with this, Eugenie must eventually conclude that the party is right about Edwin. Of course, how quickly this happens and how smoothly this goes will depend on how well the party explains themselves and how well they support Eugenie. *They* know Edwin is a bad guy, but Eugenie still thinks of him as her young nephew. Hopefully the party will present this information kindly!

If the party *doesn't* tell Eugenie anything, she continues to talk. Eugenie tells the party that Edwin had stopped by, last Saturday, as she was assembling his mother's wayshrine. While talking, she walks with the party in that direction. She tells them that Edwin hadn't realized that Eugenie had saved the bottle of Dora's favorite sherry. Eugenie says that Edwin is not usually a sentimental person, but even he was overcome with emotion when he saw that. His hands shook and his voice did as well. Eugenie tells the party that she'd suggested she and Edwin both have a bit of the sherry then, as a toast to Dora, but he'd told her he thought that was disrespectful. Eugenie confesses to the party that he was probably right. They hadn't even brought any glasses, and it would hardly do to be swigging from a bottle when they were supposed to be getting the shrine set up. Sometimes, she says, she embarrasses herself with how gauche she can be. Hopefully this information will be enough to get the party to speak up, but if they still don't, Eugenie can thank them again for their help and then come let the Basement know. We'll think of something else then!

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Edwin Davies -- Nils Klinkenberg

Age: 45

Usually found: wandering

Traveler Lore concerning Edwin appears on page 211.

Secret Info:

Edwin Davies is a simple man who desires simple things: peace, quiet, respectability. But because people have repeatedly denied him even those simple things, he has been forced to take certain regrettable actions. These are Edwin's secrets:

Edwin was maybe 5 of 6 when he realized his mother wasn't like normal mothers. He didn't realize it earlier because his father shielded him from the worst of the stares and whispers, but Edwin was a sensitive and intelligent boy and the secret could not be kept forever. Unlike his friends' mothers, his mother Theodora had been a dancer, cavorting on a stage for money, like a cheap...

Well. No one actually said *that word* in front of young Edwin, but he understood well enough what she was.

His father Harold rescued his mother from all that, overlooking her sordid past in the interest of building a new life together, but even as a child, Edwin understood that this largesse was all but lost upon his mother. There was an innate selfishness about Theodora Davies. Even while dusting the beautiful mahogany furniture Harold had bought her, she would pirouette about the house, because Seasons forbid anyone forgot for a minute what she'd been. When Edwin's mouth pressed into a flat line, she would laugh and muss his carefully-tidied hair and say, "Little man, you look just like your papa!" And it was true: he disapproved of her just as his father did, but neither of these mattered to her, only her own feelings. She never stopped to think about how her behavior reflected on Edwin and Harold both.

But even though some people never missed a chance to further humiliate him - he can still hear the mocking voices of neighbors saying "This is Edwin. His mother was Dora Bright, the dancer!" - his father was very good to him and Edwin's upbringing was, by and large, a pleasant one. Tragically, his father died young, not even reaching his 55th birthday, but Harold had been a prudent man. A financial advisor, he had taken his own sage advice, and Edwin and Theodora were well taken care of.

...which is why it made no sense at all that, two years after Harold's passing, his mother had announced that she wanted to start dancing again. When Edwin tersely reminded her that she'd never *stopped* dancing, she'd pretended she didn't hear the bitterness in his voice. "Thank you, love. But I meant start dancing again *professionally*."

He was still foolish enough then that he'd thought she was joking.

She was well past 45. If dancing in her twenties had been shameful and tawdry, trying to do so at that advanced age would be pathetically indecent. It was hard to imagine she would subject herself to that sort of humiliation for any reason besides besmirching her son and late husband's reputations, unless her whorish need for attention was so great that even ridicule was better than being ignored.

He'd appealed to her sister, his aunt Eugenie, but she was useless as always in the face of Theodora's willfulness. Edwin implored his mother for naught. "This is something I have to do, love," she said. But she *didn't* have to. She *chose* to, regardless of what he said or thought.

Theodora's dancing "career" spanned twenty years more, which is all the proof you need that people will pay to see someone more laughable than themselves. The less said of it now, the better.

When she at last retired, Edwin dared to think that the difficulties his mother caused were at an end. And at first they were. She still dressed as though she'd woken up inside a Roamer rag-bag and still sought out the least suitable people as friends, but at least she was off the stage. He had reason to think she and Eugenie would live out their remaining years quickly and quietly.

But then a year and a half ago, Theodora started spending money on ludicrous things. She'd always been embarrassingly frugal, so this was a real shift, but once she got a taste for living lavishly, she indulged it more and more... and on the most foolish things imaginable: esoteric flowers, expensive perfumes, outrageous parties. She wasted huge portions of Harold's bequest buying gifts for people she barely knew, and when Edwin admonished her about it, she had the gall to claim the money was her own earnings.

Edwin saw his own inheritance being whittled away. Why should he have expected any differently? His mother was acting as she always did, thinking only of herself.

Theodora was already in her late 70s and obviously could not live forever, but Edwin was facing the ugly reality that she could be around for a decade or even two more, wreaking additional havoc with each passing year.

And thus he reached the unfortunate but evident conclusion that his mother's exit from life's stage needed to be hastened. As it were.

It was a straightforward matter, honestly. Theodora had some specially-concocted fertilizer for her rose bushes - Edwin shudders to think how much she probably paid that muse Floria to make it for her! - and she was always going on about how incredibly toxic it was to humans. It stank of roses, but this wasn't a problem; his mother had lost her sense of smell years earlier when she had pneumonia. She drank a glass of sherry each day - another pricy indulgence! - and it was simple to pour some of the sherry out, replacing it with the fertilizer in question.

The plan was executed quickly and quietly.

This should have been the end of the matter, but as with all things connected to Edwin's difficult mother, this was not the case. It had been more than six months since Theodora's death. Edwin was of course still wearing mourning, as was only correct after the loss of an immediate relation. His aunt Eugenie had callously elected not to do so, but that was no concern of Edwin's. At last he had his father's grand home and his father's considerable fortune at his disposal and should have been left in the peaceful quiet he so desired.

Except that late in the spring, Eugenie announced her intention to hold a séance to contact the spirit of his mother. A séance! Because of course this is just the sort of tawdry spectacle that would occur to his mother's sister. It would be a garish mockery of all that is sacred, a shadowy romp through the realms of sham fakery.

Unless it actually worked. And *that*, of course, would be far worse indeed.

Edwin didn't truly think it likely. It would no doubt be his aunt and a lot of other gullible elderly ladies playing at the occult. This was distasteful in the extreme, but Edwin could choose to ignore it. But there was the very slight chance it would work. The more he considered it, the more it made a horrific sort of sense that Theodora's spirit was still lingering around. If she was, Edwin knew full well she would like nothing better than to be contacted by a bunch of overexcited old women. She would have reams of sordid gossip to share from the Other Side, and the obvious *pièce de résistance* would be Edwin and the rose-scented poison.

His damned mother had been dead more than half a year and he *still* wasn't rid of her!

Edwin had tried to convince Eugenie not to hold the séance, of course, but in her own way she is just as stubborn and selfish as her sister. He expressed his disapproval in the strongest possible terms and indicated he would not participate.

And yet just as he had been forced to take action back in November, he was now forced to participate, albeit not as a traditional attendee. Instead, deplorable as he found it, Edwin did the only thing he could think of to ensure that the séance wouldn't be successful: he disguised himself as a demon and disrupted it himself.

He had heard that miserable wretch Brimstone telling people what demons looked like: very tall, with greenish skin, and arriving in a puff of noxious smoke. Even as a child, Edwin eschewed silly games of dress-up, but now he was forced to resort to preposterous dramatics, donning boots to make himself taller and greasepaint to color his skin. The "demon" stormed into the séance and smashed up the table, after which Edwin shoved the absurd costume into a sack and stashed it away where no one would find it. Eugenie and the other attendees had been terrified, so Edwin's actions, while unpalatable, had been successful.

And yet somehow, *somewhat*, this was still not the end of the matter.

Time passed and the Rites of Remembrance were upon them. Aunt Eugenie was setting up a wayshrine for Theodora and he'd wanted to just leave her to it, but of course she'd dragged him out to see the finished result. She'd furnished it with some items of his mother's she had squirrelled away: a few of his mother's gaudy perfume bottles, some of her garish jewelry. And there, right in the center of the wayshrine: his mother's bottle of sherry.

Edwin's heart had gone cold. He'd corked the bottle right after Theodora had drunk her final glass and then collapsed. Eugenie must have been storing it untouched all this time.

She'd turned to him then and suggested they both drink a toast: to his dear departed mother.

His hands shaking, Edwin told her he thought that highly disrespectful. Chagrined, Eugenie agreed. But there it was, the bottle still full of poison, sitting right in plain sight in the center of the wayshrine. Edwin knew that his mother was reaching from beyond the grave and forcing him to act one final time.

That night, he'd retrieved the hidden sack and once more disguised himself as the demon, and then he'd gone to destroy the wayshrine and all its contents. He didn't want to call special attention to his mother's shrine, so he'd smashed up a few others on his way toward hers. Just when he was nearly there, that miserable mouthy little keeper, Electra, she'd come upon him out of nowhere, and she'd fallen on him like a wildcat, clawing and kicking at him. Edwin believes she may have broken a bone or two in his foot, and worse, she prevented him from getting rid of the cursed bottle.

He cannot make another attempt, because the wayshrines are now warded. But all is not lost. Eugenie's meddling - because of course everyone blames her for unleashing the "demon" upon the town - has resulted in actual criminal charges against her. Although this was not Edwin's initial plan, it has served very nicely. He can appear as the solicitous nephew, concerned for his poor senile relation, and can rest assured that on Sunday, Eugenie will be taken into custody. He has even enlisted the aid of some yahoos from Uri-Kesh, who can only confirm that yes, this foul demon-summoning is wholly Eugenie's fault.

Then, he will disassemble Theodora's wayshrine and destroy everything in it, and he will be left blissfully alone at last. It has been a long, long time coming. He has earned this.

A description of the Observation Challenge appears on page 489.

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: on Friday night

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Edwin should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Edwin needs to convey, but he'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Edwin doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, he'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if he's had a brief interaction with the party! Note that this is Friday night, so Edwin shouldn't be too awful to/around the party, but if they dislike him at least a little, that would be good.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Uri-Kesh

When to approach a party: Edwin is assigning this party's charge. He is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, Edwin approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled against his aunt, Eugenie Bright. Edwin tells the party that the death of his beloved mother Theodora Davies was of course very hard on both him and Aunt Eugenie. He himself is still wearing mourning black, and even carries a jet-handled cane, and while Eugenie herself traipses around in bright colors, he does not hold this against her. Edwin tells the party that he feared something terrible would happen when he heard Aunt Eugenie's ill-advised plan to hold a séance, but she was insistent. If only he had been able to make her see reason on the subject! But alas, he was not. Edwin tells the party that his aunt held the séance at the beginning of the summer - early in June, he believes - and that just as he feared, dabbling in the supernatural proved extremely unwise. Although Edwin was not present at the session, he has heard the demon described as terrifyingly tall with powerful musculature. Attendees said it appeared in a cloud of noxious fog. The demon ran into the night, and Edwin is only grateful no one was hurt or killed! It seems the foul creature is still present in this plane of existence, because it showed itself again a mere week ago, smashing several wayshrines in town. Edwin reminds the party that wayshrines are protected by the most stringent of laws, and because dear Aunt Eugenie's actions resulted in the destruction of several of them, she is sadly being prosecuted to the fullest possible extent. Edwin is concerned sweet Aunt Eugenie doesn't fully understand how dire this situation is. He himself went to talk to Justice Orion Wilde, suggesting the case be tried as property damage rather than desecration, where a conviction incurs mandatory jail time. Edwin reminded the prosecutor that Eugenie is just a little old lady who acted misguidedly, but Justice Wilde was unswayed. Edwin is not certain anything can be done to help his poor elderly aunt, but he would greatly appreciate it if the party could look into this charge.

Charge to which this info pertains: Eugenie Bright's, see page 97 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Glendeep

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the observation challenge

Info to give the party directly: Edwin does have a viper's-eye pendant, which belonged to his dearly departed mother. It is a rather showy piece and is a touch garish for Edwin's tastes, so he is willing to let the party have.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: viper's-eye pendant

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Edwin tells the party that frankly, the situation with Katherine Carmichael - where she grievously wounded that soldier chap and got away with it for more than a decade - is as predictable as it is sordid. When children are exposed to garbage such as that Ms. Carmichael peddles, it is small wonder that society grows ever more accepting of lax morals, criminality and general bad behavior. Edwin tells the party that it will do no good for Ms. Carmichael to assert that it was "Kit Carnage" and not she herself who shot that man because people are well aware that Carmichael and Carnage are actually the same person. Edwin supposes that he should be grateful Ms. Carmichael was not intelligent enough to devise a more clever subterfuge. Then again, if she were a more intelligent person, no doubt she could write books at an adult level rather than only for little girls.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Edwin tells the party that only a week or so ago, he heard that rock and roll fellow Milton Peacock expounding about how "all publicity is good publicity." This is patently absurd, Edwin says. Now it's come to light that Milton stole a great deal of money from the band's account. It's lucky some concerned citizen wrote an anonymous tip alerting Justice Orion Wilde to this crime, and lucky too that Justice Wilde was able to force a confession from Milton! Edwin tells the party that Milton is no doubt regretting his foolish stance on publicity now that he himself is notorious!

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Aria Morgan -- Diana Galanakis

Age: 34

Usually found: wandering

Traveler Lore concerning the Morgan family appears on page 209.

Secret Info:

Aria has two secrets, but honestly, they scarcely deserve to be called that. They're essentially just things that matter so little she's not bothering to say them. Unsurprisingly, they both concern the Morg, the theater Aria loves – well, *loved* – so dearly.

This first part is more than a little silly, honestly. When Aria was a young girl, she herself performed as a dancer at the Morg. She sang a little song and spun around on the stage. It wasn't anything terribly fancy, just a sweet little diversion so that the stage crew could move scenery behind the velvet curtains. People mostly clapped because she was a small child with curls and a pretty dress, not because she was any sort of trained performer. But it is still a sweet memory for her.

When she first started restoring the Morg, that sweet memory helped her. For just a minute, she could see the theater as it once was, all deep red velvet and golden sconces and polished wood. Instead of cobwebs and spiders and so, so much water-damaged wood, there was candlelight and music and wonder. There were people in the audience in their best clothes, waiting to see something magical and lovely on the stage, and for one brief moment, that something was Aria herself.

And so it became her foolish little tradition, at some point during the workday, to recreate that small performance.

Obviously, the frothy white dress she'd worn is long gone, and it wouldn't begin to fit her if it wasn't. But in a random crate on a backstage shelf, Aria'd found an aged and crumpled piece of white paper, and as soon as she saw it, she knew it for what it was: the paper crown she'd worn so long ago.

It was a simple little thing; one of the costume ladies had made it for her. The paper at the top was twisted into points so that it held its shape, and in the glow from the footlights, it looked like ivory atop her auburn curls. And astonishingly, here it was after all this time.

Aria had lifted it gently from the box, both because she wanted to preserve it and because there as a very real chance mice were nesting in there. Dirty though it was, she'd set it on her hair – which was not terribly clean itself – and then she'd climbed to the stage. She still remembered the words to Spun Sugar, the little tune 6-year-old Aria had sung. "Sugar, sweet as it can be. Sweet like you and sweet like me." And she'd danced there on the old stage in front of the rotting curtains, ending with the spin at the end, hands outstretched.

It was silly and indulgent, but it reminded her of what the Morg could be. Once a day, when she was tired of working, she'd go retrieve the crown from the crate and recreate her performance, and when she was done, she'd put the crown back. The mice had left it alone for all those years, so it should be safe there for a little longer.

And it was. Until it wasn't.

Aria's made no secret of the fact that she didn't want to hire Danny Donovan to work in her family's theater. She told Baron Honoré that when he asked her to. But what choice did she have? She has so little money in reserve to pay anyone, and Danny was willing to work for so little.

And if she is honest, he did mostly good work. He's a hard worker, and good with his hands. He'd show up late sometimes, reliability never being his strong suit. But he'd stay late more than enough nights to make up the time and then some. They had reached a point where they could work together.

On Thursday morning, though, he'd told her he'd thrown out some old garbage and papers he'd found backstage, and as soon as she heard him say it, she knew what he meant. She could've been wrong – even after months of work, there is no shortage of garbage backstage – but she wasn't. The paper crown was gone.

It shouldn't really have mattered. It was old and dirty; she knew that. But it was all she had tying her to that shining performance on the stage, and Aria'd fired Danny right then and there. She'd told him – told anyone who asked – that he'd carelessly thrown out important paperwork. That's not a lie. People don't need to be told the specifics. Certainly *Danny Donovan* doesn't need to be told the specifics. She promised Honoré she'd give Danny a chance and she had.

The second secret is much smaller. It's from later that same day.

Thursday was long and exhausting, after she'd fired Danny. She was supposed to go to Belle Bishop's bachelorette party that evening, but she was too drained. She'd just gone home and gone to bed instead.

That's what she did. Obviously.

She knows because that's where she woke up, Friday morning. In her bed, where she'd crawled still fully dressed, too tired to do any more.

Except that she doesn't actually remember getting herself there. That's hardly surprising. No one in town remembers anything from the night before, nothing after 6pm or so. She must have finished at the theater and walked home and climbed into bed. She did, obviously. So it's not a lie, when she tells people she did that. Yes, technically she could say "I *think* I did this..." but that hardly seems necessary. It doesn't matter.

There is only this: when she woke up Friday morning, before she realized she had no recollection of the evening before, Aria's first thought was that her hair was slightly damp. Only in the back, where it had pressed against her pillow. That doesn't make any sense, of course. She wouldn't come home from the theater and wash her hair while keeping her dirty dress on. There's no reason for that whatsoever, so it can't be true.

She finished her long long day of work after firing that miserable Danny Donovan and then she came home and crawled into bed fully dressed. Surely that's what happened.

See, that's not even worth mentioning.

A description of the Philanthropy Challenge appears on page 483.

Arden

Approximately when: Friday night (Aria is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Aria asks the party to tell her all about their mission.

Aria tells the party that she's awfully sorry, but she doesn't know anything about a Sconce of the Wood or a scoundrel named Rook or a Ritual of Location. It sounds like the Sconce is very valuable and important, and if there's anyone in town who's likely to know where valuable and important things are, it's Ursula Smirch. Aria suggests they speak to Ursula about their mission.

Sometime during the conversation, Aria introduces the party to their Companion. Aria says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Ari, who has been sitting at the same table. Aria quietly lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aria tells the party how strange it was to wake up this morning and realize she had absolutely no idea what had happened the night before. Everything from Thursday around 6pm through early this morning is just... gone. Aria explains that she's not the only one this has happened to; everyone who was in town last night has been similarly affected.

Aria tells the party that the only advantage to this bizarre group amnesia is that she cannot actually remember her beloved theater burning. She explains that she has been hard at work restoring her family's theater in the center of town. It was just fine yesterday afternoon but when she came to work this morning, it was just a smoldering ruin. Her heart is broken, she tells the party. It was such a beautiful old building and having it restored - having a working theater in town once more - was going to mean so much for the town. She isn't sure what she'll do with herself now that it is gone.

Item(s) to give this party: none

Sythwan

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the philanthropy challenge

Info to give the party directly: Aria is willing to give the eternity pendant to the party, but she asks them to please do her a favor.

She's concerned about Brimstone, she says. He has done a very good job of adjusting to life in World's Edge considering how desperately terrible things were for him back when Maledicto was alive. Brimstone is so grateful to be accepted in the village that he never wants to take help from anyone. But of course he needs certain necessities to live. Aria would like to give him a little money, but he's very proud and won't easily accept it.

She gives the party a pouch containing 100 royals. She asks them to find a way to give Brimstone the money without embarrassing him.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: eternity pendant (and the 100 royals for Brimstone)

Arden, Dolorón, Keer and Noctara

When to approach a party: any time after the 4th Friday encounters and before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aria references the golden page she carries from Nemaia's book. Although this paper (which she DOES show the party but DOES NOT allow them to read) reminds her of a good memory, she also vividly remembers the difficult memory she shared with Nemaia, where she described standing in the burnt ruins of the Morg, saying "The theater belongs just to the ghosts now."

Reason this info matters: Please read the Changed World section, beginning on p. 158, for the context of this info and answers to a bunch more questions!

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aria tells the party that her schedule is the same every day... or, at least, it was until Danny Donovan destroyed the theater her family worked so hard to build. She tells the party that she used to spend every morning and early afternoon at the theater working on the restoration. Then, she says, she would go to the tavern for lunch and would sit there writing letters to wealthy art patrons, trying to find someone to finance the remainder of the work. Aria confesses that she hated asking for money this way, but it was necessary. Every day at 5:30 she'd finish her letters and return to the theater to make sure everything was as it should be, and then she'd walk home. Aria tells the party that Thursday was a mostly normal day for her, except that on Thursday morning, Danny - whom she never wanted to hire in the first place, because she just knew something awful would happen - threw out some very important paperwork he had no business touching. This was the final straw, Aria says, and she was forced to fire him. She tells the party that early in the afternoon, Baron Honoré - the person who talked her into hiring Danny in the first place - came to see her. He'd asked her to reconsider and even gave her a letter he'd written listing all of Danny's good points. Aria tells the party that she respects the Baron but that she'd made the right decision getting rid of Danny. As far as she was concerned, this was the end of the matter. If only that had turned out to be true! She'd gone home Thursday night and like everyone else in town, she woke up with no memory of the previous evening. Then she came into town and found that her family's beautiful theater - the building she'd worked so, so hard to restore - was destroyed. Aria tells the party that some people are claiming Danny didn't mean to burn the building down. They say that he's an addict, that he couldn't resist the allure of the White Noise, and so he'd snuck back into the theater and, with his pipe, accidentally started the fire. This is nonsense, says Aria. He may well have been high when he did this, but he set the fire on purpose, to get back at her for firing him. She will hear no disagreement on this subject. If and only if the party uses truth magic, Aria should remember that truth magic only makes you disclose the truths you remember. A spell like Interrogate will get three "I don't know's" in response. It's remotely possible the party might try something like Mighty Adjective o' Power with an awkward adjective of "remembering". If this happens, tell them the magic of their spell isn't strong enough to overcome the magic that took away the memories and that this doesn't use up their spell.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aria tells the party that they're probably going to think this is a little silly, maybe, but that she still rereads her old Kit Carnage books sometimes, when she is feeling anxious. She tells the party that she's read them so many times that the covers are creased and falling off. There is a scene in *Across the Great Prairie* she pretty much knows word-for-word by heart. Aria tells the party that it's the part where a bandit gang has taken over the schoolhouse in that one little town, where they're using it as their headquarters and so the kids in the town can't go to school. The part where Kit goes into the schoolhouse and there are apples on the teacher's desk and she makes eye contact with all the different bandits, one by one,

while she shoots a crossbow bolt into each apple? Aria tells the party that there's that one line in there, just before the bandits turn tail and run, when Kit is shooting the apples. Kit says, "I was afraid, yes, but I *could* not - I *did* not - let my hand shake." Aria tells the party that maybe they'll think she's silly, but that she tells herself that line now, when she's afraid. And it helps. It was so exciting, Aria tells the party, to meet Katherine Carmichael - the actual Kit Carnage - when she came to World's Edge and to see the very crossbow that convinced those bandits to get out of the schoolhouse.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aria tells the party that she wishes she could do more to help the Peacock Family Singers, but now that the theater has burned, there's not much she can offer them. It's such a shame, because there are so many talented musicians there. Aria tells the party that the band's manager Milton Peacock had been talking to her for several weeks now, encouraging her to book the band for a show in the Morg, even though renovations weren't yet finished. Milton had a real vision for the show, Aria says, but it was also evident that he was feeling really anxious about getting something lined up. Aria got the sense that the band hadn't been having much success getting bookings. She tells the party that she understands the difficulty. After all, not all venues can accommodate a band of that size, and not all budgets can *pay* a band of that size. This is all a moot point now, Aria says sadly, given that the theater is gone.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Clairia

When to approach a party: Sunday around 10:30am, after the party has interacted with the ghosts

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Aria is out in a visible spot near the tavern. Ideally, the party will have most of the answers about this charge and hopefully they'll approach her to talk. If they haven't approached her by 11:15am, she will approach them, in which case this encounter will change slightly (see below) but will overall be the same.

Assuming the party approaches her and tells her about their interaction with the ghosts, Aria is utterly disbelieving of all of it... until they tell her about her dancing the Spun Sugar dance on the stage. This is a silly indulgence of hers, remembering her time in the spotlight when she was a little girl. As an adult, she has never done the song and dance when anyone was in the theater, ever. If the party knows about this, then she is forced to admit that their story about ghosts is real.

And if the ghosts know about her dance and described that accurately, then Aria is forced to admit that they could possibly be telling the truth about Danny. She admits to the party that she remembers getting to the theater but not walking home from it. Still, she's not quite ready to believe this drastically-revised tale of events. And, as she tells the party, there's no way to know for sure.

Hopefully the party will have understood their vision and will mention something about the letter Honoré gave her on Thursday. Aria can touch her pocket a couple times in hopes that this reminds them. If it's getting too late, Aria can say "I'm not sure why you want so much to believe good things about that man! You're as bad as the Baron!" and then if there's still not a response, she can refer to the letter herself.

Once the letter gets brought up - and again, let's hope it's the party that does this - Aria pulls it **PROP** from her pocket. The paper is dry but crumpled, and when Aria opens it, the ink inside is washed almost completely away. Almost as though someone threw a bucket of water at her while it was in her pocket...

Only then does Aria actually believe. She is now deeply regretful, as passionately convinced of Danny's innocence as she once was of his guilt. It's not lost on Aria that not only did he not set the fire, but he risked his own life to save her from the burning theater. Her intense gratitude is a lot of what will make this emotionally satisfying to the party, so she doesn't need to hold back here!

Note: Again, we really hope the party will approach Aria rather than the other way around. If instead she needs to go to them, she can do this by saying "I understand you people are looking into the charge against Danny Donovan. I hope you're not going to claim him setting that fire was an accident!" and that should get them talking.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

the Philanthropy Challenge

Activity: Multiple staff - Obsidian, Electra and Aria Morgan - are doing this same challenge. Unlike many of the shared challenges, which work best if everyone doing them can manage to be together to do the activity, this is a case where each individual staffperson just happens to do this with no reference to any of the others.

When the party approaches seeking an item, Obsidian (or whoever) is happy to give it to them. He asks them if they could please do a favor for him in return. There is a person he has been trying to help, but he has run out of ideas on how to do this.

The encounter information on each person's page gives the name of the individual that staffer would like to help. Obsidian has some royals (in a small pouch) for the person in question. He'd like the party to find a way to give the money to the person without hurting the recipient's pride or shaming them. Clearly, it won't work to just walk up and hand over the money. Obsidian asks the party to please get the money to the recipient in a way that will allow them to take it while not feeling belittled.

Educational goal(s): to instill the party with moral responsibility. to force the party to think creatively and find a way to solve a given problem.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a small pouch containing some royals (a different pouch for each party)

the Soul Speaking Challenge

Activity: In this plot, Soul Speaking will be Officiated by Obsidian, Electra and Al Bishop. Other staff - Santiago Valerius, Mila, Crabtree, Evelyn, Bonnie Stillwater and Dramina, plus additional staff if needed - will be “shuttling” parties to the three Soul Speaking locations.

The week-long Rites of Remembrance is a time when people remember and celebrate their lost loved ones, but on the final night of the observance, the focus shifts. At that time, people in World’s Edge gather to share stories and accolades not for the dead but for the living. This longstanding and beloved tradition is known as Soul Speaking.

During the evening, each person must be Spoken for, with the speaker extolling their virtues and deeds. The Seasons reward those who are deserving of Their grace, so this recital of worth helps to show that those who are Spoken for are good-hearted people. The only rules are that no one may Speak for themselves (someone else must do this) and everyone must be spoken for. Far from being thought of as a chore, Speaking for someone is a great honor and privilege. We suspect that most participants will be Spoken for by someone else in their party, although some staff people may ask a participant to Speak for them as well, and if a participant would like a certain staffperson to Speak for them, that's okay too. And someone needs to Speak for the Companion!

There are three holy spaces where Soul Speaking will take place: in the Fern Grotto with Al Bishop, in the Spring Glen with Electra, and in the Bower of Dreams with Obsidian. In the past, which location parties did Soul Speaking in was determined by where they were staying, but now the Soul Speaking Coordinator (see page 577 for details) will send parties to whichever location is available.

While everyone is enjoying themselves in the tavern, Soul Speaking helpers will bring one party at a time to the Soul Speaking locations, where our staff keepers will be waiting to perform the ritual. (Obsidian will have talked to all parties earlier in the weekend to let them know that this will be happening.) After parties enter the holy ground, they are asked to form a circle and to extinguish any lights they are carrying. (Keeping things in the dark makes it easier for many people to concentrate on what is being said as well as making it easier for some people to speak up without having everyone staring at them.) (The only exception to this is that if a party has a participant who’s hard of hearing, it’s valuable to keep lights on to facilitate that person hearing what’s being said.) The parties are reminded that this is holy ground and they are safe here from any harm. They are then reminded of the two rules of Soul Speaking. Participants can then take turns speaking. The staff member should keep things moving, typically by simply asking who else would like to speak, and not allow there to be comment added to anything that one person says. The staff member should also keep count of how many people have spoken so that we can make sure that nobody has been skipped over. (Typically, if anyone is forgotten, it is the Companion. If they do forget, the staff keeper should prompt them that someone has not yet been spoken for.) Other staff members can join in the circle if they wish and speak either for each other or for members of the party. The staff keeper in charge (Obsidian/Al/Electra) need not be spoken for. After hearing everyone speak, some participants may want to speak a second time for someone else. This can be allowed, but care should be taken not to let any party spend too long on this activity. (There are plenty of tired people behind them!)

After the last person has spoken, Obsidian/Al/Electra should thank the parties for taking part in the custom of Soul Speaking, explaining again how important this is to the community of World’s Edge. They should then say a short (and loud) thanks to the Seasons, which is the cue for the Nightingales to begin singing. This works best if the staff keeper can speak for a minute or two while the voices of the Nightingales begins to gain in volume, and then stops before the Nightingales finish their chorus. (This requires a bit of rehearsal to get right, but makes for a very nice effect.)

Educational Goal(s): to allow the party-members to hear a recitation of their own worth. to encourage each participant to assume moral responsibility for keeping the person they Speak for safe from harm. to foster positive feelings within the party and within the larger community. to encourage each participant to focus briefly but completely on the accomplishments of someone else.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: Obsidian, Al, Electra and their helpers need flashlights to ensure that they can get to the Bower/Glen/Grotto safely

the Perfectly Good Bucket Challenge

Activity: Crabtree, Evelyn and Buzzkill are all doing this challenge. Staffers can of course change the wording as needed based on who's issuing the challenge.

Crabtree tells the party that she's having trouble thinking about their request right at this moment because she's steamed at Evelyn. When she got home last night, what do you think she found Evelyn doing? Right in her very own house? Throwing out some of her perfectly good things, that's what! According to Evelyn, none of Crabtree's possessions "spark joy." Not sparkling joy! The nerve!

Besides the fact that Evelyn was trying to get rid of Crabtree's favorite shirt, her sitting-around-the-house-in shirt, Evelyn wanted to get rid of the bucket they used to use to draw well water, just because it has a two-inch-wide hole in the bottom. It's still a perfectly good bucket! Evelyn should have her head examined!

But no, Evelyn was claiming that Crabtree never *used* the bucket, that it wasn't *good* for anything. Crabtree told her that it was *so* good for a lot of stuff, and Evelyn said "okay, name one thing it's good for" and when Crabtree couldn't, not right off the top of her head after she'd worked hard all day, Evelyn had taken that as a victory.

Well, Crabtree'll show *her*. She's going to make a list of 25 things the bucket is still good for, and who'll have the last laugh then? Crabtree will! But... first she has to think of 25 things. Crabtree tells the party that she's happy to give them the thing they want, but before that they've got to think of 25 things to put on the list.

Hopefully the party will get into the spirit of brainstorming; they can call things out – use it to carry big rocks in! turn it over and sit on it! plant some flowers in it! use it to draw water when you're not actually thirsty! – while Crabtree writes them on the list.

Educational goal(s): to practice brainstorming and building on each other's ideas

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a piece of paper and pencil (Crabtree doesn't actually have the bucket with her; she just talks about it.)

the Arbitration Challenge

Activity: When the party arrives, Crabtree and Evelyn are arguing. This, of course, is nothing new, but at the moment they are arguing about something specific:

Evelyn has just learned that she has inherited a modest amount of money from her Great Uncle Chester. She wants to use this money to order a copy of a new magical tome called *Lightning Renewal: Replenish Twice the Spells in Half the Time!* This book, part of the highly-regarded (but expensive) Magical You! series, promises to allow casters to dramatically improve their spell-renewal skills. Evelyn thinks that this would be a great investment and that it would allow their business to grow and prosper.

Crabtree completely disagrees. She thinks that they should use the money to paint their shop an appealing and eye-catching new color. No one wants to shop in a run-down building, she reasons. Increasing their customer flow is critical if they want their shop to flourish; she thinks this is a much better use of the money than purchasing the *Lightning Renewal* book.

Of course, neither Crabtree nor Evelyn presents their arguments in this cut-and-dried fashion. Evelyn attempts to tell the party her side, Crabtree interrupts to call her names, Evelyn responds by calling Crabtree even worse names, Crabtree attempts to tell the party *her* argument, Evelyn mocks Crabtree's speaking style, Crabtree dredges up remnants of an old but possibly-marginally-relevant argument, etc. etc.

Before the party can gain any kind of help from Crabtree or Evelyn, they need to help the pair come to some sort of agreement. It doesn't matter much what this solution is; what *does* matter is the way in which the party goes about it.

Hopefully they will encourage Crabtree and Evelyn to stop (at least for a little while) the name-calling and insult-slinging and will then set about seeking a compromise which is mutually agreeable to both parties.

If the party proposes ideas which patently won't work, C & E can feel free to object. (For instance, if the party suggests that they split the money in half, they can both point out that half a paint job and half a book won't do them terribly much good.)

Crabtree and Evelyn can also raise objections specifically to force the party to articulate "fair fighting" guidelines. (For instance, Evelyn might ask "Why should I compromise when Crabtree hasn't compromised anything?" Placing the party in the role of the reasonable person – where they point out that *someone* needs to be the first to compromise – might even come in handy when the party themselves is next disagreeing!)

If the party *does* come up with a clever solution, that's great, but that isn't really the focus of this activity. What matters more is that the participants help Crabtree and Evelyn learn the *process* of compromising.

Ultimately, Crabtree and Evelyn should allow the party to help them find a mutually agreeable solution. As is their way, they are then completely affectionate with each other. (It's probably advisable that the pair not start bickering again before the party leaves, since this may diminish the party's feeling of accomplishment!)

(Note that Crabtree and Evelyn can do this challenge with any party they encounter as much or as little as feels right!)

Educational goal(s): to place the party in the role of negotiator. to force the party to articulate some guidelines for fair and civil compromise. to provide a negative example of how *not* to resolve disputes!

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none

the Curiosity Challenge

Activity: Bailey is fascinated by the visitors who have arrived. They are new! They smell so interesting! Where did they come from? Bailey wants to know all about them!

Bailey is very excited to hear about the party's mission and/or their adventures since arriving in World's Edge, but he's also particularly interested in the rules that govern their interactions with each other and with other groups. He is full of questions for them: Who in the group is the alpha human? Who gets the biggest piece of food? How is their pack different from the other little packs of humans? Why is it that they sometimes listen to a certain party-member, even though that person is small? What happens if another pack of humans tries to sleep in this pack's cabin? Are the pack's males or females in charge? When there is danger, who speaks to give instructions? Whose voice is loudest? Who is most listened to? If half of them want to walk upstream and half want to walk downstream, who decides which way to go? If one of you goes against the wishes of the pack, what happens to that person? etc. etc.

The hope is that Bailey's questions will cause the party to reflect on their practices, rather than just throw out pat answers. If the party gives an answer that doesn't jibe with what Bailey has seen them do, he should point out the contradiction!

Note: If a party is scheduled to seek Bailey out, he should wait for them to find him. But he is welcome to ask these questions of any other party he meets as well.

Educational Goal(s): to help develop a sense party identity. to force the party to explicitly articulating the implicit norms that are governing the group's behavior

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none

the One Good Sock Challenge

Activity: Brimstone tells the party that he's happy to help them with their request. Maybe it will distract him from a kind of upsetting thing that happened that morning. To understand it, you need to know a little bit about Brimstone's history.

Brimstone explains that, ever since he came to World's Edge, Bonnie Stillwater has helped adjust to his strangely wonderful new life. Bonnie was his first friend and is still his best friend. She is so nice to him! Sometimes she brings him presents, like cookies (which he loves) and a soft warm pair of socks (which he also loves) and pants (which he is not honestly wild about but which Bonnie said were important.)

She has also shown him how it's important to keep things - like the little hut where he lives, or those darn pants - clean. This is all new for Brimstone! Both in Maledicto's castle and in The Other Place, no one cared if you were clean! You were actually supposed to be dirty! So there is a lot to learn here in World's Edge, and Bonnie is helping him with all of it.

Just this morning, she helped him clean up his hut. While there, she discovered that he only had one of the socks she'd given him. Brimstone explained that he had somehow managed to lose one of the beautiful soft socks, but that thankfully, he still had one left. Bonnie wasn't upset about the lost sock; she said this happens to people all the time.

(This is so exciting! He has done a people thing and not even known it!)

But then, the upsetting part: Bonnie wanted to throw out the lone sock! His beautiful sock! Sure, he's only got one good sock, but still!

Brimstone wanted to tell Bonnie that he was keeping the sock, but he knew that if he did, she'd ask what the sock was still good for. He'd like to give her a big long list of things the sock was good for! But... he hasn't yet thought of any.

So... Brimstone proposes a deal to the party. He'll give them the thing they're looking for, but in return, could they make a list for him? He'd like a list of 20 things one good sock is good for, and then he'll give him the item they need.

Hopefully the party will get into the spirit of brainstorming; they can call things out – wear the sock when only one foot is cold! ensure your money's safety by storing it in the sock! let a squirrel use it as a sleeping bag! put some rocks in it and use it as a weapon! – while one of the party mates writes them on his list.

Educational goal(s): to practice brainstorming and building on each other's ideas

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a piece of paper and pencil (Brimstone does not actually have the sock with him.)

the Observation Challenge

Activity: Multiple staff – Eugenie Bright, Edwin Davies and Cal Coleman – are all doing this challenge. The challenge can be done by multiple staff at a time or individually; either is fine!

The tone of this challenge can be either semi-antagonistic or cheeky/playful depending on the personality of the staff character issuing it.

Eugenie (or whoever) tells the party it's funny how most of us think of ourselves as observant but think other people have missed the obvious. (Edwin says "I'm sure that's not a problem for any of you" while making it clear that he thinks exactly that. And Cal attributes obvious errors to people's obliviousness and/or general stupidity.)

When the party asks for an item, this gives Edwin an idea for a friendly wager. He tells the party that he's happy to give them the item... so long as they can demonstrate that they've been observant of their surroundings.

Edwin tells three of the party to close their eyes and then turns them so that they're facing away from the rest of the group. (It's important that he do this before proceeding any further with the conversation. Otherwise the participants may realize where this conversation is headed and start 'checking each other out' in preparation for the quiz that's about to come. Edwin can pick any three members of the party, but, if possible, it would be great if he could pick the more vocal people, since these are sometimes the less-observant ones. The Companion may also whisper to Edwin ahead of time if there's a certain participant who should be chosen.)

Once three participants have their eyes closed and are facing away, Edwin tells the party that he has five questions to ask. So long as the three blind participants answer correctly, they're welcome to have the item they need.

Edwin tells the party that the blind participants are welcome to confer with each other before answering. He will need to customize the questions he asks, using the list below for ideas.

All the questions should concern physical descriptions of the three remaining people (i.e. the ones who aren't blinded.) Possible questions:

- Only one of these three people is wearing spectacles (or boots/a hat/etc.) Which one?
- All three of these people are wearing the same color shirt. What color is that?
- One of these people is dramatically taller than the other two. Who is it?
- What color is your keeper's Sacred Shield?
- Your caster is wearing a large brooch in the shape of an animal. What animal is it?
- Your seeker is carrying a shield. What is pictured on it?

The staff should avoid trick questions (e.g. ones where the answer is "none of them!") or ones that are *too* nitpicky (e.g. 'is the caster wearing an armband on his left or right arm?') or, obviously, ones which will make the partymembers feel awkward or uncomfortable (e.g. 'who weighs the most?')

If the blind participants can't answer at least four of the five questions correctly, Edwin tells them that he's sorry, but, following the pre-established rules, he just can't give them the item at this time. They are, he says, welcome to try back later.

If the party doesn't succeed the first time and thus needs to try again (after some reasonable amount of time; Edwin is, after all, a busy person), he should repeat the challenge, but (since the party will clearly be ready this time by memorizing every possible physical attribute) should ask questions about simple past events ('who slept in the bunk above yours?' 'what did your traveler have for lunch this afternoon?', etc.) Doing so will require a slight reworking of the challenge; probably the easiest thing is to whisper a few questions to the 'subjects' and then, once Edwin knows the answers, pose the real question to the other participants.

Educational goal(s): to encourage the party to pay closer attention to their surroundings, including each other.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none

Bartleby Sprink -- Kevin Kulp

Age: 52

Usually found: wandering

A description of the What a Surprise! Challenge appears on page 524.

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: Friday night (Bartleby is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Bartleby asks the party to tell him all about their mission.

Bartleby is sorry, but he's afraid he doesn't know anything about a magical genie lamp. As for a thief named Shade... Bartleby obviously doesn't saturnize with that sort of person, but there is a fellow in town right now named Shadow, which the party must admit is similar to Shade! Maybe they're brothers or somesuch! Bartleby certainly thinks the party should talk to Shadow, whom he points out. If this Shade chap is still around, Bartleby will be incontinent until he is brought to justice! No doubt Shadow will know where he is!

Sometime during the conversation, Bartleby introduces the party to their Companion. Bartleby says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Urving, who has been sitting at the same table. Bartleby quietly lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bartleby tells the party that it really is the strangest thing: he woke up this morning with no recollection of the night before. And everyone else in town was exactly the same! He explains that yes, there were bachelor and bachelorette parties scheduled for last night, so no doubt there was a fair amount of arousing that went on, but he and Geneva had no plans to attend either sorbet, and yet neither of them can remember anything after 6pm until they woke this morning.

Item(s) to give this party: none

Sythwan

When to approach a party: immediately after the party's 1st Saturday encounter (which will be with Elliott Peacock in the Peacock Family Singers camp)

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bartleby "just happens" to encounter the party. Bartleby tells the party that, a week ago, he got a letter from Baron Albert Huxley, Baron of Hillsmoor, Elsewhich. Bartleby says that he's never actually met the Baron personally but that they have a mutual friend. Bartleby is pleased to have heard from the Baron, especially given how powerful and influenza the man is! Bartleby still has the letter, which he shows the party. It says: "My youngest son, Lord Percy Huxley, will likely arrive there quite soon. He wants to see a bit of the world and no doubt sow his fair share of wild oats along the way. I shouldn't be surprised if he had a paramour or two along for the ride; we Huxleys have always been popular with the ladies! Anyway, I should take it as a great personal favor if you'd look after the boy whilst he's there. Let Percy get up to whatever shenanigans he fancies, but do see that he's in one piece upon his return, would you? Your assistance in this shan't go unnoticed. Thanks awfully, good sir." Bartleby tells the party that he was delighted to hear about Lord Percy's visit. It's not impossible the man is visiting because he's looking to find a legible young woman for his bride! Bartleby can think of no one more legible than his own beautiful daughter Angelica! Sure enough, Lord Percy arrived just yesterday morning. Bartleby says that the man is a down-to-earth fellow who assured Bartleby that he was comfortable just being called 'Huxley.' Bartleby tells the party that he was delighted to introduce Huxley and the young woman with him to a few important people in town, as well as to give him some very expansive gifts as a welcome.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Clairia

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what a surprise! challenge

Info to give the party directly: Bartleby tells the party that he doesn't have a phoenix egg, but that he does have a poem that talks about a phoenix. He spent 200 royals on it, so you know it's poetry of the highest caliper. He's willing to give it to the party, though.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the riddle leading to the phoenix egg

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bartleby tells the party that he and his wife insist that that punk Bracken be locked up and the key thrown out with the bathwater! This is an unconsumately reasonable punishment. Bartleby tells the party he'd made it abundantly clear Angelica wants nothing to do with a dirty vagrant such as Bracken. And what happens in response? That young reprobation had the nerve to look Bartleby right in the eye and say "With all due respect, sir, that is Angelica's decision to make." No doubt Bracken learned that sort of cheek in the orphanage! Perhaps Bracken is not aware, but Bartleby routinely throws away items worth more than the orphanage's entire operating budget, so next time Bracken should be mindful of whomsoever he's speaking to! Bartleby tells the party that, while on the subject of speaking, it's not bad enough that that would-be romancer continues to come around, but there's also the matter of the uncouthful things Bracken has been telling Angelica. Just three days ago, he overheard the boy describing in lurid detail how Solomon had made that day's soup! Bartleby obviously put a stop to that, and frankly that young lecher should be glad Bartleby was wearing his 400-royal silk trousers, because otherwise Bartleby might well have taken matters into his own hands! His Angelica is not some orphanage trollop who needs to know how food is made! And yet no sooner had he turned around that Bracken was conversating about washing the dishes! Poor Angelica had had no idea the bowl she was eating out of had been used already before, and by a complete stranger! This was traumatically for her, Bartleby says, and he himself is infurious just remembering it!

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bartleby tells the party that he certainly hopes that whatever book-making company makes those dreadful Kit Corsage books will think twice before making any more of them, now that poor brave Vernon Guilt has come forward with his sad story! Bartleby assures the party that he has never read any of the books himself but that he has always known they were no good. Not only is it very lazy work, writing a story that's not even made up but is rather just an armoire of her very own life, but also the books breed young girls to be violent and combatatory and not nice at all. Books like that should be against the law and probably are, and that's the truth.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bartleby tells the party that he doesn't like to brag, but he and Ember are very close. Bartleby tells the party that most people in World's Edge wouldn't know hot couture if it bit them with a ten-foot pole, but he and Ember are cut from a cloth above. Ember's personal brand is very chick, very now. Bartleby is a fan. Big thumbs up.

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: Saturday after 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bartleby tells the party that he just now received a letter from Lord Percy Huxley.

It said, among other things, “I shall be arriving in your hamlet around sundown on Sunday evening. I look forward to experiencing your generous hospitality.” This is abdominal! This can only mean that that villain who *claimed* to be Huxley is a total fraud! Bartleby tells the party that he is streaming mad about the whole thing. He has been incredibly helpful to that scoundrel, giving him money and gifts! He hopes that fiend and his trumpet of a girlfriend get locked up for a good long time!

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Geneva Sprink -- Jess Schoolman

Age: 47

Usually found: wandering

A description of the What a Surprise! Challenge appears on page 524.

P'loa

When to approach a party: Saturday at breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Geneva tells the party that she just received terrible news. (This should feel like she's exclaiming about this in the party's general vicinity but ideally shouldn't do a lot to distract lots of other parties. Geneva should try to do this interaction before the party goes with Vernon Gill for their 1st Saturday encounter.) There has been a pirate attack in Keer and one of the Sprinks' homes has been completely destroyed! Once Geneva has recovered from her swoon, she reads the letter:

Monday, September 30, 994

Madame:

I write with terrible news. There has been a pirate attack, and your beautiful home here in Concordia has been completely destroyed. I alone managed to escape; the other servants have perished. All of your exquisite furnishings were stolen and then the house, the stables, even the gardens were put to the torch. This foul deed is the work of none other than Jack Brigham. His ship docked in Safe Harbor and his vile crew swarmed all through Concordia and Vigilton. Before I fled, I saw Jack himself grab up handfuls from your jewelry box. Those items he deemed not valuable enough, he crushed beneath his boots. This was the last I saw before I ran for my life. Now the marauders are gone and the valley is quiet. My heart breaks to see all that has been lost.

Yours faithfully,

<unreadable signature>

Geneva is inconsolable. This house was her 4th favorite! Several of her nicest summer-weight gowns were there! Also, how dare that dreadful man decide any of her jewelry isn't valuable enough! She tells the party that wants this Jack Brigham prosecuted and arrested and sentenced to death and whatever else the court can manage! Geneva then sweeps out, taking the letter with her.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Waylon

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what a surprise! challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: agate orb

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Geneva tells the party that she and her husband intend to see that rapscallion Bracken prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law for his harassment of their sweet Angelica. She has no doubt that once the prosecutor hears what Bracken has done, that upstart will be locked away for the rest of his life! The conversations he's subjected Angelica to! Simply outrageous! At one point, he told Angelica that it was possible she might be attacked by chitters or skeevers or even worlogs! There are no such things, Geneva tried to assure her baby girl, but that scoundrel persisted! Looked her right in

the face, bold as brass, and said, "I'm reluctant to contradict you, ma'am, but they are all quite real." Well! Geneva tells the party that where Angelica is concerned, she and Bartleby get to decide what is real and what is not, thank you very much! But that hoodlum wasn't satisfied with terrifying poor Angelica out of her wits, oh no! He *also* suggested that Angelica formulate a plan to defend herself from these beasts! Unbelievable! No doubt this has given Angelica nightmares and palpitations and probably vapors as well! Frightening her sweet girl just for his own amusement! Geneva promises the party that she will see Bracken locked away or she will have that prosecutor fired!

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Geneva tells the party that she was there in the tavern on Monday when Lenora Graves used that magic board of hers to contact the spirit of the dead professor. Normally, Geneva assures the party, she does not approve of this sort of magical shenanigans, but Lenora is a very classy caliber of person and so that makes this all right. She explains that Lenora had just begun the magical process and everyone was rudely shoving forward to watch, which made it difficult for Geneva to get into an optimal position to see. Suddenly that horrible little crackpot Dorito started shouting about how the professor was dead and that she - Dorito, obviously, not Geneva! - had killed him! It should be against the law to be a crank like that Dorito, Geneva tells the party. Allowing strange little persons of that ilk is just asking for trouble!

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Angelica Sprink -- Lane Daniels

Age: 16

Usually found: wandering

A description of the What a Surprise! Challenge appears on page 524.

Arden

When to approach a party: on Friday night

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Angelica should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Angelica needs to convey, but she'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Angelica doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, she'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if she's had a brief but positive interaction with the party!

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Arden

When to approach a party: Angelica is assigning this party's charge. She is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, Angelica approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Bracken. Angelica is aware that Daddy and Mum have pressed this charge against Bracken. They don't like him one little bit and they especially don't like him having anything to do with Angelica. It never used to bother her, Angelica tells the party, them treating her like an absolute *infant*, but just lately she has had *enough*. Bracken isn't harassing her in the slightest. They're friends, and the sooner her parents come to grips with that, the better it'll be for everyone. Of course, this whole thing where her parents - Daddy especially, but Mum can be just as bad - have accused Bracken of an actual *crime*, well, it's *not cool*. She'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against Bracken.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

P'loa

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what a surprise! challenge

Info to give the party directly: Angelica tells the party that she does indeed have something that is reported to have once belonged to Elani Edgewater. It's a tortoiseshell comb. Daddy bought it for her at Smirch & Smirch. He argued that it should be cheaper because it was old but Mrs. Smirch disagreed. Some things like combs are more expensive when they old but some things like sandwiches are cheaper after a certain point, and no one knows why. So interesting!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: tortoiseshell comb

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Angelica tells the party that she only just recently read her first Kit Carson book but that now she cannot get enough of them. She had always heard that the books were dangerous and unrealistic - her father does not like them one little bit! - but that this clearly isn't true. How could they be unrealistic, when Katherine Carmichael - that's the lady that writes all of them - actually *is* Kit Carson? Angelica tells the party that she was shocked how good the books were after hearing her father complain about them, but they're really just wonderful! She read *Resolute* all in one day because she was so excited to find out what would happen next! It's a funny thing, Angelica tells the party, but after she read it, she felt like maybe she herself could be braver. She clarifies that she is not going to ride into a canyon that has rattlesnakes in it, because unlike Miss Carmichael, Angelica does not have a crossbow to fire a warning shot at a rattler. But she thinks there are things she could certainly be braver about.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Angelica tells the party about two startling things that happened a week or two ago. Her papa had given her some spending money for the day, perhaps 300 royals or so. Angelica tells the party that she'd left the money in a pile on the table of the tavern. She has recently been told that perhaps she should carry this money with her rather than leaving it in a pile in a public place, but at the time she hadn't known that was a rule. Anyway, Angelica says, when she came back for lunch, about a hundred of the royals were gone. Angelica isn't sure what someone intended to do with the royals. Maybe they wanted to buy a muffin or an apple? Is it possible to buy a muffin for 100 royals? Angelica isn't sure. Anyway, she tells the party, the 100 royals were gone, but in their place was a painting of Angelica! It's a wonderful painting, Angelica says. Someone told her that Aesthetika painted it, but when Angelica went to thank her, Aesthetika told her she hadn't painted the picture. It's a large coincidence, Angelica tells the party, having 100 royals less but one painting more, and both on the same day! Very surprising indeed!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Arden

When to approach a party: Sunday morning on their way to breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: The party encounters Angelica standing over the body of a dead Wolven. Angelica is slightly winded but not unduly upset. She tells the party that she had gone out for an early morning walk. Normally, she says, she would have taken a book with her, because she's always liked reading while walking around. Bracken told her she should reconsider doing that, that it was a good idea to be paying attention to what's around her. It's probably fortunate she listened, Angelica says, because she was attacked by three Wolven. Angelica doesn't have a sword with her, but when one of the Wolven stepped in close to her, she did the thing Bracken showed her and slammed the heel of her hand upward into his nose. She must've connected just right, she thinks, because he fell down and, as the party can see, he hasn't gotten back up again. She brought the heel of her boot down hard on the instep of one of the others and then the two of them ran off... although the one she'd stepped on didn't run terribly fast. She's just about caught her breath, Angelica says, so she can now head back to the tavern with the party.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Samuelson -- Mike Scandizzo

Age: 57

Usually found: wandering

A description of the What a Surprise! Challenge appears on page 524.

Elsewhich

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what a surprise! challenge

Info to give the party directly: Samuelson tells the party he does indeed have some doveroot seeds. He is trying to duplicate the most exquisite soufflé recipe, and for a time, he thought that perhaps doveroot seeds might have been the source of the soufflé's haunting flavor. He has tasted them now and alas, they are not. The party may have them.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: doveroot seeds

Noctara

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the what a surprise! challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: emerald star

any parties encountered (ideally 3-4)

When to approach a party: any time after the 4th Friday encounters and before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Samuelson references the golden page he carries from Nemaia's book. Although this paper (which he DOES show the party but DOES NOT allow them to read) reminds him of a good memory, he also vividly remembers the difficult memory he shared with Nemaia, where he described his employers, Bartleby and Geneva Sprink, as "classless and barbaric."

Reason this info matters: Please read the Changed World section, beginning on p. 158, for the context of this info and answers to a bunch more questions!

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Samuelson tells the party that, for years now, he has made certain Miss Angelica's boots are laced each morning. After a meal, he will raise a napkin to Miss Angelica's mouth. If it is wintertime, it is has always been Samuelson's role to tell her that it is likely to be cold out and to suggest that a coat is warranted. Just as his father and grandfather and great-grandfather would have done. But lately, Miss Angelica has spurned these services. Just a few days ago in the tavern, she asked the barkeep how much her meal cost! Samuelson is filled with shame! He has always prided himself on

paying the bills so quietly and quickly! The young miss has learned that meals in the tavern must be paid for because he has not been quick enough in his duties! Samuelson's father would weep to know this.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Samuelson tells the party that he is sad to be the bearer of unpleasant news, but that it was very apparent to him that Mr. Daniel Donovan was going to wreak havoc upon the Morgan Theater. Samuelson is sorry to have been correct on this front, but the signs were all there: Mr. Donovan is a drug user, chronically under-employed and under-motivated. This present situation where the Morgan Theater has burned down due to Mr. Donovan's careless disregard for the property of others and/or his thuggish inability to manage his temper? Depressingly predictable, says Samuelson

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Samuelson tells the party that the old maxim – that a title is no guarantee of class – continues to be true. Take, just for example, the case of Lord Percy Huxley. A less impressive specimen Samuelson has rarely encountered. Approximately one week ago, the Master received a letter from Baron Albert Huxley, of Hillsmoor, Elsewhich. The Master was understandably pleased to receive this missive, as the Huxleys are an old and respected family. The Sprink household was thrown into a tumult as preparations commenced for Lord Percy's arrival. Miss Angelica was given a whole new wardrobe and groomed to look as enticingly marriageable as possible, and Samuelson himself was tasked with unearthing a banner with the Huxley coat of arms upon it and with hanging said banner in the tavern so that their guest would instantly be made welcome. Samuelson tells the party that Lord Percy himself arrived yesterday, and upon being shown into the tavern, blithered out something approximating: "Uh, yeah, hi. I'm... uh... er... Huxley." Inarticulate boob. Apparently the man - who can be called "young Huxley" only in the sense that he is younger than Baron Albert himself - wishes simply to be called "Huxley." Samuelson tells the party that, while "Percy" is perhaps a less-than-inspired name choice, this is still a level of informality that he personally abhors.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: either Saturday after 10pm or Sunday at breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Samuelson tells the party that he has only just now been shown the actual letter which Madame Sprink received from the surviving servant in Keer. There are certain inconsistencies in the letter which give him pause, he says. Samuelsson tells the party that the letter refers to the stables being set on fire, which is odd, given that the Sprinks' home in Concordia has no stables. The letter claims that the attack ranged throughout Concordia and Vigilton, which seems unlikely given these towns are approximately 300 miles apart. The writer says that the valley is quiet, although Concordia sits on a hill. And perhaps most tellingly, the letter is correctly spelled and punctuated, a feat Samuelsson would be surprised if any of the Sprinks other servants could manage.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Bracken -- Rowan Scassellati

Age: 17

Usually found: wandering

Secret Info:

From the time when he was very small, Bracken has dreamed of only one thing: becoming a Knight of the Black Lantern.

His parents died when he was only a baby, leaving him with his grandfather Reynaldo. When Bracken was five, Reynaldo told him he had something very important and very secret to share. Reynaldo explained that he was a Knight, sworn to protect the helpless and preserve all that was sacred. "I have always hoped, Bracken, that you would someday be a Knight as well." This was the most wonderful and exciting thing Bracken could possibly imagine.

"I am afraid, my boy, that I will not live to see you grown. If I am not here, you will have to find your own way and earn your own place in the Order."

This frightened Bracken. His grandfather seemed so strong, and he didn't want to lose him! But the old man was still speaking.

"I am entrusting you with my prize possession: the instructions to join the Order. Whatever happens, you must keep this paper safe. When you are grown, if you wish it, you may complete the quests. There are four of them, and they will not be easy. When it is time to complete the final quest, a young Knight-to-be will know it. If this is truly your destiny, you will know when the time is right. And then, that final quest complete, the Order will find you."

Reynaldo gave him a strange and beautiful piece of paper, a black piece of paper that shimmered with even blacker writing. The paper felt very old and a small portion at the bottom was already ripped away. Bracken ran his fingers over the black words he didn't yet know how to read, and slept every night with the paper under his pillow.

A year later, after Reynaldo died, Bracken was sent to the orphanage to live. He had little to take with him, but he kept the black paper rolled up very small and hidden in his pocket. He learned to read and memorized the words written in the blacker-than-black ink:

To gain entry, complete the quests.

Do so and then we shall find you.

- *restore a holy relic*

- *give to those poorer than yourself*

- *rescue a damsel in distress*

- *slay*

The paper was torn away on a diagonal such that the remainder of the 4th quest line was missing.

Through the long hungry years at the Western Moreth Home for Children, the dream of becoming a Knight sustained him. Bracken learned the lessons of the orphanage: how to sneak small bits of extra food, how to pick the lock on the closet where blankets were stored, how to punch hard enough that bigger kids left him alone. But he also never lost sight of how a Knight must act.

When he was old enough to leave the WMHC, he came back to World's Edge, the town where Reynaldo had lived. He wasn't old enough yet to become a Knight, but he had had the dream for so long that he could not wait to begin.

After years of learning information others wanted to keep hidden, Bracken was well-placed to learn that it was possible the sacred Crown of St. Mora might be right there in World's Edge, hidden away by a family named Smirch. The Crown was kept locked away, but Bracken has practice getting places he isn't supposed to be. Once it was in his possession, he left it at the door to the Valerius house. Quest 1, complete.

Giving away to those poorer than himself was challenging only because few people have less than Bracken. Still, he needs almost nothing to survive. Quest 2, complete.

Bracken originally thought the 3rd quest, about rescuing a damsel in distress, was - with all due respect to the Knights of the Black Lantern - a load of antiquated patriarchal bullshit. But then he met Angelica Sprink, a young woman who'd been coddled to the point that she was essentially helpless. He's tried to help her learn as many life skills as he can think of, even though doing this has incurred the wrath of her parents, who attribute ulterior motives to his actions. Bracken isn't sure if all of his lessons have stuck, but the third quest is, he thinks, as complete as it can be.

The 4th quest, though, has thwarted Bracken. If only the paper were not ripped! He doesn't know who or what he's supposed to slay. Bracken knows there are stories of knights slaying dragons. He was pretty sure dragons weren't actually real, but this was the sort of information that was hard to come by in the orphanage. Here in World's Edge, he's confirmed that no, there are no real dragons. The only other possibility he could see was that he was supposed to slay a terrible villain or villains. He has in fact tried to kill Morgoth himself, since Morgoth is the most villainous person Bracken can imagine, but although he got close, he failed to do so. Since he has been unable to kill Morgoth, he's taken it upon himself to eradicate as many Wolven as he can.

And yet. Reynaldo told him that a Knight-to-be would know when it was time to complete the final quest... and yet he himself has felt no such instinctive knowing.

Is it possible, after all these years, that he is not actually worthy?

A description of the Story Web-Weaving Challenge appears on page 525.

Dolorón

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the story web-weaving challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: water from the River Sigh

Arden

When to approach a party: at any time(s) prior to Sunday

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bracken should make sure to meet and/or be seen by this party. There's no specific information he needs to convey, but it would be good if they could see him displaying his steadfast, knightly sort of behavior and also good if they like him. *If the party asks him about the Crown of St. Mora*, Bracken tells them he knows very little about it. Is that the thing that was left at the Valerius house? If they present him with Santiago's story about him returning the Crown, Bracken tells the party that, respectfully, Lord West Valerius is mistaken. *If and ONLY if the party uses truth magic on him*, Bracken acknowledges that he was the one who left the crown. What else he admits will depend entirely on what else the party asks. (Did Bracken steal the Crown? Yes. Did Bracken steal the Crown from the cathedral? No. Etc.)

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bracken tells the party that he knows people are upset with Danny Donovan about the theater burning, and he understands that. There's a story about Danny he wants them to know, though: About a week ago, it was dinnertime and Bracken didn't have enough money for a meal. Sometimes that happens, he says. It's not the end of the world. He tells the party that Danny offered to buy him dinner, which was great because although it's not the end of the world to miss a meal, Bracken was pretty hungry. Danny reached into his pocket and pulled out only a coin or two: enough to buy a meal, but not two. Bracken tells the party that Danny'd pulled out chairs for both of them and ordered some food, and when it came Danny insisted they split it. Danny said "we'll each have half", but then he cut the potato and the piece of chicken, and the portions he put in front of Bracken... well, they were way more than half. Bracken admits that he'd eaten the pieces Danny gave him; he really was hungry. It's awful about the theater burning, Bracken tells the party. If Danny needed drugs that badly, he should've found somewhere safer to smoke them. But the idea that Danny set fire to the tavern on purpose? No, Bracken says. Maybe Danny doesn't know what happened on Thursday night, but burning a building on purpose? Bracken can promise, it wasn't that.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bracken tells the party about an interaction he had recently with Dorito. He is very aware Mr. and Mrs. Sprink do not care for him, he says. This is regrettable but not a situation he can do anything about. Dorito was in front of the tavern at one point when Mrs. Geneva Sprink was detailing certain objections she took with aspects of his clothing and behavior and history and face and manners and demographic. This is simply something that happens sometimes. It's not a problem. Bracken tells the party that, at one point, Dorito came over to him. He admits that he was scarcely listening to Mrs. Sprink. He was doing calisthenics and was largely focused on those. Dorito had asked him if he was all right, and he told her he was, that he did pushups like these routinely. Dorito had clarified then that she wasn't referring to the pushups, but rather to the fact that he seemed troubled by one of the comments Mrs. Sprink had made: that he had been largely ignoring her, but that when she'd said something about how his grandfather would have been embarrassed to see Bracken dressed the way he was, the pace of his pushups had faltered. Bracken says that he hadn't realized he was even listening to Mrs. Sprink. He hadn't realized *Dorito* was listening, and he *certainly* hadn't realized she was paying attention to what he was doing or what it might mean. Bracken is not accustomed to anyone worrying about him. He tells the party he was surprised to hear that Dorito had killed that man, Professor Merriweather. Bracken doesn't know anything about the professor, and he doesn't like to speak ill of the dead. But if Dorito killed him, maybe he deserved it. Because as near as Bracken can tell, Dorito isn't the type of person who'd hurt someone unless it was warranted.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Arden

When to approach a party: Sunday starting at 8am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Bracken is out in a visible spot in or near the tavern. Ideally, the party will have at least some ideas about this charge and hopefully they'll approach him to talk. If they haven't approached him by 9:35am, he will approach them, in which case this encounter will change slightly (see below) but will overall be the same. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!] Bracken takes them someplace private to talk, and should very reluctantly reveal the following information - this is, after all, a big secret! - in whatever order makes sense, and depending on what the party's doing/asking:

The paper he dropped last night was given to him by his grandfather Reynaldo, shortly before Reynaldo died. (Bracken doesn't know the party has the paper unless they tell him, so he doesn't bring this up if they don't. Of course, if they tell him they have it but don't immediately give it to him, he will not be happy!)

- The paper lists the steps to become a Knight of the Black Lantern, which Reynaldo was. Bracken has dreamed of becoming a Knight in the order since he was a small boy, and even though he's not old enough yet, he feels strongly that he shouldn't wait any longer.
- To complete his 1st quest, he needed to restore a holy relic. Bracken heard rumors that the Smirches had the stolen Crown of St. Mora in their vaults, so he broke in and stole it back. He left it on the Valerius doorstep knowing Santiago West Valerius would return it to the Church.
- Completing his 2nd quest, giving to those poorer than himself, was challenging only because Bracken himself had almost nothing, and it was difficult to find someone with less. Still, he has done that, as his ragged clothing attests.
- Bracken originally thought the 3rd quest, about rescuing a damsel in distress, was - with all due respect to the Knights of the Black Lantern - a load of antiquated patriarchal bullshit. But then he met Angelica Sprink, a young woman who'd been coddled to the point that she was essentially helpless. He's tried to help her learn as many life skills as he can think of, even though doing this has incurred the wrath of her parents, who attribute ulterior motives to his actions. Bracken hasn't heard yet about Angelica successfully defending herself against the Wolven this morning, but assuming the party tells him, he is delighted. Angelica is now a self-rescuing damsel!

- The 4th quest, though, has thwarted Bracken. If only the paper were not ripped! He doesn't know who or what he's supposed to slay. Bracken originally thought that perhaps he was supposed to slay a dragon, but apparently those aren't actually real. The only other possibility that occurred to him was that he was supposed to slay a terrible villain or villains. He has in fact tried to kill Morgoth himself, since Morgoth is the most villainous person Bracken can imagine, but although he got close, he failed to do so. (This is because Morgoth can only be killed by a caster, although Bracken doesn't know or say this.) Since he has been unable to kill Morgoth, he's taken it upon himself to eradicate as many Wolven as he can.
- Reynaldo told him once that a young Knight-to-be would just instinctively know when the time was right to complete the final quest. Bracken hasn't yet experienced any sort of instinctive knowing, even the times he got closest to killing Morgoth. His grandfather was very insistent on this point. Bracken worries maybe this means he isn't cut out to be a Knight after all.

Hopefully the “ever fabulous” on the coaster as well as their keeper’s vision has given the party at least a hint that the Order of the Black Lantern isn’t an entirely conventional chivalric order. It doesn’t matter if the Knight Club pun occurs to them, but ideally they’ll realize that the slaying Bracken must do isn’t about killing anyone, but rather about being generally epic. If they suggest this to Bracken, he’s very interested. There’s something that sounds cosmically right about that, he says. How would he go about doing that, he wants to know. Bracken should take any and all suggestions the party has to offer to heart!

Bracken will go along with the party when they do their Ritual of Location, and then also asks to go with them to the Wild Lands. Although he likes their idea about slaying (if they’ve had one!) he wants to hedge his bets. Certainly it can’t hurt him to kill a few more Wolven, just to be on the safe side, right?

Note: If it gets to be 9:35am and the party hasn’t approached Bracken, he’ll need to approach them. If this is the case, he tells them that he heard a rumor they were looking for the Sconce of the Wood. Bracken knows where the Sconce is, in fact: Morgoth has it. Bracken saw it there when he tried unsuccessfully to kill Morgoth. Bracken tells the party that he’s on a quest to slay as many Wolven as possible and asks if he can accompany them. They still need to do their Ritual of Location, which will confirm what Bracken says as well as give them additional info. Hopefully, Bracken being with them for all this time as well as mentioning his quest to slay Wolven will encourage the party to ask him about the black paper et al. If they get back from the Wild Lands but haven’t asked, Bracken should let the Basement know! Again, these instructions are only if the party fails to approach him. If they’re taking the lead, he doesn’t need to mention the Sconce.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken’s, see page 83 for the whole story

Arden, still

Time: 9:45am, Sunday (Bracken is NOT the penultimate step for this party, but he will be with them when they collect the chaos pendant from Buzzkill at 9:45am in the tavern, and he will go with them to do their ritual and then to complete their party path ending.)

Info to give the party directly: The following information is for the party’s Companion, although Bracken can also assist with this:

Once the party has collected the chaos pendant from Buzzkill, the Companion should suggest sitting someplace quiet to perform their ritual. (Windvale is nearby and is often used for this purpose since the party can sit on the pews.) Bracken will be with them for this. Once in a quiet place, the party completes the Ritual of Location as described in the note they got Friday night:

All eight sit in circle, Eldest puts on chaos pendant. Each person holds one item. All pass items (slow) around to the right. Eyes are closed whole time. While passing, all say: "Let all be known. Let all be revealed" (whispering) repeated until all items passed full circuit. When each participant back holding item had at start, eyes opened again. Revelation is granted.

Since eight people are required, the Companion also participates. As the party completes the ritual, the Companion places a small scroll in each participant’s lap, optimally doing this while each one still has their eyes closed. Each scroll says “Divine Revelation – You may read this” on the outside. Other than Bracken and the Companion, it doesn’t matter which person gets which scroll.

Inside, each scroll begins: “You feel the very core of your being touched by the divine might of the Seasons. The following words appear in your mind. You may share them with anyone you wish but you may not let anyone else read directly from this paper.”

Beyond that, each scroll’s message is different. They say:

- Morgoth killed Rook and took the Sconce of the Wood from him. Morgoth has the Sconce with him right now.
- Morgoth is not with his whole army right now, but neither is he alone.
- Morgoth is near the entrance of the Wild Lands right now.
- The entrance to the Wild Lands is warded. If more than eight people approach, Morgoth will be warned of their approach and will summon reinforcements.
- Morgoth is completely immune to all magic – spells, artifacts and prayers.

- Only a caster can kill Morgoth.

The Companion keeps a scroll which says:

- Courage is not the absence of fear. It is the mastery of fear.

Bracken gets a scroll which says:

- When the time is right, you will know.

Once the party has shared all the information from their Divine Revelations, they will need to take action pretty quickly. They can't ask other people to go along and help them, since this would trigger the aforementioned wards and alert Morgoth that they are coming.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: the Companion needs to have the divine revelation scrolls to give the party

Arden, the neverending story

Time: 10am Sunday (Morgoth, Melisande and the henchmen and Bracken are the final step on Arden's party path.)

Where: at the entrance to the Wild Lands (far up the Fool's Errand trail)

Signal to appear: Morgoth, Melisande and the Wolven can either be in hiding when the party arrives (i.e. they can surprise the party) or they can be out and visible when the party shows up. It's up to Morgoth. Do whatever is cooler, so long as you accomplish the objectives below!

Activity/Direct info: Morgoth will fight the party using a sword and will also have a spell whistle with him in case he needs to use magic for anything. Melisande has a sword. They are accompanied by multiple other Wolven fighters.

Ultimately, Morgoth must die by the party's caster's hand. (Morgoth may receive one limb wound from another person, but will not take a second limb wound or a torso wound from anybody but the caster.) We know this will be tricky, but Morgoth should give the party as exciting a fight as possible and then let them win. It's fine if the party sustains heavy casualties in the process!

Melisande focuses most of her own attacks on Bracken, who will arrive with the party. Ultimately, Bracken will kill Melisande, although this should look like a challenging fight for both of them! Although the party won't have much to do with Melisande's death, we want it to be clear who it is that Bracken is fighting, so if Morgoth or the other Wolven occasionally call her by name, that's great.

If at all possible, Morgoth, Melisande and Bracken should talk before the Wolven leave for the Wild Lands, just so a rough plan can maybe be put together!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none to *give* the party, but they will certainly take the Sconce of the Wood off Morgoth's dead body

Arden I can't even

When to approach a party: after Bracken and the party return from the Wild Lands

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: After the party has returned from the Wild Lands, if they haven't offered any ideas about what Bracken needs to slay, he should let the Basement know and we'll figure something out.

At some point before the trial, if the party hasn't suggested that he could use a nicer outfit, Bracken can bemoan that he is so disheveled. Karmin Smirch will be in (or near) the tavern at this time selling items, and will have a set of clothing for sale that is, remarkably, just Bracken's size. Hopefully the party will offer to buy it for him or to help him acquire it in some way.

Hopefully the party has fun teaching Bracken to slay. If so, they may well be expecting other Knights to show up to induct Bracken right then. If so, Bracken tells the party that - just as Reynaldo told him - he feels like his time is getting closer, but that it's not quite there yet. (This, of course, is because Bracken doesn't actually have his scene with the other Knights until during the trial. We don't want the party worrying too much that they need to keep doing more, because nothing will make this scene happen until then.)

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Lincroft Spence -- Morgan Harris-Warrick

Age: 49

Usually found: wandering

Traveler Lore concerning Lincroft appears on page 208.

A description of the Writer's Block Challenge appears on page 527.

P'loa

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the writer's block challenge

Info to give the party directly: Lincroft tells the party that he does not have a shimmerstone orb, but he does in fact have a poem that mentions a shimmerstone. He found it somewhere and enjoyed it. He used to write things that were enjoyable. Sigh. The party is welcome to take the poem.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the shimmerstone orb

Elsewhich, Glendeep, Sythwan and Waylon

When to approach a party: any time after the 4th Friday encounters and before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lincroft references the golden page he carries from Nemaia's book. Although this paper (which he DOES show the party but DOES NOT allow them to read) reminds him of a good memory, he also vividly remembers the difficult memory he shared with Nemaia, where he described himself, saying that the inability to write is driving him mad.

Reason this info matters: Please read the Changed World section, beginning on p. 158, for the context of this info and answers to a bunch more questions!

Dolorón

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lincroft tells the party that shortly after *Whatever* became really popular, all sorts of journalists wanted to interview him, and one of the questions he got asked constantly was what his favorite book was. Lincroft tells the party that this is an absurd question. Does any devoted reader really have *one* favorite book? He tells the party he got in the habit of listing five or ten of his favorite books from that year. One of the books he always mentioned to reporters - and one they were always surprised by - is *Wide as the Sky*, the latest Kit Carnage book. This, he tells the party, made it rather thrilling when he came to World's Edge and found that Katherine Carmichael - the author of the Kit Carnage books - was here as well. It has been a real pleasure to meet her, he says. Lincroft tells the party that he'd thought at first that Ms. Carmichael had come to town to work with Inspirations Unlimited just as he has, but this is seemingly not the case. This is no wonder, Lincroft says; Katherine's own life clearly provides plenty of inspiration and unlike him, she is able to write without it being a tortuous process. Lincroft explains that he was always irritated at the shock interviewers expressed when he listed the Kit Carnage book as one of his favorites. Apparently he was supposed to look down on the books because they were "only" written for younger readers, or maybe because they were written for girls. A good book is a good book, Lincroft says, regardless of who the intended audience is. The Kit Carnage books are great stories. Yes, they're obviously based closely on Katherine Carmichael's real life, but they're also full of sly humor and insightful observations. Lincroft says that he can only hope and pray he'll create something half as good, assuming he ever manages to write anything else.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lincroft tells the party about an interaction he had recently with Dorito. He'd needed to purchase some salve the Smirches sell. It's terribly expensive, but it's the only thing that cures the muscle cramps he gets in his writing hand. He wouldn't normally mind the expense because it really does work, but he's running quite low on funds at the moment. Lincroft tells the party that he'd been at the shop at the same time Dorito was there, and he'd been crushed to learn from Phineas Smirch that the shop was almost out of the salve. Phineas explained he'd had to raise the price further because the salve was in such short supply, so Lincroft decided to do without it, even though his hand was aching. Lincroft tells the party that Dorito watched this interaction without saying a word, but that when he'd turned to leave the shop, she'd said, "Oh, he's lying about being nearly out of that stuff." Lincroft was startled to hear this, he tells the party. Dorito explained that every time Phineas talked about the salve, he'd glanced just a little at the third shelf to his right. "I'll bet if you look there, you've got some more after all." Dorito told Phineas, and although Phineas hadn't looked at all happy about it, it turned out there were multiple bottles of salve on the third shelf, and Phineas had ultimately sold him two at the normal price. Lincroft tells the party that people are saying Dorito killed a man, which is obviously awful. Lincroft is sad to hear that, he says. The young woman he met in the shop was kind as well as perceptive, even if Phineas Smirch wasn't a fan.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Lincroft tells the party that he's heard the unfolding drama surrounding Tanya Peacock's stolen crown. He tells the party that one of the visiting Makai, a man called Dealbinder, has the crown and claims to have found it in a box out in the woods. Lincroft tells the party that this story obviously strains credulity. In his experience, that means it's probably true. If Dealbinder were to make up a story, surely he'd craft a story more believable than this one, right? Lincroft says that he supposes it's possible Dealbinder is rather dim and this is honestly the best story he can come up with. Or perhaps Dealbinder is a genius and has purposely crafted a fiction so laughably implausible that it appears conversely true! Lincroft tells the party that sadly, the truth is probably less interesting than either of these. But he does not know what that truth might be.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

Katherine Carmichael -- Marléna Soble

Age: 52

Usually found: wandering

Traveler Lore concerning Katherine appears on page 209.

Secret Info:

Hand to heart, she never intended to lie to anyone. This is Katherine's secret.

She is not Kit Carnage and she never has been. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In *Resolute*, the first book Katherine published, Kit says, "I was born in Sythwan. I won't bother telling you the name of the town on account of you've never heard of it. Nothing's ever happened there worth noting except for how my Ma and Pa both died before I turned one, and admittedly this is a fact primarily of interest to my own self."

Katherine herself was born in Sythwan... and that's just about where the similarities end. She was raised in the prosperous township of Noblegrange, in a three-story home full of heavy mahogany furniture and the hushed footsteps of servants. Both of her parents are, to the best of her knowledge, still living, although she has had no contact with them for more than two decades.

Katherine was a lonely and timid little girl. It was never made clear what sort of child Mother and Father had hoped to have - certainly a boisterous one would have been deeply problematic - but whatever they'd wanted, it was abundantly obvious Katherine wasn't it. Her father ignored her nearly completely. Her mother reprimanded her often with a sort of dispassionate cruelty probably intended to be corrective in nature. "Your hair is a rat's nest, Katherine, and one fit only for the least discriminating of rats. Is it *too* much to ask that you brush it?" A series of nannies were hired, all of them trained in Mother's particular brand of biting condescension.

Some afternoons, Katherine would sit quietly on a brocade settee, looking out the large windows at the faraway rolling hills, and it was then that she first began to daydream of a girl very, very different from herself. *That* girl wasn't afraid of anything, or if she was, she certainly didn't let being afraid stop her.

Katherine was 16 the first time she actually wrote one of those daydream stories down. She cringes now, thinking of the bald-faced *want* poured out on those pages. That other girl looked a great deal like Katherine, with her untamable curly hair and pale blue eyes. ("*Must* you sit staring with those moon-eyes, Katherine? You look like a cow that has lost her way back to the barn.") She had a name quite like Katherine's, except that it was short and sharp and meant business. Katherine now realizes that creating a character thusly is escapist nonsense, an exercise in authorial self-insertion and wish-fulfillment.

In her defense, she'd never intended the stories to be seen by anyone but herself.

At age 22, however, she found herself at a crossroads she'd somehow approached unawares. ("Are you planning to live here *forever*, Katherine? Perhaps there's a man out there looking for a plain-faced wife of no discernible talents.") Katherine sent off her writing to a publisher, not because she was optimistic about the results but rather because she was pessimistic about the likelihood of finding such a husband.

Against the odds, however, those stories eventually found their way into print, and in time other books followed them. Kit was everything Katherine was not. Kit didn't go picking fights, but she didn't back down when they inevitably found her. She carried a weapon and moved through lawless places, but she fought always on the side of the angels. And she didn't let anybody - *anybody* - disrespect her.

Little girls loved the books, and her publisher was taking notice of this fact. Parents liked that the books eschewed explicit violence. That had never been a conscious choice on Katherine's part, but since the sight of - or even the thought of - blood made her lightheaded, she was uninterested in writing scenes of gore.

Resolute had been out for almost a year when it happened for the first time. She was signing books at a bookseller, and a troupe of girls approached her. One girl saw Katherine's curls and squealed, "That's her! Kit Carnage!" Katherine had corrected her, of course, but all the girls took up the chant. They told her how wonderful she was. Her, Kit Carnage.

Katherine stopped correcting them.

It started happening more and more, and then Katherine started actively blurring the lines slightly. She no longer lived in the coldly elegant house in Noblegrange, and she could now dress as she wished. And it turned out that she rather enjoyed dressing in the practical trousers and heeled boots Kit favored. With some of the proceeds from *Shadows on the Trail*, she bought herself a crossbow, and she took lessons until she was good with it, although unlike Kit, she never once pointed it at an actual person. Even though she still introduced herself as Katherine Carmichael, she stopped correcting the people who referred to her as the "real-life Kit Carnage."

And then the letters started.

There had been fan mail from the beginning, much of it written in childlike handwriting telling her the books were wonderful and asking when she'd write the next one. They were delightful to receive, but these other letters were something different.

These letters weren't saying they loved the stories. They said they loved *her*. Kit. They loved her and they emulated her. They could be brave because of her example. She got letters from little girls who talked about standing up to schoolyard bullies or pushy older siblings. And she got letters from grown women as well.

She still has the one from a woman who'd only signed it "Mary."

"My husband, he gets mean when he's been drinking," it said, in the second paragraph. "He yells something awful. Anyway, I wanted to tell you about a thing as happened last month. It was a Saturday night and he was drunk and getting drunker and at some point he got mad at me for how I was looking at him. He came over to me, all angry-talk, and he had that look he gets. Ms. Carnage, I am honest not sure what came over me, but I looked him dead in the face, just like you did with that bandit leader in Showdown In Amaranth, and I said real low "I don't think you ought to be speaking to me like that." And he said "What did you say to me Mary?" and I repeated myself just slow and even like I knew you would've. I can't even hardly believe this but he backed himself up and he just said "Oh" and Ms. Carnage it has been a month now and he hasn't raised his voice to me, not once. I didn't think I would have the courage to talk back to him like that but I pretended I was you and then I did it and I thought you should know."

Even if Mary had included a return address - she hadn't - what was Katherine supposed to do? Write back and explain that Kit Carnage wasn't real?

Katherine continues to write her books, and she continues to get letters like Mary's. There are women and girls out there - real ones - who draw strength and courage from the example Kit sets.

Now she is in Moreth, in a little town at the edge of the world, and it seems her deception is catching up with her at long last. A man named Vernon Gill has only just recently arrived, and he claims she shot him twice, permanently damaging his arm. She's not sure what actually happened to the man's arm, but it certainly wasn't her shooting him.

Still, she cannot say that. The only way to dispute Vernon Gill's claim is to divulge the fact that she has never shot anyone, because she is not Kit Carnage, because Kit Carnage isn't real, is only words on a page.

What will that do to the Marys of the world?

She will not take Kit away from them. She will pay whatever damages the justice requires to Mr. Gill. She will likely also go to prison. This is a terrifying prospect, but she sees no other alternative.

It is better than letting all those women and girls learn the sad truth.

A description of the Double-Mute Charades Challenge appears on page 526.

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the double-mute charades challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: cryptstone brandy cork

Dolorón

When to approach a party: at any point(s) during the weekend before Saturday 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Katherine should meet the party. There's no specific information she needs to convey - she shouldn't bring up Vernon Gill or anything about the charge unless they ask - but she should be likable and straightforward. She can be interested in them and ask about their adventures in World's Edge, because that's the quickest way for the party to like her. She should come across as competent and no-nonsense without bragging (e.g. "Yeah, Skeevvers are a headache. Sounds like you did a good job getting rid of them.") Katherine has a crossbow hanging from her belt, but if the party

(or any party) asks, she tells them that in light of recent events, she has turned over the bolts to Justice Wilde's bailiff. *If and only if the party asks about Vernon/the shooting/the charge*, Katherine tells them she'd rather not discuss it. She doesn't get flustered, but she's very comfortable setting boundaries and this is a clear one for her. *If and only if the party asks how she could pull crossbow bolts from Vernon Gill's body without fainting at the sight of blood*, Katherine gets very shaky and tells them she doesn't want to talk about it. She should sit down quickly and look as though she might faint or get sick. Unless the party completely disengages and walks away right then, Katherine will do the scene described below as happening on Sunday at 10am.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Keer

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Katherine tells the party that she'd shown up a little bit early last Sunday afternoon for the lecture Professor Merriweather was supposed to give. The talk was supposed to be at 3pm and she got to the tavern around 2:15 or so. She confesses she wasn't especially interested in his subject matter per se, but she's an author herself, and she did some readings back in the early days that were very poorly attended. It's a terrible feeling, speaking to an empty room. She wouldn't wish that on anyone, so she makes a point to show up when other authors speak, regardless of genre. As it turned out, there was no lecture after all, since the professor never actually arrived. Katherine tells the party that Lenora Graves was there and was very anxious about Dr. Merriweather's failure to show. Katherine wonders if maybe *she* should've skipped some of her early book-talks. Would anyone have been anxious about her absence? She doubts it.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Sunday at 10am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday at 10am, is out in front of the tavern. Soon thereafter, the party should have finished their party path ending. It's possible they'll know/suspect most of what's going on here (although probably not why) and will approach Katherine directly. If this happens, that's great! On the other hand, if the party has shown up outside the tavern and it's been 5-10 minutes and they haven't approached her, she should approach them. The scene works either way!

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

If Katherine approaches the party, she tells them she's heard they've been asking around about the charge that was leveled against her. She tells them she greatly appreciates their concern, but that she needs them to please not say anything more on the subject. (If they approach her, she lets them tell her what they think/know and then does the above.) When the party (hopefully!) wants to know why she wants this matter dropped, she slowly and reluctantly confides in them. She explains that she didn't shoot Vernon Gill, that she's never actually shot anyone. She is not Kit Carnage and she never has been. Then Katherine tells the party about the letters she gets from her readers. There are letters from little girls who talk about standing up to bullies because they think about what Kit would do. There are letters from teenaged girls and from grown women. They write to let her know they've stood up for themselves. Sometimes they write that they've gotten away from men who yell at them, or men who hit. They write about finding courage, she tells the party, and they say that Kit Carnage taught them to be brave.

Katherine tells the party that she cannot tell all those women and girls that Kit Carnage is a lie. Katherine tells the party that, although she appreciates their efforts and their concern, she cannot tell the truth. It's better for her to pay Vernon Gill and to serve a prison term than it is to reveal the truth. She will hear nothing else from them on the subject and then hurries away as quickly as possible.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Katherine tells the party that Solomon Stillwater recently made a trip back to Keer, where he's originally from. Before Solomon left, he'd hung a picture of himself on the bar so that everyone behaved while he was away. Katherine can't say whether or not that was effective - a lot's happened in town in the past couple weeks! - but that the picture sparked its own bit of drama. She tells the party that about a week ago, she was in the tavern one night when a man she didn't recognize came in. He took a look at the sketch of Solomon and said, "Why have you got a picture of Scurvy Jack Brigham in here?" People explained that it wasn't the famous pirate, that the picture was of Solomon, but the man was insistent that no, it was Jack Brigham. Katherine tells the party that she'd ignored the man. It wasn't the first time she'd seen a drunk man insisting he was right and she's sure it won't be the last. She hadn't thought much more about it, but apparently a few days later, it happened again. That is, it was a different day and a different man - again, someone no one knew - but the man had insisted the picture was of Scurvy Jack. Katherine doesn't think you should read too much into the statements men make in bars, but of course some people have gotten worked up over the incidents, speculating that maybe Solomon actually was Jack Brigham. Solomon is back now, so hopefully that will set this silliness to rest.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Pearl Bryce -- Tricia Boynton

Age: 25

Usually found: wandering

A description of the Double-Mute Charades Challenge appears on page 526.

Sythwan

Approximately when: Friday night (Pearl Bryce is the party's Contact.)

Activity: introducing the party to their Companion / helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Pearl asks the party to tell her all about their mission.

Pearl tells the party that gosh, she surely would like to help them with what sounds like a real important mission. She doesn't know anything about a magical song, but as for a man named Golden, Pearl knows a lady with that name, and she's a whiz with magic to boot! Her name's Poppy Golden, and she's pretty much a genius, Pearl thinks. Pearl just knows Poppy can get them what they need in a jiffy! Poppy's in the tavern tonight and Pearl's happy to introduce them to her.

Sometime during the conversation, Pearl introduces the party to their Companion. Pearl says the party ought to have someone familiar with World's Edge to accompany them during their stay, and suggests Silla, who has been sitting at the same table. Pearl quietly lets the party know not to expect too much fighting skill or common sense from the Companion.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pearl tells the party that it was the darndest thing, the way no one who was in town last night can remember anything from that night. She explains that when she woke up, she had no idea what had happened, which maybe isn't all that surprising on account of how last night was Belle Bishop's bachelorette party. Pearl's awful close to Belle, what with Belle having been Pearl's former babysitter. Pearl's one of Belle's bridesmaids and everything! Anyway, Pearl admits, she might maybe have had a drink or two more than she oughtta have had. So when she personally woke up with no memory of the night before, it wasn't all that surprising.

The surprising part, Pearl says, is that no one could remember anything... even people who didn't go to Belle's party, or the party for Cary, Belle's fiancé. From what Pearl's heard, Pascal Valerius and his husband Santiago were out of town last night, and they remember everything. But no one who was actually in World's Edge has the slightest idea what went on. The whole thing is all-fired strange, and Pearl intends to get to the bottom of this mystery!

Item(s) to give this party: none

Dolorón

When to approach a party: on Friday night

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pearl should take a few minutes to meet the party. There's no specific information Pearl needs to convey, but she'll be assigning the party's charge on Saturday. (Note, of course, that Pearl doesn't mention anything about the charge yet!) Saturday around 1pm, she'll need to say "You seem like good people, people I can count on to help." That's much easier to say if she's had a brief but positive interaction with the party!

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Pearl Bryce is assigning this party's charge. She is in the tavern at lunchtime and follows the party out when they leave the tavern, assigning the charge once they're outside and can focus.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party directly: *Saturday just after lunch*, Pearl approaches the party and asks them to please look into the charge that has been leveled again Katherine Carmichael. She tells the party that she grew up reading the Kit Carnage stories - *Shadows on*

the Trail, Journey into the Ghostlands, and her favorite one, *Across the Great Prairie*. They're swell stories, every last one of 'em, and they're a big part of why she decided to become a writer herself. Golly, the party can't even imagine how excited Pearl was when she got to World's Edge for Belle's wedding and found that Ms. Katherine Carmichael herself was here! Pearl tells the party that sometimes it's a bad idea to meet your idols because they so rarely live up to the hype, but Katherine Carmichael exceeded expectations. She's real, real smart and brave as all get-out! Pearl has been interviewing Katherine for an article about the 25th anniversary of the very first book, *Resolute: The Kit Carnage Story*. Everything was swell until that awful Vernon Gill came to town. Pearl tells the party that Vernon arrived midday on Wednesday, making claims that Katherine'd shot him twice, once in the forearm and once in the shoulder. Pearl tells the party that she'd been in the tavern when he arrived and she'd asked him if he had any proof of these claims. He claimed Katherine shot him and then when he fell the ground, she'd stood over him and yanked the bolts back out of his arm. According to Vernon, it was 10 years ago that this happened. Pearl tells the party that 10 years is a long time and maybe Vernon Gill is confused or mistaken, but Katherine has said that yes, she did this. Katherine says she'll pay Mister Gill fair and square whatever the court orders, which is liable to be a lot on account of him bellyaching about how much pain and suffering he's endured. Plus, there'll be time in jail! Pearl confesses that if it were her, she'd probably just head for the hills and hope the law never caught up, but Katherine is a better person than that. Pearl tells the party that still, it gets her goat just thinking about this. Maybe there's a loophole or something Katherine doesn't know about! Gosh, she'd really appreciate it if the party could look into this charge against Ms. Carmichael.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Item(s) to give the party: the written copy of the Prosecutor's indictment

Elsewhich

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the double-mute charades challenge

Info to give the party directly: Pearl tells the party it sure is funny, them asking her about a heliotrope candle. She doesn't have one, but just the other day she found a crumpled-up letter that talks about a magical candle. Pearl tells them that she'd saved the letter because it seemed like there might be a story behind it, but the more she thinks about it, she's guessing the only story is that some fella wasn't treating his sweetheart too good. That's not news, Pearl says. The party's welcome to take the letter. Hopefully it'll lead them to that special candle they need!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: riddle leading to the heliotrope candle

Noctara

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the double-mute charades challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: aventurine shards

any parties encountered (ideally 2-4 parties total)

When to approach a party: any time before Saturday at 4pm, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pearl tells the party that she's all fired up for Belle's upcoming wedding. Belle used to babysit her when she was little, so she's known Belle pretty much her whole life. Pearl remembers being maybe 4 or 5 years old and being over at the Bishop house. She was supposed to be taking a nap, but Mr. Bishop - Belle's dad - would make faces at her to make her laugh. Belle would act all exasperated with them both, but it was clear she wasn't really mad. The only thing that actually made Belle angry for real was when her father called her "Belly Bean", which she hates. Pearl tells the party that Belle's always been a genius and now she's a famous inventor to boot!

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Big Musical Number and the scene that follows

Arden

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pearl tells the party that Bracken asked her at one point if dragons were real, and if so, if she knew where any could be found. Pearl assumes he was just flirting with her, which happens a lot. Obviously dragons aren't real. Everyone knows that.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Pearl tells the party she's writing an article about the embezzling of all that money from the Peacock Family Singers. She hates to do it, because that Mister Milton Peacock seems like a real stand-up fella. But 12 thousand royals! Golly, that's a lot of moolah, and her readers are gonna want to hear about how those Peacock folks had so much and then had it all taken away.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Sunday at 10:45am, after the party has interacted with Katherine Carmichael, the party encounters a group of women - Pearl Bryce, Nix Valerius, Joni Peacock, Donna Peacock and Nina Bliss - all feverishly discussing a plan. Pearl pulls the party over and tells them what's happening. She explains that they cannot allow Katherine Carmichael to go to jail for shooting Vernon Gill. Vernon is an odious person, she says, and surely Katherine must have had a valid reason for shooting him. [Remember: none of these women know that Vernon is faking his injuries or that Katherine didn't really shoot him!] Joni tells the party that they all love the Kit Carnage books so much. Kit has been so important to all of them. Donna reiterates that they cannot let Katherine go to jail.

Nix tells the party that Pearl has come up with a plan to keep Katherine from going to jail. When Katherine's charge comes to trial, Pearl is going to claim that *she* was the one who shot Vernon. And then Nix is going to say that no, *she* shot him. Then Joni and Donna are also going to claim that *they* were the ones who shot him. With so many other people confessing, Justice Wilde can't possibly rule that Katherine is guilty! [Note: yes, this plan is 100% us ripping off the "I'm Spartacus" scene.]

Nina interrupts here. She tells the others - as she has already been doing - that this plan isn't going to work. First of all, they cannot get up and lie in a Lyrian court of law. Second of all, even if they're willing to commit perjury - which they should not be! - this plan is likely to result in a legal situation the law calls Merrick's Conundrum. In a case like this, it's not at all impossible that Justice Wilde could simply declare all of them - Katherine Carmichael *and* Pearl and Nix and Joni and Donna - guilty! He could require *all* of them to pay damages to Vernon Gill, resulting in the unpleasant Mr. Gill receiving a very, very large amount of money indeed! And he could send *all* of them to jail.

The group then resumes arguing amongst themselves, because Pearl is still insisting that they need *some* plan to save Katherine, while Nina is sympathetic but vehemently opposed to this particular plan. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

Hopefully at some point in here the party confides in these women and tells them the truth about Katherine, that she didn't shoot Vernon or anyone else. Assuming the party does this, all these women are overcome. Katherine is an inspiration! She's so brave!

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Hopefully, the party then makes the leap to the fact that telling Katherine's real life story will inspire women and girls just like Kit Carnage's stories do... and Katherine is actually real.

If the party *doesn't* tell these women the truth here, or if they propose a different plan, someone should tell the Basement and we'll make a plan from there! Also, if it's early enough and if it seems like the party really wants to have this scene with Katherine pre-trial, then we can send her back out at that time.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Vernon Gill -- Jim Vincent

Age: 62

Usually found: in the Inn at World's Edge/wandering

Traveler Lore concerning Katherine Carmichael (which Vernon should read) appears on page 209.

Secret Info:

Sometimes you have to tell some stories that aren't exactly true in order to serve the greater good.

Vernon Gill wasn't *technically* shot by that Kit Carnage woman... or "Katherine Carmichael", or whatever her name is. If someone wants to split hairs, Vernon wasn't ever actually shot at all.

Be that as it may, there's no denying that a lot of *other* very serious things have happened to him. Vernon was raised, and still resides, in Dunnsmoore, a small and depressing barony in Moreth with a worse than average school system and unusually bad weather. His parents weren't wealthy enough to give him the finer things in life, but also not poor enough to instill him with innate grit.

Vernon doesn't like to complain, but it was about as awful an upbringing as a person could have.

Vernon mostly supports himself by taking on odd jobs here and there, although you'd be surprised how many of those expect a person to expose himself to dirt or exertion or inconvenience. It's also challenging to find jobs he can take on, because he's always had a real low tolerance for boredom (thus ruling out a lot of employment options) and for authority (further limiting his available choices.)

The story that Vernon tells about having been a soldier? Also technically not actually true. But he certainly did *think* at one point about enlisting, but in light of the potential for either danger or tedium, he deemed it a bad fit.

It turned out he could achieve a lot of the benefits of being a soldier just by buying an old uniform off of some guy. Although the guy wanted 15 royals for the uniform, which is outrageous. Why does everyone insist on making things so hard for Vernon?!?

It honestly seemed like Vernon could never catch a break, but then he heard that Katherine Carmichael, the one who wrote all those books, was spending some time in World's Edge, which isn't all that far away from Dunnsmoore. (Although the roads to World's Edge are *awful*. Badly maintained *and* largely uphill!)

Vernon got to thinking. Okay, Katherine Carmichael didn't *actually* shoot him. But she's shot a lot of people. If he *said* she'd shot him, he'd probably be entitled to compensation, right? Especially if he said that he'd lost the use of his sword arm! That would be a real bad injury for a career soldier, which at this point Vernon basically was!

He was a little afraid some truth-happy official would ask for proof Katherine was the one who shot him, especially because he's heard about those fancy crossbow bolts she'd got, engraved with her initials and everything. (Engraved crossbow bolts! Honestly, the sheer gall of some people!) But *then* Vernon figured out a perfect explanation for this: all he has to do is say that Katherine shot him (twice! In his sword arm! And him a decorated career soldier!) but that she yanked her fancy crossbow bolts back out of his arm. *That's* why he doesn't still have them. Also this was real traumatic for him and probably entitles him to an even bigger settlement!

He'd made his way to World's Edge, at great personal risk and inconvenience to himself. Once there, he told the story of the attack on him. He said it happened ten years ago, which is why the wounds have long since closed up. And also means he should probably get compensated extra for all those intervening years when he was out of work. Now that he thinks about it, it might've even been eleven or twelve years ago!

Vernon figured he'd tell his sad story, and hopefully the local baron or whoever would make this Carmichael woman pay up. Two unexpected things have happened, though.

The first is that he hasn't even needed to appeal to the baron, because it turns out an itinerant justice was scheduled to come to World's Edge. That was fine with Vernon. He doesn't care about sending Carmichael to jail so long as she pays him, but a justice will make it easier to get the money out of her.

The other real surprising piece is that... Carmichael isn't denying his story. Vernon guesses that when you shoot as many people as her, they all start to blur together. Whatever. It doesn't matter, so long as he gets the money that's rightfully owed to him.

On Sunday, that's exactly what's going to happen. It's a pain he has to wait around until Sunday, though. It's real uncomfortable, having to keep his perfect good arm in this damn sling. Poor Vernon. He just *cannot* seem to catch a break.

A description of the Illiterate Letter Challenge (version 2) appears on page 528.

P'loa

Approximately when: Saturday morning (Vernon is the party's 1st Saturday morning encounter.)

Note: Like all the 1st Saturday encounters, you'll be in the tavern at breakfast time. Unlike the other 1st Saturdays, you don't have a separate set location. Relatively soon after this party comes in, approach them as noted below and ask them to find you after they're done with breakfast. You'll do your challenge with them either in the tavern or very nearby.

Activity: the illiterate letter (version 2) challenge

Info to give the party directly: Vernon tells the party that he heard they were looking for some leatherleaf herb. He has some, because it's supposed to ease the constant aching in his arm. Sadly, it doesn't really work and it makes his stomach cramp, so the party can have it.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Vernon tells the party that they've picked an unfortunate time to come to World's Edge. There'll be a trial held in town on Sunday, which probably means the prices in the tavern have been unfairly jacked up. And there's a wedding happening soon after the trial ends. Vernon assumes the bride and groom are probably going to pestering everyone for gifts. He hopes the music isn't too loud and that the buffet has some decent options. Ugh. Vernon hates weddings.

At the very end of the encounter, Vernon asks the party "So, where are you headed next?" Up until this point in the weekend, all the encounters have been very staff-directed, and we want to signal to them that they're now in charge. Also, it would be great if Vernon could ask what other items the party is looking for. There's a chance the party has forgotten about the list they got last night, and hopefully this will remind them to take it out and re-read it!

Item(s) to give this party: leatherleaf herb

Clairia

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Vernon tells the party that in every town, there are givers and there are takers. That Danny Donovan chap, obviously, is a taker. Vernon reminds the party that Danny is a drug addict and a loose cannon. Danny needs a place to sleep and so he sleeps in the tavern. He needs a place to do drugs and so he sneaks into the theater. And then, when he gets fired for being incompetent and disobeying orders, he burns the place down. Society is full of people like that, Vernon says. There are only a few givers and a whole lot of takers.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Dolorón

When to approach a party: at any point(s) Saturday before 4pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Vernon should take every opportunity to complain to the party about their behavior as well as the behavior of staff characters. Some possibilities: Vernon peevishly tells the party that they're being too loud and asks them to keep it down as he doesn't like to eat when there's noise around. Bonus points if, after doing this, he then complains that they're being too quiet, that their silence is unsettling. Vernon tells the party that he wants them to switch servers with him because he doesn't care for his server's attitude. Bonus points if Vernon's server is Bonnie or some other utterly attitude-free person. Vernon tells the party that the fact that there are so many visiting adventurers here has made the service very slow. Vernon complains in the party's hearing that his tea is too cold and then, when he is brought a fresh cup, complains that it is too hot. Vernon should ideally work with a server or two to do these at a time/place that won't disrupt actual serving. *If and only if the party asks about Katherine Carmichael shooting him*, Vernon says that the shooting occurred ten years ago, outside a bar in a small town in Arden. Katherine called his name and when he turned to see what she wanted, she shot him, first in the forearm and then, when he was reeling in shock from the pain, shot him again just below his shoulder. The second shot knocked Vernon to the ground. Katherine then walked over to where Vernon lay. He was terrified she'd shoot him again, this time fatally, but instead she brutally yanked both crossbow bolts from his body. Vernon explained that the bolts Katherine carries have her initials etched into the shafts, and that she didn't want to leave him with proof of her attack. He passed out from pain and blood loss at that time and when he regained consciousness, she was gone.

Charge to which this info pertains: Katherine Carmichael's, see page 90 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Vernon tells the party that he was approached by that young gentleman, Huxley.

Huxley came to him asking about some sort of small spinning device. Vernon tells the party that he actually had an odd little gadget that appeared to be exactly what they were looking for. The gadget was expensive and extremely hard to come by and is probably irreplaceable, but Vernon was only too happy to give it to the gentleman. The funny thing was that as soon as he handed the device to Huxley, he started fidgeting with it... which is also what Vernon always does with it! Great minds really do think alike! Vernon tells the party that he must have a great deal in common with the younger Huxley. Who knows, perhaps one day Vernon will be invited to the home of Baron Albert Huxley, a real mover and shaker! And, of course, it's a good feeling to help out a young man like that!

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Sythwan

When to approach a party: if he's able to find the party again later on Saturday

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Vernon tells the party that he recently heard that apparently the people passing themselves off as "Huxley" and "Quinoa" are actually thieves who steal the identities of reputable citizens! This is outrageous! He graciously provided them with assistance, only now to learn that they have misrepresented themselves to him. Disappointing!

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

Ember -- Mirin Scassellati

Age: 25

Usually found: wandering

Secret Info:

Ember does not actually have secrets. She just has things she chooses not to say. Here are those things:

So, when Ember was born, she wasn't actually technically human. She was a cat. Well, a kitten, of course, what with having just been born. Duh.

Anyway, yeah. She and her brothers and sisters – a litter of 6 – grew up together and at some point it got real obvious she was different from them. Because she liked being a cat? Obviously? But also... just also always knew she was actually a person?

She's not going to go into all the details here. Ember met a witch, palled around with her for a while, and there was a spell that turned Ember human. The witch seemed to think Ember would stick around, be some kind of human familiar. Um, no. Not so much. Ember had places to go.

She's been more or less on the road ever since. People always want her to stay around, but whatever.

Here's the other thing Ember's choosing not to say: she doesn't dislike Karmin Smirch. This is pretty much the highest level of affection Ember is capable of.

Most people annoy her. People who pay her too much attention annoy her. People who don't pay her enough attention do too. And people who pay her the kind of attention she wanted 10 minutes ago? Ugh. The literal worst.

But Karmin is okay.

As such, Ember is treating him the way she treats people she sorta likes. She hangs around the Smirch shop reasonably often. Sometimes there are boxes piled up outside, which makes it a good place to catch her late morning nap, her early afternoon nap or maybe her pre-dinner nap. Sometimes there are items on shelves there, which means Ember slides an item or two onto the floor just as a way of expressing her friendship to Karmin.

There are times when she might need to cough up a hairball or two, but even when Karmin doesn't thank her, it's still cool between them. On some of those occasions, she'll pee around the outside of the shop, just so people know she and Karmin are friends.

There've even been a few times when she felt affectionate enough to bring him a handcrafted gift. Last week there was a mole that – not to brag – she ate only about a third of, and she totally could've finished it all. Instead, she left it for Karmin as a little good-morning sort of present. You're welcome.

Are there other things Ember's not telling? Probably. But this conversation is boring her. She's done now.

A description of the POV Challenge appears on page 529.

Elsewhich

Approximately when: Friday night (Ember is the party's 2nd Friday encounter.)

Activity: helping the participants get comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Info to give the party directly: Ember asks the party about their mission. It sounds like their Duchess has already tried all sorts of sacred means of healing her daughter, but if (when) Ember gets them to mention that the little girl asked about some sort of cup, Ember tells them she vaguely remembers someone saying something to her about a magical healing cup. Ember tells the party she doesn't usually listen much to what people are saying, but this seems important to them, so she'll try to remember. Oh, yes, she's got it now: it was one of those green-robed people who'd told her something about a magic cup. Makai, those people call themselves. Ember tells the party that the man who'd mentioned the cup to her is named Kerrick Dealbinder. Apparently the Makai homeground is many miles away from World's Edge, in a remote mountain location, but the Makai occasionally send small groups to World's Edge. One such group is in town right now.

Kerrick Dealbinder doesn't appear to be in the tavern at the moment, Ember says. She herself cannot leave the tavern at the moment and also she does not want to. But she brings the party over to Kira, and asks Kira if she would be willing to walk the party to the Makai camp. Ember wishes the party much luck in World's Edge.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: During this encounter, Ember is sitting with Karmin Smirch. [Prior to the party's arrival in the tavern, Ember should remind Electra (the party's Contact) to bring them to her so that she doesn't need to approach them and can be her normal aloof self.] There's no charge-specific information Ember needs to convey; we just want the party to see her personality and to let them see that she's friends with Karmin.

Item(s) to give this party: none

Clairia

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the POV challenge

Info to give the party directly: Ember has a carbon key one of her followers gave her. That whole carbon-key fad from a few months back? She started that. The party can have this one, though. Now that everybody's wearing them she's pretty over the whole thing.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: carbon key

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: whenever it's light out and they're not occupied with something else

Activity: the POV challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Ember tells the party about something that happened a couple weeks ago. She'd left her bag on the bar, and when she returned to get it, someone had left her a gift. This happens often to Ember. People like giving her gifts. This particular gift was a painting of her. Ember tells the party that the painting looks good. This is to be expected, as the painting is realistic and she herself looks good. If the party asks if any money was taken from her bag, Ember tells the party that she doesn't know. She doesn't use money much. People don't usually charge her for things.

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Ember tells the party that she heard someone saying that Miscellania had been spending a lot of time with Milton Peacock. Ember says that hadn't made any sense to her, because Miscellania has a lot going for her and Milton is... whatever. But then Ember heard that Milton had embezzled 12 thousand royals, which she has to admit is kind of a baller move. So maybe she understands his appeal after all.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

Elsewhich

When to approach a party: Sunday around 10:15am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: After their party path and post-party-path scenes with Kovi Woundtender are complete, Teknos brings the party back to the tavern. He's very excited to show them an item he just received from one of his inventors. It's a new sort of wand with a fascinating new targeting system on it. This wand is just a prototype; it doesn't actually have an effect. It has just been shipped to World's Edge, and is packed (along with a lot of packing material) inside a large crate. Teknos removes the lid of the crate, placing it on the floor, and then lifts out the wand. Through all of this, Teknos is telling them about the inventor who built the prototype, the creative process, etc. None of this matters; it just needs to sound like something Teknos actually cares about so the party is surprised by the part of the scene that really matters.

Hopefully, there won't be other parties in the tavern at this time. Ember is there, paying no attention to anything Teknos or the party are doing. (If there *are* other parties, Ember should try to shoo them outside if possible.) In a perfect world, there will be a couple other staffers around, just so Ember doesn't seem like a focus of the scene. Note that this scene *can* be moved outside if needed, but that the crate may be unwieldy and that the scene may be hard if there's bright sunlight. This will have to be played by ear.

After Teknos has unpacked the wand, he shows it off to the party. It looks higher tech than the other wands the party has seen. Teknos points out a few of its features and then tells the party that, as he says, this wand is just a prototype. It won't actually affect anyone, but still, he won't point it at a person, just for safety reasons. The wand's newly designed tracking system is really quite extraordinary, he says. And then he flips the switch on it, which activates the "tracking system" ... which is a laser pointer.

Ember is suddenly *very* interested in this interaction. Or, rather, in the magical red dot that's moving across the floor.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

[Also note: this laser pointer should, of course, not be pointed directly at anyone's face.]

If the party figured out Ember's deal before this scene, she can go all out confirming their suspicions. If they have no idea, she can move more slowly, expressing keen interest but not yet full-out chasing the dot. She can also, when the time is right, climb into the lid of the crate.

Ember can make her cat behavior more and more apparent until the party asks her questions, at which point she can answer truthfully (and dismissively.)

- Yes, she used to be a cat. Duh. (If the party believes she's still a cat or whatever, she doesn't need to get bogged down in this. Ember = cat is the part that matters.)
- Yes, she left presents at the Smirch shop for her friend Karmin. Duh.
- Yes, she sometimes plays there, knocking merchandise off shelves and sleeping on boxes. Duh.
- To most any other questions/comments, especially things like "But Evelyn was about to be prosecuted for this!" or "These things cost the Smirches business!", Ember answers "I don't think I care about that." And, if the party persists, "No, I'm sure I do not care." And then she turns her attention elsewhere. Ember isn't evil, but she really, really doesn't care.

If the party gets that Ember is a cat but has not made the connection that the "sabotage" is all normal cat behavior, Ember asks, "Where is Karmin? I like him more than you." Hopefully this will move the party in the right direction; if it still doesn't, let the Basement know!

(Note: Karmin Smirch is out at this time, selling items either in or near the tavern. It might be easier if he is not in the tavern when this scene is taking place, although he also could be, with Ember hanging around with him. Karmin and Ember can determine how this will work best.)

Charge to which this info pertains: Evelyn's, see page 113 for the whole story

Cal Coleman -- Ozzie Osborne

Age: 53

Usually found: wandering

Secret Info:

Cal's a guy with a lot of irons in the fire. And, thus, a lot of secrets. Here are a few of them.

He recently spent some time in Keer investigating an opportunity he'd heard about there. That particular revenue stream wasn't viable, but Cal is the kind of guy who's always finding new angles.

In this particular case, those angles were attached to a woman named Scarlet Billows.

Late one night, Scarlet told him about a little town in Moreth, a place called World's Edge where she used to own a bar. Scarlet claimed to be the former lover of Jack Brigham - the Pirate King himself! - and even went so far as to assert that Brigham buried treasure beneath the bar's floor. Her story was hard to believe at first, but then she'd shown Cal the pendant Jack had given her. Cal recognized it instantly as the Dawn Star, and while he's guessing it wasn't actually pulled from the severed neck of a gorgon like the legends say, there was little doubt it once belonged to the Pirate King. If Scarlet was truly Jack Brigham's ex, there was reason to believe there really was a fortune buried under a little tavern at the edge of the world.

Cal and Scarlet schemed until nearly dawn, although obviously Cal did the heavy lifting, thinking-wise. Scarlet told him about the ship's captain and his wife, Solomon and Bonnie Stillwater, who now owned the bar. A pair of real amateurs who had no idea of the gold mine that was literally under their feet, they'd nevertheless refused Scarlet's attempts to buy the bar back.

This is where it takes a big thinker like Cal to get things done. Because sure, it'd be possible to keep offering this Stillwater guy more and more money to buy the place - everybody has their price, obviously - but that would cut into the profits. Instead, the trick is to make owning the bar much less desirable, and then it would be purchasable for peanuts. The Stillwaters would beg him to buy it!

Suppose, Cal had spitballed, Solomon Stillwater was arrested for a crime?

He's a sailing man, so accusing him of piracy is almost too easy. For that matter, perhaps he could be accused of being not just any pirate, but Jack Brigham himself! The more Cal thought about it, the more he liked this idea. It just so happens that not much has been heard from Scurvy Jack for the past couple years, so the idea that he's hiding out incognito in Moreth is surprisingly believable.

It won't hold up forever, but it doesn't need to. Just long enough for Solomon Stillwater to get hauled off to jail. His wife - Connie or Lonnie or whatever it is - will be lost without her husband around. When Cal makes a lowball offer, she'll jump on it!

It was apparent Cal would need to travel to Moreth to put this plan into effect. He'd impressed upon Scarlet that she couldn't come along, because of course people in World's Edge already knew her, which would raise suspicions. Besides, the real idea here was Cal's, and splitting proceeds with Scarlet was not in the cards, not that he spelled that out for her.

Before he left Keer, Cal also helped himself to the Dawn Star pendant. It was almost endearing, the fact that Scarlet had hidden it away in her jewelry box, as though he wouldn't think to look there for it.

And then he was on his way to World's Edge. Of course, a high-powered entrepreneur couldn't just walk into town and claim he was there to buy the tavern, not without raising the idea that it was actually worth something. Fortunately, as noted before, Cal's a guy who's always hustling. He's like a shark, gotta keep swimming.

A cover story was easy. Scarlet told him about a business in town, Inspirations Unlimited. Apparently artistic types show up there and get made successful. The whole thing sounded crazy, but apparently people were traveling from all over the kingdom for it. Cal realized that not only would this make a great cover story, but it actually had real potential as another sideline business.

That's what sets a guy like Cal apart. Even when he's gonna come into big profits with the tavern, he's still hungry, still hustling.

He'd gotten to World's Edge and gotten the ball rolling on the Solomon Stillwater thing. It was all straightforward for someone like him: he'd written a letter claiming to be from a neighbor in Keer, telling Solomon his father was dying and wanted to see him again. Once the man was out of town, the other pieces fell into place: hide the Dawn Star in the tavern and then ensure it got found quickly and publicly. Pay a couple yahoos to come into the tavern and identify a picture of Solomon as Jack Brigham. Send a letter describing a pirate attack in Keer while Solomon was there. Bing bang boom.

Pretty funny: it turns out Solomon Stillwater even has a tattoo of the initials JB! Cal didn't plan that, but it's just further proof: when you forge your own destiny like he does, the universe wants you to succeed!

And this whole Inspirations Unlimited thing, Cal's starting to think it has real potential. It's unbelievable they've managed to keep it going as long as they have, given that no one there has the slightest idea what they're doing. Cal just needs a look at that book their secretary keeps and then he'll have all the info he needs.

Soon he'll be wrapped up in this backwater. On Saturday he'll sneak a peek in the IU book, and on Sunday Solomon Stillwater is going down for piracy. Cal figures he'll need another day or two to get the deed to the tavern transferred over. He'll start prying up floorboards, and with any lucky he'll have the treasure within a few days and then move on to even bigger things.

To put it in pirate terms: smooth sailing!

A description of the Observation Challenge appears on page 489.

Clairia

Approximately when: unscheduled Saturday encounter

Activity: the observation challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: gold essence

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: any time Friday or before 4pm Saturday, so long as the party isn't occupied with something else. Note that Miscellania is giving out similar information from a different perspective. It's awesome if you manage to connect with at least some different parties but not at all a problem if you don't.

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info that moves the general plot forward. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Cal tells the party that he's come to World's Edge because Inspirations Unlimited is such a unique business opportunity and he's just the man to see it reproduced on a much larger scale. Cal explains that he's envisioning franchising, branding, and leveraging.

Cal tells the party that this process isn't without its frustrations. Getting a straight answer from the IU team is challenging, but Cal didn't get to be where he is today without hustling, and now is no different. Cal says that obviously he's gotta keep his cards close to his chest, but he doesn't mind revealing he's real close to cracking the whole nut wide open!

[Between noon-4pm on Saturday, Cal becomes more aggressive and adds in the following] Cal tells the party that he overheard that IU secretary, Nemaia, saying something about a book. Cal asked about the book and Nemaia told him he couldn't look at it, so... bingo! Obviously that's the key to unlocking this whole scheme. Cal asks the party what they know about Nemaia's book.

Reason this info matters: this helps provide context for the Saturday 4pm shift

Glendeep

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Cal tells the party that it's laughably obvious that Aesthetika is stealing money from people all over town. It she didn't want to get found out, he tells the party, she shouldn't have been so stupid to leave her artwork behind as a calling card! Typical crazy artist, Cal says. Not only is she leaving clear evidence behind, she's also utterly failing to cover her tracks. He explains that he's been in Inspirations Unlimited and has seen stacks of money on Aesthetika's desk, often the amounts she's stolen around town. It's like she's asking to get caught!

Charge to which this info pertains: Aesthetika's, see page 120 for the whole story

Noctara

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Cal tells the party that it's just as well talent scout Jack Johnson is sticking to backwater communities like World's Edge and cut-rate musical acts like the Peacock Family Singers, because Jack will get chewed up and spit out if he ever tries to play in the big leagues. Cal tells the party that Jack came to town on Tuesday. It should not take that many days to promise the band what they need to hear and then get them to sign on the dotted line. Jack Johnson strikes Cal as a real time-waster. What is Jack even doing with the Peacock Family Singers, listening to every single song and learning all their histories?!? If Jack ever wants to see how business actually gets done, he should take a look at Cal and maybe learn a thing or two!

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

P'loa

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Cal should be sure to meet this party at least once or ideally once on Friday and again on Saturday. There's no specific information Cal needs to convey, but he should be his normally amoral and predatory self.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Waylon

When to approach a party: any time

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Cal tells the party that he'd originally assumed that those Peacock Singers people were some sort of bad joke. Whoever heard of a commercially viable band with 10 people? The band's whole look and feel was lame. Cal tells the party that now he's updating his assessment, because if the band had 12 thousand royals for that manager of theirs to embezzle they must be doing something right. Cal knows a couple guys who're in music promotion and he's going to contact them about booking a gig or two.

Charge to which this info pertains: Milton Peacock's, see page 69 for the whole story

the What-A-Surprise! Challenge

Activity: Bartleby Sprink, Geneva Sprink, Angelica Sprink and Samuelson will both be doing this challenge. They don't need to be together when they're doing it, although they can be. It's somewhat easier if they don't present it to two different parties at the same time, but if that can't be helped, it still works. The tone of this challenge can be either semi-antagonistic or cheeky/playful depending on the personality of the staff character issuing it.

Bartleby (or whoever) sarcastically tells the party that – what a surprise! – they *want* something from him. Of *course* they do. Bartleby tells the party that unfortunately, he isn't running a charity here, and even though he might indeed have the item they need, he's not in the mood to give it away. No, Bartleby says: what would be surprising is if someone did something for *him* for a change.

He thinks about this for a second and then tells the party that, actually, he doesn't really have all that much need of the item they want. Given that... he'll make a deal with them. If they surprise him – honestly surprise him in some way – they can have the item. It doesn't have to be right now, but that's his offer. If they do something surprising, he'll do something surprising back and actually help them.

This challenge is obviously very open to interpretation. Whether or not the parties succeed is left up to the best judgment of the staff characters and should be based largely on how clever the party is being. Numerous things might be considered surprising: if the party is clever enough to set up an "ambush" so that some partymembers jump out yelling from behind bushes, that might be surprising. If a participant who's been consistently timid and polite suddenly lets loose with a stream of profanity, that might be surprising. If a party offers to give some gold *to* the staff character, that might be surprising. Obviously, staff won't suggest these things to the party.

Note that although the staff characters aren't sharing this challenge directly, they may end up doing it at similar times. If a party does something for Angelica and then 5 minutes later another party attempts the exact same thing for Samuelson, it is of course much less surprising the second time.

Educational Goal(s): to encourage the party to address an ambiguous situation with new and creative ideas

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none

the Story Web-weaving Challenge

Activity: When the party approaches Bracken, he tells them he'd be happy to give them the item they need. In return, all he wants is for them to tell him a story of something valiant and memorable they've done.

As soon as someone in the party identifies a story to tell - e.g. "Cool, we'll tell you about when we fought Skeevens on the bridge...", Bracken holds up his hand to pause them. He's very excited to hear this story, he says. But there's a specific way he'd like them to tell it:

From a pouch, Bracken pulls a ball of twine. He hands the end of the twine to whoever proposed the story. Let's call that person Samantha. Bracken tells Samantha she needs to start the story off by telling him the opening of it. She can only give him one sentence, and the rule is that the sentence needs to tell him about the actions of one of her partymembers, not the group as a whole, and not herself. At this point, Samantha says, "Okay, there were 4 Skeevens ahead of us on the bridge and Phil called out 'Hello, friends!' to them."

After Samantha tells this sentence, Bracken has her hold onto the end of the twine and pass the ball itself to Phil. Now it's Phil's turn to tell a sentence, following the same rules as Samantha. (It's okay if Phil chooses to tell a sentence about Samantha so long as the whole exercise doesn't just become a Samantha-Phil-Samantha-Phil-Samantha performance.) After Phil's sentence, he and Samantha are both still holding a part of the twine, while the twine-ball has been passed to whoever Phil spoke about.

Ultimately, we want everyone to be part of the story, but Bracken can enforce this casually, with a "Hey, this guy's got no twine! I'm sure he was doing stuff during this fight, right?"

Ideally, everyone will be able to come up with a sentence about someone else. If someone is really struggling with this, Bracken can open the challenge up to the group a bit. "Cindy's trying to come up with something to tell me. Who's got an idea she can use?"

Hopefully the story will continue until everyone in the group has been passed the twine at least once. Many stories may not go much more than that, and Bracken should stop the activity before it becomes tedious. Of course, if the party is having fun and moving the story forward - or if they finish one story and want to tell another - that's great!

Note: If a party is scheduled to seek Bracken out, he should wait for them to find him. But he is welcome to do this challenge with any other party he meets as well.

Educational Goal(s): acknowledge partymates' contributions, to tell a story in a new and interesting way, to force the party to focus on the achievements of others instead of just themselves

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the ball of twine

The Double-Mute Charades Challenge

Activity: Katherine Carmichael and Pearl Bryce are sharing this challenge. It is maybe slightly easier to arrange if they're together when a party encounters them, but this isn't at all critical.

When the party approaches, Pearl is talking about maintaining journalistic integrity and preventing sources from biasing each other's statements. Golly, this is important! As soon as the party asks a staffer for an item, Pearl (or whoever) instructs the party to please stop speaking. She tells them that they can have whatever item they want but she'd like to use them to illustrate a few points about these protocols.

Pearl explains that to really know you're getting an honest accounting from your source, you need to follow procedures kinda like they'd do in a science experiment. Double-blind, they call it. If there's another party in the general vicinity, and if that party's Companion doesn't indicate that they're in a hurry to get someplace, Pearl asks if the other party can provide 10 minutes of assistance. If there's not another party who can help, other other nearby staff – can fill this role.

When the first party (for the sake of this example, let's assume it's Keer) has returned with the second party (Noctara, although again, it's okay if it's instead random staffers), Pearl instructs them: Keer must tell Noctara why they need the item in question. Then Noctara must tell Pearl. The catch is that Keer may not speak to Noctara, nor may they show them anything written. ALSO (and this is different from plain old Charades), Noctara may not speak to Keer or show *them* anything written. After Noctara thinks they understand the whole story, they can speak normally to Pearl and tell her the story. If Pearl thinks it's a compelling story, she'll give Keer the item they need.

Keer will then need to use gestures to explain to Noctara that a leviathan is ravaging their coastline and that no one can stop it and that they need to summon the Knights of the Golden Circle so the Knights can come kill the monster. If Noctara doesn't understand part of the story, they need to use gestures to ask Keer questions. After all, Noctara is going to have to tell this story, so they'd better get as much information as they can.

Now, Noctara's rendition of the story doesn't have to be word-for-word accurate in order to satisfy the staff. (Note that it's great if the staff know what the parties' actual missions are so that they know when they've heard a reasonable retelling!) They're unlikely to get the Knights' full title correct, for instance, but they *should* be able to give a pretty decent version of the story.

If Noctara only presents a small portion of the story to Pearl (whether because Keer only told them a truncated version or because Noctara is only retelling a small portion of what they were told), then Pearl objects. (She can always say something like "You want me to give you this item so that you can kill a sea monster with it? That's not going to work at all!") She stops the proceedings and tells both parties that they have one more chance to tell a *complete and meaningful* version of events. (It's important that Noctara not tell Pearl the story until Keer has "told" them the entire thing and they've had a chance to "ask" questions of Keer. Otherwise, if they're telling the story to Pearl at the same time that Keer is charading it, then Noctara is essentially guessing aloud and the whole point of the double-mute charades is lost.)

If this challenge is completed with another party, rather than with staffers, it's possible the second party will *also* be scheduled to see a staffer who's doing this challenge. That's fine. If they want, they can ask the party whom they've just helped to help them in turn, or they can find a different group. If another party asks them for help later, their Companion should pay a bit of attention to make certain no one tries to circumvent the challenge (a.k.a. cheat) by telling the other party what their mission is.

(Because of this need for another party or other staff to do this challenge, Katherine and Pearl may want to situate themselves near the tavern or find other well-traveled spots to hang out in.)

Educational goal(s): to encourage the party to collaborate with other participants in order to succeed. to force the parties to communicate around obstacles. to refocus the party's attention on the urgency of their overall mission. to allow the party an opportunity to share their story with others.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none

the Writer's Block Challenge

Activity: Lincroft asks the party to tell him about exploits they've had. Everything, as they say, is copy. He desperately needs *something* to write about, and maybe one of the party's stories will spark an idea. To this end, he asks them a lot of questions: How did they know what do to? While one of them was doing X, what were the rest doing? How did they feel when they realized what was happening? Etc.

Lincroft is, of course, a very appreciative audience for these stories. He takes notes of anything especially interesting and recounts it to the Basement, please.

Educational Goal(s): to give the party a chance to recount their exploits to an appreciative audience

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a small (or not) notebook and pen

the Illiterate Letter Challenge (Version 2)

Activity: Vernon tells the party that he picks up odd jobs here and there, which is tedious and requires him to spend too much of his valuable time dealing with ignoramuses.

Case in point: just a little while ago, one of the farmers who lives outside the village approached Vernon. Unable to write herself, the woman paid Vernon to write down a letter which the woman dictated. After Vernon had written out the entire message, the woman mentioned how surprised and pleased her mother would be to receive such a letter "since she doesn't even know anyone who can read!"

Irritated, Vernon had pointed out that, if the recipient knew no one who could read her the letter, it was hardly worth sending it at all. Distressed, the woman had paid Vernon extra "to re-write the letter so someone who can't read can read it." It is an absurd assignment, but Vernon wanted to earn some cash and so he *very grudgingly* accepted the job.

Vernon tells the party that, if they expect him to help them with their mission, they're certainly going to have to do something for him in return. He tells them that they must re-write the farmer's letter for him before he's willing to help.

To ensure that they do a good enough job – Vernon doesn't care terribly much about the woman's letter, but he's rather enjoying calling the shots with the party – he stipulates that three members of the party must write the message without using any words or letters. When they have done so, they can show it to the remaining three party members. If those people can't understand the gist of the message's content, Vernon has no plans to help the party. (Vernon should make sure the three "writers" know that they don't have to replicate every single word, just the ideas of the letter.)

Dear Mother,

I have given birth to twins! One is a boy; he looks just like his father. The other is a girl; she is very pretty and has lots of hair. Everyone loves them, even the dog.

Love,

Daisy

Educational goal(s): to force the party to find alternative methods of communication. to encourage collaboration on a project.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a copy of the farmer's letter, multiple sheets of paper and a pencil

the POV Challenge

Activity: Ember approaches the party and asks if she might have a couple minutes of their time. Her followers are clamoring for some new content. She's envisioning this POV shoot following her through her day here in World's Edge. Super great, right?

Anyway, she's reaching out to them because she literally loves their energy. So, she's thinking something like, "POV you just met these Total Heroes." Yes, this is gold. She can already feel this going viral.

Ember asks if the party would mind terribly if she were to magically capture their image to share with her followers? There are a lot of people out there who could learn a lot from the party, Ember tells them. Style-wise, yes, and also their attitude? So great!

Ember has with her a magical device that allows her to record images. She takes several pictures of the party, encouraging them to try out different poses or whatnot as she sees fit. During this time, if Ember can keep up a commentary about the things the party is doing right ("#SuperAttractive!") it may just help to get pictures in which people are smiling genuinely.

Ember should of course do her best to avoid using spots which are less attractive, like the parking lot, when everyone is sitting in metal folding chairs, etc. Note that Ember is explicitly asking the party to pose rather than snapping candids of them as they interact with another staff person. In the past, taking candids has resulted in very few decent photos and can sometimes be intrusive.

It's REALLY IMPORTANT we get at least one good picture of each party. To this end, Ember probably ought to take several photos of each group to allow for the inevitable blinking, etc. Also, if a party is posing-challenged, she can assist them in standing in an aesthetically pleasing configuration. She may also want to take one pose of the party holding swords and one without. If the party wants to do a few "artistic shots" in keeping with the flavor of this, that's great, but Ember should also get a few where they're actually facing the camera AND smiling!

#FuckPortraitLandscapeForever

Educational Goal(s): to make the party feel good about themselves. to provide us with good pictures of all the parties!

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the camera

Ander Party #1 -- Bob Coury, Charlotte Wilson & Linda Bennet

The All Aboard! Challenge

Activity: The Anders ask the party if they'd like to play a game. (Anders who want to play act much like little kids, jumping up and down and saying "Oh please oh please? Can we can we can we?" etc.) The Ander keeper tells the party that, if they will play the game, then s/he will restore some lost Free-Hits to them.

With them, the Anders have a cement-block. The Ander keeper explains that the challenge is as follows: The participants need to see how many people can simultaneously stand on the cement-block. To be counted, the participants must all stay balanced on the block for 15 seconds. (The Anders should count to fifteen out loud so the group knows how well it's doing.) During the 15 seconds, if one or more people touch the ground with their feet, the entire group needs to start over. The Ander keeper will restore one free hit for every participant on the cement-block.

Note: If the participants are doing something that the Anders believe could be dangerous to the people involved - especially if someone suggests that the first person lie down on the block and that the other people then be "stacked" on top - the Anders should disallow this.

In playtesting, we were only able to get four people on the block - less than we expected. It will be interesting to see how well the participants do, and how long they work at increasing their number!

Educational Goal(s): to provide an opportunity for problem-solving and teamwork.

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Anders can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction.

Activity: the all aboard! challenge

Item(s) to have with them: the cement block

of Free-Hits restored: one Free-Hit per person balanced on the block

Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: the participants can divide up the Free-Hits however they want. They can give some to partymembers who weren't on the block and/or they can give more than one Free-Hit to one person, if they so choose. (The Anders should make this clear; otherwise the party might, for instance, only have two people stand on the block because only those two are missing Free-Hits.)

Ander Party #2 -- Abigail Vargus, Jeff Yaus & Tenille Reichert

The Bump 'n' Run Challenge

Activity: The Anders ask the party if they'd like to play a game. (Anders who want to play act much like little kids, jumping up and down and saying "Oh please oh please? Can we can we can we?" etc.) The Ander keeper tells the party that, if they will play the game, then s/he will restore some lost Free-Hits to them.

The Anders say that the game is called Bump 'n' Run. The game works as follows: There is a starting line and a finish line which are at least 100 feet apart. Two of the participants will be throwers. The remaining four participants will be bump-n-runners. (If the party has only 5 people, then the Companion can play, or there can be just one thrower.)

At the starting line, the Anders have a bag of tubular beanbags. Half the beanbags are long, the other half are short. The object of the game is to get as many of the beanbags across the finish line as possible. For each long beanbag they get across the finish line, the party will receive one point. For each short beanbag, the party will receive two points. (This is because longer beanbags are easier to catch and are thus worth fewer points.)

There are rules regarding how the beanbags are carried: First, throwers stand at the starting line. The bump-n-runners must stand at least 6 feet from the throwers. (They can be farther from the throwers if they wish, because the farther they are, the closer they are to the finish line.) Each thrower selects a long or a short beanbag and throws it to a pair of bump-n-runners.

The bump-n-runners are not allowed to grasp the beanbag. The beanbag must be caught between the two bump-n-runners' bodies in some way. (This is where the "bump" part comes in.) The bump-n-runners may catch stomach-to-stomach, hip- to-hip, elbow- to-elbow, shoulder-to-nose, whatever they want. They may catch hand-to-hand, although remember that neither of them may grasp the beanbag.

Once the pair has caught the beanbag, they must carry it, still in that position, across the finish line. (This is where the "run" part comes in...although in these positions, it's rather unlikely that the participants will really be able to run.) Once they've dropped the beanbag across the finish line, they run back so the thrower can toss them another beanbag. If a beanbag is dropped en-route to the finish line, the pair needs to return to the starting line to catch another one. Each pair may only carry one beanbag at a time.

The Anders say that the party has 3 minutes to do the relay. At the end of 3 minutes, the beanbags that are at the finish line are counted up. (Long bags = 1 point; short = 2.) The Ander keeper says that, for every 6 points, s/he will restore 1 Free-Hit. (If the number of points isn't evenly divisible by 6, the Anders can round up or down at their discretion.)

Note: when the party first divides up to do this activity, it's entirely likely that the bump-n-runners will separate themselves into pre-existing pairs (i.e. where a boyfriend & girlfriend or good friends are catching together.) If it seems appropriate, the Anders should feel free to put the participants into different pairings to force the partymembers to intermingle.

Educational Goal(s): to provide practice working closely with another partymember. to help participants become more comfortable with physical contact. to provide a physically-challenging, non-combat activity

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Anders can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction.

Activity: the bump 'n' run challenge

Item(s) to have with them: the sack of beanbags

of Free-Hits restored: 1 Free-Hit per 6 points scored

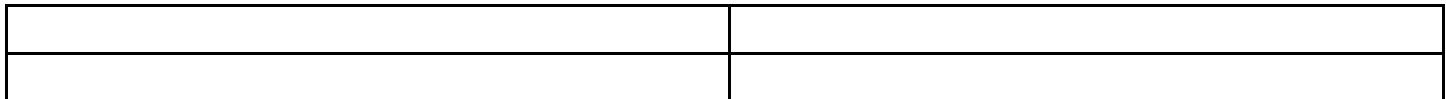
Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: any participant(s) that the party chooses. (More than one Free-Hit can be restored to the same participant if this is how the party wants to do it.)

Ander Party #3 -- Cliff Young & Paul San Clemente

The 'Scuse Me Shuffle Challenge

Activity: The Anders ask the party if they'd like to play a game. (Anders who want to play act much like little kids, jumping up and down and saying "Oh please oh please? Can we can we can we?" etc.) The Ander keeper tells the party that, if they will play the game, then s/he will restore some lost Free-Hits to them.

The Anders say that the name of the game is 'Scuse Me Shuffle. Four 8-foot-long 4x4s are laid on the ground as shown:



so that they form a long, skinny block of wood that's 16 feet long and 8 inches wide. (In order to ensure that this challenge is safe, the wood needs to be set on the flattest ground possible. When we get to the camp, we'll scout around for a good location. Then the boards can be stashed nearby so that the Anders only need to set them up at the start of the activity.)

The game is played as follows: Three participants stand at the left end of the board, facing the right. The other three participants stand at the right end of the board, facing left. (If the party has only five people, the Companion can play as well.) The right-facing participants need to cross the board to exit it at the right end, and the left-facing participants need to cross the board to exit on the left. None of the participants may step off the board except at the correct end. If anyone needs to put their foot on the ground for balance, the whole group must start over.

The Ander keeper says that, if the participants can complete the whole Shuffle in 90 seconds, s/he will restore 3 Free-Hits for whichever participant(s) the party wishes. The Anders should make it clear that the party can try this activity as many times as they want until they get it.

If the party is successfully able to complete the shuffle in 90 seconds, the Ander keeper asks them if they want to play Double or Nothing. That is, the party can take their 3 Free-Hits and go. OR, they can take what's behind "Door Number Two"...they can agree to try one more Ander challenge without knowing what that challenge is. If the party is successful at the second challenge, then they get 6 Free-Hits restored instead of the original 3. But if they're not, they don't get any Free-Hits restored.

If the party agrees to the gamble, the Anders produce six blindfolds. (This is probably a good time for the Anders to just hold up the blindfolds, look at the boards, smile, and let a dramatic hush fall over the crowd.)

The party needs to re-do the shuffle activity, but blindfolded this time. There is no time-limit on this. (This is important for safety reasons.) In addition, the Anders should re-arrange the order of the participants. (i.e. some participants who were right-facing should become left-facing and vice versa. This is so that participants have to shuffle around some different people than last time.)

The Anders should remind the participants to go slow and to be careful of each other. The Anders should "spot" for the party while they do this activity. One of the ways that the 'Scuse Me Shuffle can be approached is to have one person crouch down while the person facing her swings his leg overtop of her. If the participants are doing this, the Anders should watch very closely to make sure no one gets kicked in the head. (Nothing destroys party unity quicker than having one partymate injure another.)

Educational Goal(s): to get the party more comfortable with physical contact. to practice creative problem-solving.

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Anders can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction. Because the props used in this activity are a bit heavy and cumbersome, it's probably best if the Anders pick a high-traffic area, set up the challenge, and then just wait for participants to walk by.

Activity: the 'scuse me challenge

Item(s) to have with them: the 4 8-foot-long 4x4's (hopefully, these boards will already be near the place where the activity is going to take place.) 6 blindfolds. a watch with a second hand

of Free-Hits restored: 3, if the party can successfully cross the boards in 90 seconds. If they opt for Double or Nothing, they get either 6 or 0 Free-Hits

Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: any participant(s) that the party chooses. (More than one Free-Hit can be restored to the same participant if this is how the party wants to do it.)

Ander Party #4 -- Jeff Anderson, Katie Paugh & Lindsay Daviau

The Guess the Wumpus Challenge

Activity: The two Anders approach the party in a grand and ceremonial fashion. Once the party is paying attention, one Ander begins by reading the following from a scroll:

*Here's a game we like to play.
Here's a rhyme we like to say.
"Guess the Wumpus!" Thus say we.
Listen close and then you'll see.*

*You must name the Wumpus true.
Listen! It is one of you!
Maybe Mr., maybe Ms. -
You must guess just who it is.*

*One thing more before you try:
You must also tell us why!
That's the part that always stumps us:
Why the Wumpus is the Wumpus?*

*If you guess right, dear little friends,
That's the time when this game ends,
And at that time I think you'll smile;
Guessing right is worth your while!*

Then the second Ander says "Guess the Wumpus!" Then both Anders are silent and stand there, watching the party.

The secret of this game is that the Wumpus is whichever one of the participants is the first to speak after the second Ander asks his question. Of course, the participants are very unlikely to figure this out on the very first try. That's fine. The Anders wait quietly while the participants debate.

Eventually, the participants will probably just pick somebody more or less randomly. If they happen to guess right, the Anders then ask them WHY that person is the Wumpus. Unless the participants know, the game will progress. If the participants guess the wrong person, the Anders tell them who the Wumpus is, but of course don't say why.

The first Ander then reads again from the scroll:

*You could not guess the correct answers;
Do not fret! We're patient Anders.
Two tries more you'll have to get it!
(After that, you can forget it.)*

*Listen then before you guess:
A few more rules we must confess.
The Wumpus-Crown may now be passed;
It might not be who it was last!*

*But also know that in this game
The way of choosing's still the same.
The same old rules we always use
When we that lovely Wumpus choose!*

*But lest you think this wager boring,
Three Free-Hits we'll be restoring
If you correctly signify
The Wumpus-who and Wumpus-why.*

Then the second Ander says "Guess the Wumpus!".

Again, both Anders wait silently until the participants decide who to guess. The new Wumpus is the person who was the first person to speak after this verse was read and the second Ander re-asked the question. (Thus, if one person in the party is usually the first one to speak, it's entirely possible that the Wumpus will be the same person as it was last time.)

If the participants choose the correct person, the Anders then ask them why that person is the Wumpus. If the party knows, then the Anders can restore the Free-Hits. If they don't know, the game will progress. If the participants guess the wrong person again, the Anders tell them who the new Wumpus is, but of course don't say why.

If the party wasn't able to answer both questions correctly, the first Ander reads the following:

*Wrong again! Oh dear, oh dear.
And now the end is drawing near.
This one guess will be your last,
You had best be thinking fast!*

*A brand-new Wumpus we have choosed.
Again, the same-old rules were used.
If you forgot I'll say once more
It might still be who 'twas before!*

*But then again it just might not be!
At least you know that it is not me!
So do not fret and raise a ruckus,
Please, we ask, just guess the Wumpus.*

*Put on those thinking caps and name true;
Then the winners we'll proclaim you!
Then we all can eat some Cheez-Its!
Not really. But we'll restore Free-Hits!*

Then the second Ander says "Guess the Wumpus!"

Again, both Anders wait silently until the participants decide who to guess. Once again, the Wumpus is the first participant who speaks. If the participants choose the correct person, the Anders then ask them why that person is the Wumpus. If the party knows, then the Anders can restore the Free-Hits. If they don't know, the Anders tell the party that, alas, the game is over. They tell the party who the Wumpus was this last time and explain how the Wumpus was chosen.

Whether the party has won or lost, the Anders make the party promise not to reveal the secret to any other parties. To do so would Spoil the Game. (In the Ander religion, there are few sins more heinous than Spoiling the Game.)

Note: The first Ander should pay very close attention as the second Ander asks the "Guess the Wumpus!" question. After all, if the Anders forget which participant spoke first, then the activity becomes kind of pointless.

Educational Goal(s): to help the party notice who is speaking up the most. to practice riddle-solving.

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Anders can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction.

Activity: the guess the Wumpus challenge

Item(s) to have with them: the scroll with the Wumpus poem on it

of Free-Hits restored: 3 Free-Hits if the party can correctly identify the Wumpus and say why. 0 if they can't.

Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: any participant(s) that the party chooses. (More than one Free-Hit can be restored to the same participant if this is how the party wants to do it.)

Ander Party #5 -- Ariel Jaffee, Jim Vincent, Kim Ricket & Morgan Harris-Warrick

the Cooperative Charades Challenge

Activity: The Anders ask the party if they'd like to play a game. (Anders who want to play act much like little kids, jumping up and down and saying "Oh please oh please? Can we can we can we?" etc.) The Ander keeper tells the party that, if they will play the game, then she will restore some lost Free-Hits to them.

The Anders say that the name of the game is Cooperative Charades. To start, the party needs to choose two people to do the charading. The rest of the group will be the guessers.

The Anders explain that they have cards that each display A Thing People Do Every Day. When the game starts, the charaders are going to have a fixed period of time to charade as many cards as they can to the guessers.

The twist is that the charaders are going to be working as a team. One will use his face and body. The other person will stand behind the first person; that second person will use her arms. That means that if the team is, for instance, trying to act out "putting on a hat", the 2nd person has to pick up the imaginary hat and pantomime putting it on the 1st person's head. (If the charaders are dramatically different heights, this will be easier if the taller person is standing in back.)

When everyone is ready to start, one of the Anders will bring the pile of cards over near the charading pair to hold up the cards for them. (This Ander, of course, needs to stand so that the charaders can see the card while not blocking the guessers' view.) A different Ander can be the time-keeper.

The cards are as follows:

brushing teeth	putting on lipstick
brushing hair	shaving
drinking cocoa (or coffee or tea)	putting on a tie
looking in a mirror	shampooing hair
putting on eye makeup	exercising
going to sleep	yawning
thinking	eating a sandwich
flossing teeth	putting on jewelry

The Ander keeper announces that the party has 1 minute to get as many correctly-guessed cards as possible. At the end of the minute, she will restore 1 Free-Hit (to whomever the party wishes) for every 4 correctly-guessed cards.

Educational Goal(s): to allow the party to relax and have fun. to get more physically comfortable with each other.

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Anders can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction

Activity: the cooperative charades challenge

Item(s) to have with them: the cards, a way of keeping time

of Free-Hits restored: 1 Free-Hit for every 4 correct guesses

Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: any participant(s) that the party chooses. (More than one Free-Hit can be restored to the same participant if this is how the party wants to do it.)

Ander Party #6 -- Betsy Rosenblatt, Dana Sullivan, Dave Korka, Dave Nadig, Julie Gruszynske, Marsha Gershon & Merri Rosen

The Two-Toothed Beastie Challenge

Activity: The Anders ask the party if they'd like to play a game. (Anders who want to play act much like little kids, jumping up and down and saying "Oh please oh please? Can we can we can we?" etc.) The Ander keeper tells the party that, if they will play the game, then s/he will restore some lost Free-Hits to them.

The Anders say that the game is called Two-Toothed Beastie. Here's how it works: The party needs to set their belongings (including spellbooks and weapons) down in a little pile which the Companion can keep an eye on. The party forms a line (standing side-by-side) and holds hands. The participant on each end of the line (i.e. the only ones who still have a free hand) are each given a sword. The party is now the Two-Toothed Beastie.

This Beastie then plays a variation on Tag with the Anders. In order for the Beastie to "bite", it needs to tag an Ander with one of the swords. (These tags don't do any damage to the Anders who are hit.) The Ander keeper announces that, for every bite the Beastie is able to make, s/he will restore 1 Free-Hit, up to a maximum of 5 Free-Hits. After an Ander is "bitten", there is a count to 10 (so the Anders can back up) and then the game continues. (Unlike a normal Tag game, the Beastie is always "It", no matter how many times it tags the Anders.) The Companion can keep track of how many bites have occurred.

The Anders should play for about 10 minutes or until people are tired.

Note: If one of the participants in the party cannot run at all, they will need to "sit out" for this game. With most Otherworld activities, we try to structure them so that people with different levels of physical abilities can participate. However, this activity simply doesn't work if the Beastie and the Anders are forced to walk rather than run.

Educational Goal(s): to encourage creative problem-solving as the party tries to take advantage of its two different "leaders" (i.e. the two people holding swords). to provide an opportunity to relax and have fun.

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Anders can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction.

Activity: the two-toothed beastie challenge

Item(s) to have with them: none

of Free-Hits restored: The Ander keeper will restore 1 Free-Hit for every "bite".

Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: any participant(s) that the party chooses. (More than one Free-Hit can be restored to the same participant if this is how the party wants to do it.)

Ander Party #7 -- Diana Galanakis & Mara Feingold-Link

The Jolly Trolley Challenge

Activity: The Anders ask the party if they'd like to play a game. (Anders who want to play act much like little kids, jumping up and down and saying "Oh please oh please? Can we can we can we?" etc.) The Ander keeper tells the party that, if they will play the game, then she will restore some lost Free-Hits to them.

The Anders say that the name of the game is Jolly Trolley. The "trolley" itself is simple: two lengths of 4"x4", with six rope lengths for people to grab. Everyone puts their left foot on one piece of wood, and their right foot on the other.

The Anders pace out a distance that's approximately 30 feet apart, with at least one Ander at the starting line and at least one Ander at the finish. The Anders tell the party that, if they can manage to use the trolley to travel from start to finish in 45 seconds, they win the game. The party can make multiple tries, but they can only 'win' (and get free-hits restored) once. (These numbers are estimates! The Anders should test this and scale up or down to make this challenging but possible!)

Also, note that the Anders should hang out in a space that has mostly flat terrain for this challenge.

Educational Goal(s): to require the party to work as a team to accomplish a clearly-defined goal

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Anders can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction

Activity: the jolly trolley challenge

Item(s) to have with them: the two wooden "trolley" pieces

of Free-Hits restored: 3

Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: any participant(s) that the party chooses. (More than one Free-Hit can be restored to the same participant if this is how the party wants to do it.)

Ander Party #8 -- Erhard Konerding, Greg Reid, Greg Rothauser, Linda Bennet, Melissa Crouch Chang, Rich Pellosie, Scott Moore & Tricia Boynton

The Flip Me the Bird Challenge

Activity: The Anders ask the party if they'd like to play a game. (Anders who want to play act much like little kids, jumping up and down and saying "Oh please oh please? Can we can we can we?" etc.) The Ander keeper tells the party that, if they will play the game, then she will restore some lost Free-Hits to them.

The Anders say that the name of the game is Flip-Me-the-Bird Tag. They show the party "the Bird" - a stuffed Opus doll.

The rules of the game are as follows: One of the Anders starts the game as "It." Opus plays the part of "Goal" - that is, touching Opus is the only way one can be safe from It. However, if the same person holds on to Opus for more than 15 seconds, then that person becomes the new It. For this reason, it is necessary to frequently "flip the Bird" to one's teammates. As in traditional Tag, whoever It tags (assuming that person is not currently touching Opus) becomes the new It.

The Ander keeper announces that, if the party will play this game with them for 10 minutes, then she will restore 2 Free- Hits to the participant(s) of the party's choice. (Note that, unlike many of the Ander challenges, the party doesn't need to succeed at a given activity in order to gain the Free-Hits. They just need to be willing to play the game.)

Of course, the amusement factor of the game is greatly increased - especially if any other people are in the area - if the person currently being chased yells out "Oooh, oooh, flip me the bird!"

Educational Goal(s): to allow the party to relax and have fun. to provide a physical, non-combat activity. to encourage the participants to pay attention to the whereabouts of their partymates.

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Anders can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction

Activity: the flip-me-the-bird challenge

Item(s) to have with them: Opus

of Free-Hits restored: 2

Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: any participant(s) that the party chooses. (More than one Free-Hit can be restored to the same participant if this is how the party wants to do it.)

Ander Party #9 -- Michelle Nathan

The Mad Lib Challenge

Activity: This lone Ander spellcaster will be traveling around with a party of Wolven, although the Ander and the Wolven aren't really together; we just want them to be in the same area when they encounter a participant party. The Ander will stay in hiding until the Wolven engage the party in combat. (Baron's Field is a good place to do this, since the Ander can hide somewhere on the "cliff" and not step out until the combat begins.)

The Ander will then blow a spell whistle and cast one of the following Mad Lib spells:

I, _____, an Ander caster of air, do cast the spell of Ander Mad Lib on all those present.

You, (specify participant target #1) must pick a GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION.

You, (specify participant target #2) must pick a EXCLAMATION.

You, (specify participant target #3) must pick a MOTION VERB.

You [the Ander may specify the target] must (*motion verb*) all the way to (*geographical location*), yelling (*exclamation*) as you go. Let it be done!

I, _____, an Ander caster of air, do cast the spell of Ander Mad Lib on all those present.

You, (specify participant target #1) must pick an ADJECTIVE.

You, (specify participant target #2) must pick a COLOR.

You, (specify participant target #3) must pick a NUMBER.

You [the Ander may specify the target], for the next (*number*) minutes, you become violently (*adjective*) any time you see anything (*color*). Let it be done!

I, _____, an Ander caster of air, do cast the spell of Ander Mad Lib on all those present.

You, (specify participant target #1) must pick a PART OF THE BODY.

You, (specify participant target #2) must pick a NUMBER.

You, (specify participant target #3) must pick another PART OF THE BODY.

You [the Ander may specify the target] must touch your (*body part*) to your (*other body part*) (*number*) of times before you can do anything else. Let it be done!

I, _____, an Ander caster of air, do cast the spell of Ander Mad Lib on all those present.

You, (specify participant target #1) must pick a NUMBER.

You, (specify participant target #2) must pick an ANIMAL.

You, (specify participant target #3) must pick a COMBAT-RELATED VERB.

You [the Ander may specify the target], for the next (*number*) minutes, you must (*combat verb*) like an (*animal*). Let it be done!

Educational Goal(s): to encourage creativity. to allow the participants to relax and be silly

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Ander will wait in hiding until the Wolven fighters engage the party.

Activity: the mad lib challenge

Item(s) to have with them: spell whistle and spellbook with Mad-Libs, pen

of Free-Hits restored: n/a

Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: n/a

Ander Party #10 -- Alison Morris, Chelsea Hadlock, Cris Shuldiner, Esther Lee, John Nann, Matthew Scott, Nadav Barkaee & Tenille Reichert

The Fabulous Tag Challenge

Activity: The Anders ask the party if they'd like to play a game. (Anders who want to play act much like little kids, jumping up and down and saying "Oh please oh please? Can we can we can we?" etc.) The Ander keeper tells the party that, if they will play the game, then she will restore some lost Free-Hits to them.

The Anders say that the name of the game is Fabulous Tag.

The rules of the game are as follows: One of the Anders starts the game as "It." The only way that one can be safe from It is to grab someone else's hand and yell out (loudly!) something fabulous about that person. It can be something short, of course: "always smiling!" or "great runner!" or "super-spiky hair!" or whatever.

No one may grab hands with the same person twice in a row, and no pair may stay holding hands for more than 15 seconds. As in traditional Tag, whoever It tags (assuming that person is not able to grab someone else's hand in time) becomes the new It.

After playing for a minute or two, the Anders may want to designate a second It, just to make sure the action keeps moving.

The Ander keeper announces that, if the party will play this game with them for 10 minutes, then she will restore 2 Free- Hits to the participant(s) of the party's choice. (Note that, unlike many of the Ander challenges, the party doesn't need to succeed at a given activity in order to gain the Free-Hits. They just need to be willing to play the game.)

Educational Goal(s): to allow the party to relax and have fun. to provide a physical, non-combat activity. to encourage the participants to celebrate the fabulosity of their partymates.

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The Anders can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction

Activity: the fabulous tag challenge

Item(s) to have with them: none

of Free-Hits restored: 2

Participant(s) whose Free-Hits are restored: any participant(s) that the party chooses. (More than one Free-Hit can be restored to the same participant if this is how the party wants to do it.)

The Mind of a Madman

Mad Lincroft Spence -- Morgan Harris-Warrick

**Rough Drafts -- Kelsey Shultz, Kristi Hayes, Nils Klinkenberg
& Tom Rickett**

the Mind of a Madman Challenge

Activity: Several parties are told that they must acquire Folly Dust, but that this exists only in “the mind of a madman.” Although some parties may try to figure out how they might locate this, prior to 4pm such a thing will be unavailable.

At 4pm, when Nemaia’s gold book burns, author Lincroft Spence is just as he described himself in his most difficult memory: driven mad with his inability to make his writing work. This is a grim turn of events for Lincroft, but a lucky break for the parties who need the Folly Dust!

Once 4pm arrives, Lincroft is near the (remains of the) stump in front of the tavern. He holds a book and pen and periodically writes a word or two on the page, but after a minute of staring at it, he rips up the paper and throws it to the ground. (Hopefully there’ll be Anders nearby who can help Lincroft clean these up. If it’s windy he doesn’t need to do this!) Lincroft beats his fists against his head and conveys extreme distress, but he is despondent rather than any sort of shrieking/flailing “crazy”, since the latter gets really old really quickly.

Lincroft should surreptitiously be watching for any of the parties who are seeking the Folly Dust, since they won’t at first know that he’s the one who can provide it to them. We’d like them to realize themselves that he’s the one who can help, but he may need to do a little bit to attract their attention if it seems like they’re not going to notice/approach him.

After the party *has* noticed him and spoken with him, they’ll hopefully think to ask him about the Folly Dust. Again, if it seems like they’re getting ready to walk away without asking about the Dust, Lincroft may need to lead them along a bit, since there is a finite amount of time when it will be possible for them to get it from him.

Once the party does ask, Lincroft gets up. He asks the party if they are ready to follow in the footsteps of the mad. Assuming they say yes, he has them line up single-file, each with a hand on the shoulder of the person in front of them. Lincroft takes his place at the front of the line and tells the party to bow their heads. He leads them down the stairs on the side of the tavern and back to the canopy tents set up on the edge of the parking lot. (We’re asking them to do the head-bowing thing both to signify that they’re going someplace unusual and also to minimize the aesthetic experience of the parking lot. We’re not asking them to shut their eyes because walking safely down stairs while blind takes more time than we want to spend.)

Lincroft leads the party just inside the entrance to the canopy tents. (The two tents, set up end-to-end, provide a 12' x 40' space, so the effect is like a long corridor.)

Inside the tent, there are several masked figures, dressed in cast-off pages of scribbles. They are just some of Lincroft’s many discarded Rough Drafts. They don’t introduce themselves, but as the party may realize, they’re delusions in Lincroft’s brain. “Welcome,” says Lincroft, “to the mind of a madman.”

He speaks further, in a strangely formal style: “While you are here inside my mind, the wounds of the world, even including death, do not trouble you. They will return to you when – and if – you are able to leave.” (This is because the activity is plenty hard if no one in the party is minus a limb!)

The madman continues: “I invite you to enter my world, but beware: the very ground is treacherous here. Beyond this point, any limb that touches the earth is stricken useless. Because I am a thoughtful host, I will provide you with touchstones.”

At their feet, there are 6 pieces of 18"-long 4x4 wood. One of the Drafts hands one to each participant, and says “These touchstones are unaffected by the earth’s taint, but they will maintain their powers only so long as they are in contact with a person. A touchstone with none of you making contact is lost to you.” (Note that Lincroft and the Drafts refer to the ground as tainted, rather than as poisoned, since there are special rules about poison and we don’t want to confuse the participants.)

Lincroft then begins walking to the other end of the tent. As he steps on the tainted ground, he turns to tell the party: “Of course, the rules that govern *you* don’t apply to *me*. After all, it *is* my mind.”

When Lincroft reaches the far end of the tent, he seats himself in the chair there. He then says “I am delighted to be your host here, and I am happy to entertain any requests you may have. However, I must ask that you observe standard rules of etiquette. If you wish something from me, you must cross the tainted ground to ask me for it, and of course you must all approach me, rather than just some of you.”

The Drafts take a few minutes to clarify the rules for the party and let the party know that they may try out different strategies using the touchstones in the first few yards of the tent. They should also let the party know that they can (and should!) set down their weapons and anything cumbersome they're carrying.

Once the party has a strategy they are reasonably happy with, they can then begin the challenge, crossing the expanse of tainted ground without touching the earth at all.

As a quick reminder/summary:

- The whole party needs to cross before they can ask for the Folly Dust.
- Touchstones can touch the ground without harm (and anyone can step on the TS without harm), BUT...
- Someone must be touching each TS at all times; otherwise that TS gets taken away (you can't toss a TS and then step onto it).
- One participant can be touching more than one TS at a time, just so long as each TS is always being touched by *somebody*.

The Drafts move slowly but gracefully to stand somewhat near the party – like Lincroft, the Drafts can walk on the ground without harm – and to watch their progress. For the first minute or so, the Drafts should mostly make sure the party has heard and understood the rules of the challenge. In particular, they should make sure the participants understand that someone must be in contact with each Touchstone at all times.

Once the Drafts are sure the party understands the rules, the challenge begins in earnest, and any rules infractions after this point will actually be enforced. If the party is taking too long to deliberate a strategy, the Drafts impose a time limit, telling them they have 2 more minutes before they must begin.

Once the party is actually crossing the expanse of ground, the Drafts can walk around slowly, sometimes watching the party, sometimes engrossed in their own thoughts. At times, the Drafts can mutter quietly to themselves, things like "not good enough. Never good enough!" or whatever; at other times, they mock and torment Lincroft. These murmurings should make them appear obsessed or insane, but shouldn't actually be intelligible, since the point of this challenge isn't about revealing Lincroft's secrets. They also shouldn't be too loud, since this may hamper the party's ability to communicate.

While the Drafts are appearing to be lost in their own thoughts, they should still be watching the party. If anyone touches the ground, a Draft informs them that whichever leg or arm touched the ground is now rendered useless. If the party is able to heal the wound – remember, they'll have to do this while still not touching the ground – then that's great. Otherwise, the wounded participant has to complete the challenge in this diminished capacity. The Drafts should also be watching to make sure that each of the Touchstones are in contact with a person at all times. If one is not, a Draft should take it away.

(A playtesting note: the times we had people try this activity, 6 people were able to make the crossing with only 5 Touchstones. Since the party starts with 6, losing one increases the participants' feelings of anxiety and amplifies their relief when they make it across. Making the crossing with 4, however, is extremely tough, so unless the Drafts think that the party needs to be taught a lesson in humility, they might want to "not notice" if the party should lose an additional Touchstone. The Drafts can use their judgment on this. If the mistake is impossible to ignore and the party *does* get reduced to 4 Touchstones, Lincroft may choose to 'ransom' a Touchstone back to the party by asking them a difficult question which they must answer.)

In addition to observing the party for rules infractions, the Drafts should also be watching for behavior which they think is interesting from a party-dynamics standpoint. For instance, they might note that someone in the group is asking for help but that no one else is paying attention. Or they might note that someone is always giving instructions to the group. (These don't have to be positive or negative observances, just interesting.) As a way of calling the party's attention to the behavior, one of the Drafts can momentarily mirror the posture and/or wording of the participant in question. Drafts shouldn't do this in a way that makes anyone feel stupid (i.e. no mimicking a not-very-agile person who is in a silly-looking position.)

While this is going on, Lincroft can remain seated in his chair or can join the Drafts in watching/mirroring the party.

When the party reaches the other end of the tent, Lincroft welcomes them and congratulates them on reaching him successfully. When they ask for the Dust, he says that he is happy to give it to them, but that, before he does so, he would like them to answer a few short questions. Lincroft then asks the party 2-4 questions concerning their experience crossing the tainted ground. If at all possible, he should try to maintain the oddly formal quality he has been using to address them, rather than having these questions seem too touchy-feely. (In other words, we want Lincroft to debrief the group, but we don't want it to *feel* like a debrief.)

A question might be directed at a single participant or at the whole party and may well concern some of the behavior which the Drafts were mirroring. He might ask things like "Were you more afraid that someone else would disturb your balance or that you would disturb someone else?" or "At several times during the crossing, you said 'Don't rush me!' Are there other times when you feel that someone is pushing you in a way that is detrimental?" Lincroft is welcome to ask pointed questions in hopes of really getting the party to examine their behavior. However, he shouldn't direct all of his questions at one individual or do anything which will put one person *too* much on the spot. (The Drafts may also think of good questions to ask!)

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After the party has answered the questions, Lincroft gives them the Folly Dust. He tells them that he will escort them to safety. He takes two participants by the arm and each of the Drafts takes one participant, then they walk safely across the tainted ground and out of the tents. Lincroft then leads the whole party back up to the stump in front of the tavern. Once he is outside the tent, Lincroft loses the formal quality he had inside and returns to his muttering. The Drafts stay inside the tent, remembering to return the Touchstones to the entrance-end so that they're ready for the next group who arrives

Lincroft, meanwhile, returns to his spot in front of the tavern. In addition to providing a dramatic start to the encounter, this serves the purpose of letting other Companions know that the challenge is again "open for business"!

Educational Goal(s): to force the party to work as a team. to call attention to the behavior various partymembers exhibit in a challenging situation.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: the six Touchstones, Lincroft's book and pen

Elsewhich

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the mind of a madman challenge

Info to give the party: none

Item(s) to give this party: folly dust

Glendeep

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the mind of a madman challenge

Info to give the party: none

Item(s) to give this party: folly dust

Sythwan

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the mind of a madman challenge

Info to give the party: none

Item(s) to give this party: folly dust

Waylon

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the mind of a madman challenge

Info to give the party: none

Item(s) to give this party: folly dust

The Ghost Theater

Ghost Director -- Dave Nadig

Ghost Players -- Charlotte Wilson, Eileen Christiansen, Jeff Yaus, Marléna Soble & Ozzie Osborne

the Ghost Theater Challenge

Activity: The party has been told that they need a limelight as one of their party path items and that a limelight is a lamp to light the stage of a theater. Aria Morgan has been working to restore the Morg, the theater in town, but it burned down on Thursday.

At 4pm, when Nemaia's gold book burns, the theater is just as Aria described it in her most difficult memory: nothing but the ghosts remain, but the ghosts play on. Spooky this may be, but it's a lucky break for the parties who need the limelights!

To convert the canopy into the Ghost Theater, we have long canvas strips with thin, gauzy material attached to them. These get staple-gunned to the front and side open "walls" and tucked up out of sight; at 4pm, they can be quickly unfurled to provide a bit of privacy for the party completing the challenge. (The other side is enclosed already, and the side facing the lake can be left open.)

Within the Ghost Theater are the Ghost Director and Ghost Players. Until the Ghost Players are instructed by the Ghost Director, they remain motionless.

The Ghost Director stands outside of the theater, silently ushering away any parties who are not scheduled to do this challenge. (The Companions should also be able to enforce this.) When the theater is vacant and one of the scheduled parties approaches, the Ghost Director greets them silently and ushers them inside.

Once the party is inside the theater, they see a largely empty room, furnished only with some benches. One of these benches is placed just inside the entryway and another is situated at the opposite end of the room, near the "exit", so that participants can sit while waiting for their partymates to complete the challenge.

The remainder of the benches are arranged seemingly at random. In actuality, they make a rough "hallway" which the participants will pass through on their way from one end of the theater to the other. To add interest, it's best if this hallway isn't a straight line.

The Ghost Director approaches the party. He speaks quietly, in a silky, theatrical voice. "Welcome" he says "to the Ghost Theater. For the duration of the show, you will follow my instructions. There is no talking during this performance." Throughout this challenge, only the Ghost Director speaks, and then only quietly.

The overall challenge of the Ghost Theater is similar to that of the Gauntlet, with a few key differences. As in the Gauntlet, participants will be divided into pairs, and each pair will need to make their way through obstacles in the hallway to reach the other side. In each pair, one person will be sighted and one will be blindfolded.

The difference is this: in the Gauntlet, the sighted person gives verbal directions to the blind person, and talks him through the obstacles. In the Ghost Theater, none of the participants may speak. Instead, the sighted person leads the blind one using only touch to guide her through the obstacles. (This short description is not what the party is told, of course. It is provided here only to help staff understand the challenge.)

The other difference from the Gauntlet is one of atmosphere. The Gauntlet is spooky and macabre. The Ghost Theater's ambiance is one of eerie theatricality. The Ghost Players do not speak during the challenge; they don't hiss or moan like the Gauntleteers do. There are other things they can do, however, to create more atmosphere, and this is described later.

When the party enters, it is up to the Companion to divide the group up into pairs. She quietly indicates to the Ghost Director who the pairs are; it is easiest if the Ghost Director seats each pair together on the benches, to help remember who is with whom.

Within each pair, there is Partner A, who will remain able to see, and Partner B, who will be blindfolded. Again, it is up to the Companion to choose whether each person is an A or a B.

When choosing pairs and determining roles within the pairing, Companions should keep a few things in mind:

- 1) This is an ideal challenge for forming new alliances within the group. A party that is made up of three couples should probably not have those existing couples grouped together.
- 2) Although this challenge doesn't require physical strength, it will be somewhat more difficult if the two partners are *extremely* different in size. Differences that aren't really pronounced shouldn't be a problem, though.

- 3) This challenge strongly addresses what it means to be a leader, and what it means to be a follower. Putting those partymembers who have had less of an opportunity thus far to lead in the A role is a real chance to give those people such an opportunity. Conversely, casting the more dominant participants in the B role will allow them to try something different in a way that is still active and interesting.
- 4) Lastly, this is obviously an exercise that is designed to develop trust, and any such exercise can very quickly *destroy* trust if it is not treated respectfully. Given the nature of the challenge, a moderate amount of physical contact between the partners is required. Companions should bear this in mind when pairing people up. If one person in the party has been acting flirtatious with a partymate, this is probably not the time to pair those two individuals together.

Once the participants are divided up into pairs, the Ghost Director gestures to the first pair, telling them to stand. He brings a blindfold over, and indicates to Partner B that he should put it on.

He then takes two more blindfolds over to the still-seated other pairs. In these cases, he gives the blindfold to the two *Partner A's* and has them put them on. (We know that's the opposite of what we've already said about the A and B partners, but bear with us for a minute...)

Now the challenge begins. The Ghost Director begins by saying "Ghost Players! Take your places!", still speaking quietly, but in a tone that conveys authority. He then speaks to the first pair: "Together, you must make your way through the theater. You may touch each other, but not the Ghost Players. You may not speak. The curtain is rising. You may begin..."

While he was talking, the five Ghost Players take their places. Each Ghost Player has either a very long scarf or a cane, or both, and the Ghost Players will use these props to create obstacles in the participants' path. Two Ghost Players can hold either end of a scarf across the path; a high scarf will have to be ducked under while a low one will have to be stepped over.

While the partners are navigating this obstacle course, the Ghost Director watches them closely. If he sees areas where either partner could be doing more to help the other person, he can coach them, although obviously he should be careful not to overdo this. The best comments will be very brief ones that let the partners come up with solutions themselves, things like "He looks nervous..." or "She seems hesitant..." .

If a participant (whether blind or sighted) touches a scarf, cane, or one of the Ghost Players, the Ghost Director will stop the participants briefly, grasp the appropriate limb of both participants and say "You feel no pain at this time. When you leave this theater, you will both find that this limb will be pierced with pain and fall completely useless."

Once the pair has moved all the way through the obstacles, the Ghost Players all clap and then become still again. The Ghost Director leads the pair to the bench near the exit, where they can sit and the B Partner can remove his blindfold. The Ghost Director says "Not by word or gesture are you to distract those who will come behind you." We don't want the people who've already navigated the obstacles "charading" hints to Partner As who are still to come! If the Ghost Director sees this happening, he should put a stop to it.

Now it's time for the second pair to go through. The Ghost Director has them stand up and move over to the beginning of the "hallway", but then he holds up his hand for them to halt. Quietly enough so that the waiting third pair doesn't hear, he tells them "The show is about to begin. Switch your blindfold." Partner B, who's been sitting and watching the first pair navigate the course, must suddenly take the blindfold from Partner A and put it on himself.

We're doing this for a couple reasons. The first is that we want Partner A to approach the obstacles in his own way, rather than just doing whatever the previous pair has done, and this will be much easier if he hasn't seen the previous attempt.

Secondly, we hope this will create empathy in both participants: both of them will have spent the previous 10 minutes or so thinking that they are going to be fulfilling a certain role in the challenge. Perhaps the blindfolded person has been sitting there thinking "I hope he doesn't let me get hurt!" Once he finds that he's actually the sighted partner, hopefully this will inspire him to care for *his* partner in the way he was hoping to be treated!

Once the pair have switched blindfolds, the Ghost Director says, "Ghost Players! Take your places!" The Ghost Players should change the obstacles by moving their bodies, their props and the benches. If they wish, and if there is time, the Ghost Players may want to try to coordinate their movements, so that there is a sort of choreography to the way they move to get into position. This doesn't need to be anything fancy; it will look impressive if all the Ghost Players make the same dramatic gesture with their non-scarf-holding hand as they get into place.

The Ghost Players may also be able to make some small non-verbal noises that will add to the drama of the encounter. If they arrange, for instance, that all of them will take three loud synchronous steps as they get into position, or all tap their canes five times in a rhythmic pattern, it ought to look cool for the sighted participants, and sound eerie to the blind ones!

Once the second pair has navigated all the way through, the Ghost Director repeats the steps with the third pair, again having the partners switch the blindfold just before they begin.

Once all pairs are done, the Ghost Director reminds the participants that their wounds will become real once they leave the theater. He congratulates them on their performance, and offers them a limelight as a mark of respect.

Educational Goal(s): to develop trust & rapport between the paired-up partymembers. to provide practice communicating. to allow participants a chance to be the leader or the follower.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: Scarves and canes for the Ghost Players. A limelight for each party.

Arden

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the ghost theater challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: limelight

Dolorón

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the ghost theater challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: limelight

Keer

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the ghost theater challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: limelight

Noctara

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the ghost theater challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: limelight

The Court of Mirrors

the Dark Queen -- Julie Gruszynske

the Squire of Mirrors -- Vanessa Robb

Gauntleteers -- Anna Kelly, Brace Peters, Bri Taborn, Lane

Daniels & Mike Robb

the Gauntlet Challenge

Activity: When the party learns they need a favor from the Court of Mirrors, they're told that there's a portal to the Court at the Valerius family estate, but that Poppy Golden thankfully does rituals to keep said portal safely closed.

At 4pm, when Nemaia's gold book burns, Poppy is just as her sister Pansy described her in her most difficult memory. Poppy isn't doing the rituals, and the portal to the Court of Mirrors has re-opened.

In an attempt to make sure our assigned parties arrive at the out-of-the-way Court of Mirrors in a timely fashion, the Court's Squire of Mirrors is roaming the camp. Upon finding one of the assigned parties, the Squire opens a scroll **PROP** and reads the following: "Hear ye, hear ye! The honor of your presence is requested in the Court of Mirrors! Right this way, gentle folk..." And with that, the Squire escorts the party to the front door of the Valerius house. (The Squire and someone in the Court should have phones or GoTennas with them so they can communicate. There's no sense in the Squire bringing a party back if another one has just arrived.)

This challenge uses the middle and back rooms of the building that is the Valerius home. When participants arrive at the Valerius home, they find Poppy relaxing in the outer room of the Valerius house, 100% not closing the magical portal that's opened in the living room. After a few minutes with Poppy, one of the Gauntleteers (whom we will call the Gatekeeper) reaches a skeletal hand from behind the mirror, sliding it aside so that participants can enter. (The Gauntleteers can take turns as Gatekeeper.)

The Gatekeeper says: "Greetings. Allow me to prepare you for your descent into the Court of Mirrors." With the help of the party's Companion, they blindfolds each participant and tell them they feel themselves falling... The participants must then place their hands on each others shoulders and are lead as a group through the mirror, through the center room, and to the rear of the back room near the other exit of the building.

Once the party and the Gatekeeper have arrived at the back of the building, the Companion removes the blindfolds of three of the participants, telling them that they have managed to regain their sight. The remaining participants are still blinded.

The Gauntlet is made up of 6 Gauntleteers. Half of them have bare hands, the other half hold swords.

The Gatekeeper says, "In this realm, our word is law. Here in the underworld, every mortal has a counterpart, a mirror of themselves." The Gatekeeper points from a sighted participant to a blind participant, partnering them up into three pairs, and then says: "If you wish to enter, you will pass through the Gauntlet. Only one person at a time may pass through the Gauntlet. You may speak only to your counterpart. To disobey is death. Do not touch the Gauntlet."

The Gauntlet is created by the Gauntleteers (including the Gatekeeper) lining up on either side of the passageway. The figures with swords hold the sword in such a way that it partially obscures the walkway. The bare-handed figures do the same with their hands (which they can hold like claws or beseeching gestures... anything creepy, really.) Participants can pass through the Gauntlet in any order they wish, although they must follow the above-stated rules. The Gauntlet will change position after each person passes through it. The figures in the Gauntlet hiss and moan softly as participants pass through. (This is to make sure it stays scary for the participants who can't see how cool the figures look!)

If a participant (whether blind or sighted) touches one of the Gauntleteers, that person grasps the participant's limb briefly with the claws or makes a slicing motion on the participant's limb with the sword. The figure says "You feel no pain at this time. When you leave the world of mirrors, this limb will be pierced with the cold of darkness and will fall completely useless."

When all the participants are through the Gauntlet, they may enter the throne room (the middle room), where the Queen is waiting for them. The Gatekeeper tells the blindfolded participants that their sight is restored to them, and then, when they can all see, gestures grandly to the Queen, saying "Her Majesty, the Dark Queen!" and then leaves the room.

The Queen walks slowly past each participant, looking at each one intently. She seems eventually to decide that they are indeed worthy. She congratulates the group on making it through her Court and presents them with a skull-shaped token as a gesture of respect. She says "No doubt you now wish to return to your own world. I hope the wounds of the underworld will not pain you too much when you get there. You are free to go. The Gauntlet will not trouble you as you leave." She gestures for the party to

leave through the rear door of the building (NOT back through the mirror where Poppy is waiting). The Gauntletees stand aside as they pass, and open the exterior door for them.

In general, it should take a party about 30 minutes (or less) to get through the whole activity (including hearing the set-up instructions and talking to the Queen at the end.)

When a party is inside the challenge, Poppy waits in the front room. If another party arrives, she should indicate to the Companion that the challenge is occupied. If the party has entered the Gauntlet recently, she can indicate to the Companion that the party may need to return later. If the other party is likely to be done soon, Poppy can keep the party engaged while they are waiting, but should be careful to not let the party hear what is happening inside the challenge.

Educational Goal(s): to develop trust & rapport between the paired-up partymembers. to provide practice communicating.

Item(s) needed for this challenge: The Queen doesn't need any challenge props; the Gauntlet needs swords, plus three blindfolds. The Squire needs a scroll and a phone/GoTenna, plus one for a Gauntleteer (or for Poppy)

Clairia

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the gauntlet challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: a favor from the Court of Mirrors

P'loa

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the gauntlet challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: a favor from the Court of Mirrors

Uri-Kesh

Approximately when: Saturday, 4pm-8pm

Activity: the gauntlet challenge

Info to give the party directly: none

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: a favor from the Court of Mirrors

the Poison Bachelorettes*

Bridesmaid 1 (4-6pm)

Ember -- Mirin Scassellati

Mila -- Christine Reeves

Tanya Peacock -- Dana Sullivan

Bridesmaid 2 (6-8pm)

Crabtree -- Melissa Crouch Chang

Esmerelda -- Merri Rosen

Lenora Graves -- Jen Morris

Pearl Bryce -- Tricia Boynton

Age: shutup fuckyou

Usually found: on the prowl

* - Yes, technically they're bridesmaids, since Belle's bachelorette party is past. But they have Big Bachelorette Energy. At any given time, *at least* half of them are drunk, half of them are crying, half of them are horny and all of them are pissed off.

the Trying-Not-To-Die-A-Horrible-Spasming-Death Challenge

Activity: The Poison Bachelorettes are this plot's obligatory-but-still-awesome poison combat group. This handbook is not saying we based a bunch of this plot on getting this encounter to happen, but it's not NOT saying that either.

Remember the rules of poison: anyone with no free-hits left who is hit with a green-bladed weapon is now poisoned. After 50 seconds of screaming and spasming, the poisoned individual dies. The only way that a poisoned person can be saved is for a potion or enchanted artifact of Cure Poison to be used before these 50 seconds are up. (Poisoned weapons do not do any additional damage, so if Cure Poison *is* used in time, Heal Single Wound is not needed.)

For this reason, the Bachelorettes will need to exercise caution to avoid killing an entire party. (It's fine for such an encounter to result in 2-3 deaths per party.) Since the Bachelorettes will be distinctive, it's important that the same party of Bachelorettes only encounters the party once.

Educational goal(s): to force the party-mates to work together, communicate and protect one another

any parties encountered

When to approach a party: The bachelorettes can approach any party who's not right in the middle of another interaction.

Activity: the trying-not-to-die-a-horrible-spasming-death challenge

Item(s) to have with them: their poisoned weapons. A few of them can carry bottles if they're very very careful not to swing or block with them!

Angelica's Dead Wolven -- Brace Peters

Age: whatever

This is a Wolven with a rich and complex personality and backstory, neither of which matter because they are now well and truly dead. Please enjoy a complimentary dirt nap while moving the plot forward. You're welcome.

Arden

When to approach a party: Sunday morning on their way to breakfast

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: The party encounters Angelica standing over the body of a dead Wolven. Angelica is slightly winded but not unduly upset. She tells the party that she had gone out for an early morning walk. Normally, she says, she would have taken a book with her, because she's always liked reading while walking around. Bracken told her she should reconsider doing that, that it was a good idea to be paying attention to what's around her. It's probably fortunate she listened, Angelica says, because she was attacked by three Wolven. Angelica doesn't have a sword with her, but when one of the Wolven stepped in close to her, she did the thing Bracken showed her and slammed the heel of her hand upward into his nose. She must've connected just right, she thinks, because he fell down and, as the party can see, he hasn't gotten back up again. She brought the heel of her boot down hard on the instep of one of the others and then the two of them ran off... although the one she'd stepped on didn't run terribly fast. She's just about caught her breath, Angelica says, so she can now head back to the tavern with the party.

Charge to which this info pertains: Bracken's, see page 83 for the whole story

Morgoth -- Kenneth Reeves

Melisande -- Chelsea Hadlock

The Henchmen -- Cliff Young, Deo

Gallotto, Jeff Anderson, Mike Scandizzo,

Nadav Barkaee, Nils Klinkenberg, Rich

Pellosie and Rob Daviau

Age: Morgoth is 48; Melisande is 40; Wolven ages vary

Usually found: n/a (neither Morgoth nor Melisande will be seen until Sunday morning, and then by only one party. This will take place in the Wild Lands.)

Traveler Lore concerning Morgoth and Melisande appears on page 211.

Arden

Time: 10am Sunday (Morgoth, Melisande and the henchmen are the final step on Arden's party path.)

Where: at the entrance to the Wild Lands (far up the Fool's Errand trail)

Signal to appear: Morgoth, Melisande and the Wolven can either be in hiding when the party arrives (i.e. they can surprise the party) or they can be out and visible when the party shows up. It's up to Morgoth. Do whatever is cooler, so long as you accomplish the objectives below!

Activity/Direct info: Morgoth will fight the party using a sword and will also have a spell whistle with him in case he needs to use magic for anything. Melisande has a sword. They are accompanied by multiple other Wolven fighters.

Ultimately, Morgoth must die by the party's caster's hand. (Morgoth may receive one limb wound from another person, but will not take a second limb wound or a torso wound from anybody but the caster.) We know this will be tricky, but Morgoth should give the party as exciting a fight as possible and then let them win. It's fine if the party sustains heavy casualties in the process!

Melisande focuses most of her own attacks on Bracken, who will arrive with the party. Ultimately, Bracken will kill Melisande, although this should look like a challenging fight for both of them! Although the party won't have much to do with Melisande's death, we want it to be clear who it is that Bracken is fighting, so if Morgoth or the other Wolven occasionally call her by name, that's great.

If at all possible, Morgoth, Melisande and Bracken should talk before the Wolven leave for the Wild Lands, just so a rough plan can maybe be put together!

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: none to give the party, but they will certainly take the Sconce of the Wood off Morgoth's dead body

Ignatius -- Mike Hsieh

The Staff -- Gareth Hinds, Jess Schoolman & Tasi O'Malley

Age: varies

Usually found: in the Elemental Plane of Fire (which is, thankfully, off-screen)

Hopefully, the party has spent the weekend assuming that the Staff of Ignatius is an item, a standard wizardy staff. Instead, the Staff is actually the employees of Ignatius, a powerful caster from the Elemental Plane of Fire. They're his *staff*. They do standard staff-like jobs. They answer phones. They type. They file. Et cetera.

The Staff of Ignatius is an extraordinarily efficient and competent set of workers. They have to be, because Ignatius himself is a really demanding boss.

Clairia

Time: 10:15am Sunday (The Staff and Ignatius are the final step on Clairia's party path.)

Where: The party will perform the ritual that summons the Staff in one of the Horse Camp horse-rings. The party know that the Staff is not going to appear in the horse-ring, but rather that it will materialize between the two nearby horse-barns.

Signal to appear: The Staff can be hiding in one of the horse-barn stalls to help ensure that neither this party nor another party sees them too early. When they hear the party yell the final words of the summoning ritual the Staff goes to stand between the two horse-buildings.

Ignatius stays hidden a while longer. (Since the party will probably be between the horse-barns by this time, Ignatius should make sure he's well-hidden! If possible, he should take a black cloak to cover up his shiny red robes while hiding.)

The Staff will talk to the party for a little while. Soon afterwards, Ignatius will appear. (We want the party to have enough time to figure out that these people are in fact the Staff, but not to have so much time that they all walk away!)

Activity/Direct info: Probably the party will be surprised when they realize that the Staff is people rather than an object. The Staff should allow the party to figure this out, rather than blurting out "Hey, we're the Staff of Ignatius." The Staff can feel free to play up their modern-day accents and mindsets.

Once the party does realize what the Staff is, they will theoretically ask the Staff to return with them to Clairia. The Staff says that they are very happy to do this, since none of them like working for their tyrannical current boss, Ignatius.

The Staff should make it clear that they are a very efficient team of workers. Although the party is not gaining the magical artifact they expected, it should be evident to them that the Staff will be exactly what Clairia's young Duke needs. (See the party's Mission Letter on page 587 for more info.)

About this time, Ignatius himself shows up, looking for the Staff. He's angry because his Staff has been Summoned away from the office, and he wants them to get back to work. When the party mentions that they intend to take the Staff back to Clairia, Ignatius forbids this. Ignatius should be arrogant and belligerent throughout this exchange; the party will not be able to talk him into allowing the Staff to go. If/when the party attempts to leave with the Staff (all of whom want to go with the party) Ignatius pursues them and attacks the party with appropriate fire spells. Thus, the party will eventually end up fighting Ignatius. The following rules apply:

- Physical weapons do not harm Ignatius. If a participant hits him, Ignatius should tell the participant that her sword-arm is rendered useless. (Since Ignatius is essentially made of pure fire, touching him with a sword conducts all that heat into the sword-wielder's body. Ignatius can describe the unpleasant fiery effects of this.)
- Magic spells do not generally affect Ignatius. If the party does something really creative and clever, then Ignatius should allow it to work.
- Ignatius is made of fire. Things that kill fire (having water poured on it, having a blanket thrown over it, being smothered) will kill Ignatius. (To smother him, a party might try to all hug/squeeze him at once or something like that. If they try this, they'll each take a limb wound of burn damage, but they'll succeed in suffocating Ignatius.)

Basically, Ignatius should use his judgment. The goal is for the party to be creative in the way they solve this problem.

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After the party defeats Ignatius, the Staff is very happy. They tell the party that they need a little bit of time (they need to clean out their desks, complete exit interviews, etc.) and then they'll be ready to leave for Clairia. They promise to meet up with the party very soon.

Note: A very small fire is kindled as part of the summoning ritual; after the party leaves, Ignatius should make sure this fire is completely extinguished.

Item(s) to give this party: none (but they should bring a bucket of water to extinguish the small fire the party builds)

Ghost of Montgomery Morgan -- Greg Reid

Ghost of Delia Morgan -- Janet Potter

Ghost of Horatio Morgan -- Cris Shuldiner

Ghost of Veena Morgan -- Deb Lack

Age: all the ghosts have been dead for decades

Usually found: the ghosts will be seen only by one party, in the Knight's Walk horse ring on Sunday morning

Traveler Lore concerning the Morgan family appears on page 209.

Clairia

When to approach a party: Sunday around 10:15am, immediately after the party has fully resolved their party path ending

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: Mila is coming up Gilded Way, away from the tavern. Mila says she realized more about the vision she had and now knows the location where it was set. She asks the party to come with her right then. She leads the party up Gilded Way, turning right on Knight's Walk until they end at the small horse ring at the end of Knight's Walk.

As Mila leads them to the Knight's Walk horse ring, the party encounters the Ghosts of Montgomery Morgan, Delia Morgan, Horatio Morgan and Veena Morgan. The ghosts are at the far side of the horse ring - if the party remembers the lore they read yesterday, this is the spot where the Morgans first staged their outdoor performances when they came to World's Edge - and they are engaged in a performance right now. Horatio and Veena look at the party and nod vigorously and then turn their attention back to the other ghosts.

Mila tells the party that yes, this is somehow what the dream was trying to show her. [Mila is going to give the party several pieces of info during this scene. She shouldn't get bogged down with how she knows these things; she just does. It's a mystical holy kind of knowing.] Mila tells the party that the ghosts must have a message for them. At this, Horatio and Veena again nod. Mila says that these ghosts are faded. They won't be in the living world for much longer. Mila tells the party that these ghosts aren't going to be able to speak to them, at least not in words. If the party asks, she clarifies that this is true even if the party has any ghosts among them or some magical means of speaking with ghosts. [This is important because we don't want the party wasting magic or killing anyone a la Dance of the Dead to try to talk to these ghosts! If this is unclear, Mila should talk to an EM before doing this scene.]

The way this interaction proceeds is as follows: Montgomery and Delia are serving as the principal actors, and they will act out the same scene repeatedly, on a sort of continuous loop. They don't interact with the party, because they're very faded. Horatio and Veena will provide a few "special effects" for the scene. Montgomery and Delia are pantomiming, and they also serve as the audience for the other ghosts' show, reacting silently to the show's action. Horatio and Veena can also nod 'yes' or shake their heads 'no' in response to partymembers' questions. Other than that, they cannot answer. (They will not charade answers to non-yes/no questions.)

For this scene, the ghosts have a few items with them: a white paper crown, a candle in a candlestick, a bucket with blue ribbons attached inside it, and a red/orange scarf or fabric rectangle.

At the start of the scene, Delia steps to the center of the "stage", with Horatio and Veena serving as the audience, sitting at her feet. Delia carefully places the candle near her feet and then dramatically places the crown on her head. Horatio and Veena clap silently but excitedly. Delia pantomimes singing, doing a few dainty dance steps. After a short bit of this, her "song" reaches its climax. She holds her hands out dramatically and then begins to spin in a circle. Horatio and Veena clap even more enthusiastically. But then Delia kicks over the candlestick. Horatio and Veena each hold one end of the red scarf, undulating it between the two of them so that it hopefully suggests fire at Delia's feet. Delia sees the fire and silently screams, stamping in the direction of it, but to no avail. Horatio and Veena raise the scarf a little higher, showing the fire growing stronger. Delia silently screams for help.

Just then, Montgomery enters the show. He sees Delia and the fire and silently calls to her. Delia pantomimes coughing. She tries to call back to Montgomery, but she is getting weaker. She puts a hand to her forehead, swooning in the smoke and heat.

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Montgomery reaches behind him, grabbing up the bucket, and then runs toward Delia. Once he is within range of her, he pantomimes throwing water on her. (Hopefully the blue ribbons unfurl onto her, looking at least vaguely watery.) Horatio and Veena lower the scarf a little as the fire is temporarily driven back. Delia, though, is very weak. She collapses into Montgomery's arms. He scoops her up, carrying her away to safety, at which point Horatio and Veena drop the scarf and applaud. And then the show starts all over again.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

If they ask yes/no questions, Horatio and Veena can answer them with nods or head-shakes as follows:

- Do you ghosts remember what happened on Thursday? YES
- Are you acting out the theater fire that happened on Thursday? YES
- Is Delia portraying Aria / is Montgomery portraying Danny? YES
- Did Danny start the fire? NO
- Did Aria dance in the theater on Thursday? YES
- Does Aria often dance in the theater? and/or Does Aria recreate the Spun Sugar dance from her youth? YES
- Did Aria accidentally start the fire? YES
- Did Danny carry Aria to safety? YES
- Can you come to the trial and say this? NO

Horatio and Veena answer any other yes/no answers as appropriate. If the party asks non-yes/no questions, Horatio and Veena simply look at them sadly. This is also their reaction if the party asks yes/no questions about anything other than what the ghosts saw in the theater on Thursday.

If the party watches the scene unfold all the way through at least one and a half times and doesn't ask any yes/no questions, Mila asks, "Is this part of the message you needed to share?" at which case Horatio and Veena answer YES. If the party doesn't ask a question after that, Mila asks "Are we able to ask you any questions?" which is, again, YES.

After that, Mila tells the party that they'll have to think what to ask. Hopefully they'll do all or most of this scene on their own. At the same time, the party needs to get most of the above information before they leave the horse-ring, because there's no good way to fill them in later on, so Mila should not end this interaction end until the party has gotten the info they need!

Once the party does have all the above info, if they're acting like they're going to stick around making the ghosts replay the scene forever, Mila asks "Is there anything more you need to tell us?" To which the answer, mercifully, is NO.

After the scene with the ghosts, Mila walks with the party back toward the tavern. During this, she asks the party's keeper about the vision they had. Hopefully, refreshing the party's memory about the keeper's vision (especially the part about the forgotten letter) will help the interaction that will happen later with Aria Morgan make sense.

Charge to which this info pertains: Danny Donovan's, see page 127 for the whole story

Pixies -- Jo Agostinelli, Kris Size, Margot Holmes & Matt Miles

Age: their physical ages are unclear. Attitude-wise, they seem to be about 15.

Usually found: in remote woodland glades, allegedly, but few humans have ever seen a pixie. These pixies will encounter the party at the crest of Overlook Hill.

Dolorón

Time: 10am Sunday (The pixies are the final step on Dolorón's party path.)

Where: This encounter takes place at the crest of Overlook Hill. The pixies will be hidden out of sight, probably behind the Prosecutor's pavilion or else behind shrubbery, when the party arrives.

Signal to appear: During the ritual to conjure pixie dust, the party will light their incense, placing it in their incense-burner, and will pour out half the bottle of merula-fruit cordial at the base of the hill, on Autumn's Path. They'll then walk silently, in single file, up the hill. At the top, they'll place ritual items in the ashes of an old fire – the fire circle that's in front of the pavilion. As the final component of the ritual, they'll pour out the remainder of the cordial, each holding one hand on the bottle and their other hand on the incense-burner's chain (and thus, hopefully all facing inward), while saying "Let it be done, let it be done, let it be done!" The pixies then move into sight.

Activity/Direct info: The note the party received on Friday night says that this ritual will "conjure pixie dust", so hopefully they'll be at least a little surprised when it does this by summoning actual pixies.

There's another surprise in store. The note describes pixies as "small beings, most of them, although every once in a while there's one that grows nearly human-sized. Lucky is he who's treated to the sight of them cavorting in a woodland glade, all bedecked in their bright finery and lifting their wee jolly voices in laughter!" Pixies *are* mostly small, and they do wear very bright, very fanciful clothing. They're extremely adorable.

They're also sort of assholes.

This is at least somewhat justified. The pixies didn't want to be summoned. And they have no intention of giving up their pixie dust. Sweet though the pixies look, they're also formidable opponents. Pixies are immune to all magic (a fact the party doesn't yet know.) They're also armed. Each pixie carries a long staff wrapped in ribbon. This, of course, is a Pixie Stick.

When the party sees the result of their ritual, the pixies should give them a few seconds to take in their (adorable) appearance, then one of them stomps an (adorable) foot and says "Dudes, what the hell? Why are we here?"

This will hopefully give the party an opening to ask about pixie dust, to which the pixies can respond, "Yeah, maybe we do have some, but piss off; it's ours." The pixies don't necessarily explicitly say that pixie dust is their drug of choice, but they can strongly imply it.

The pixies then start to talk (audibly) to each other, pretty much ignoring the party. They are all in agreement that humans suck. Humans are always disrespecting pixies, and the party, they feel, is no exception. After all, the party summoned them here when they were right in the middle of important stuff! Screw that! Humans need to be taught a lesson, the pixies think. Probably the best way is to kill this group and leave their bodies there as a message to other humans. Oh, or maybe they should take these humans' heads as trophies! Or maybe skin them and make horrible ugly coats out of their nasty-ass human pelts! Maybe *then* humans will start treating pixies with some damn respect! This conversation continues throughout whatever follows.

How this encounter goes will very much depend on what the party does. We don't want it to be exclusively a combat encounter, but it may include some combat, and if so, that's fine.

If the party attacks the pixies, the pixies can do significant damage but must NOT kill the whole party. The pixies, meanwhile, should take no damage. (Pixies, as previously noted, are immune to all magic. They aren't invulnerable; they still make a show of defending themselves. But for the sake of this combat, they each have a ton of free hits.) If the party attacks, the pixies can fight until 4 participants are dead and then one pixie can announce "I'm bored fighting these creatures. They die too easily." or something in order to (hopefully) pause the combat.

If the party attempts to buy the pixie dust, it doesn't work. "What would we want your stupid human money for?"

If the party attempts to convince the pixies of the importance of their mission, this too will fail. "Bad stuff is happening in your duchy? And we should care... why?"

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If the party asks what the pixies would be willing to trade for the pixie dust, the pixies are similarly underwhelmed. “Seriously? It’s our job to make a plan for you? Yeah, not so much.”

With luck, the party will have heard the subtext in the pixies’ conversation: they want respect. They don’t, of course, directly tell the party that *that*’s the thing that would make them willingly give up the pixie dust, but if the party’s still not getting it, the pixies can slowly get more overt (and more repetitive) in the conversations they have with each other.

Hopefully the party will tell the pixies they respect them, and that they’re going to share their story of the pixies’ prowess with other humans. It’s not critical exactly what the party promises, so long as they have a good, convincing plan of what they’ll do.

Once this has happened to the pixies’ satisfaction, they (somewhat begrudgingly) hand over the pixie dust, then they head back around the pavilion to wait for the party’s hopefully-quick departure.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: none

Item(s) to give this party: bottle of pixie dust. Also, the pixies need their pixie sticks with them.

the Statue of Saint Lorelei the Incorrputible --

Tenille Reichert

Age: the statue has been in the Shrine of AllSeasons for decades; Lorelei herself lived centuries ago

Usually found: in the Shrine

Traveler Lore concerning St. Lorelei appears on page 204.

Saint Lorelei the Incorrputible lived more than five centuries before. A keeper of Summer, she is remembered primarily for journeying beyond the borders of what was then the edge of the kingdom, into the barely-settled lands that are today western Moreth. At that time, residents of this area were in danger of being kidnapped and enslaved by greedy individuals who knew that Lyrian laws would not protect those they captured. So compelling were Lorelei's sermons condemning slavery that powerful figures eventually put a stop to this horrifying practice, and today, St. Lorelei is celebrated with a statue at the edge of the Shrine of AllSeasons. Carved of fine ivory-colored Glendeepian marble, the statue depicts Lorelei in prayer, a pile of broken chains discarded at her feet.

Glendeep

Time: 9:45am Sunday (Pansy Golden is part of the final step on the party's party path, accompanied by the statue of St. Lorelei.)

Where: Pansy and the party begin their ritual in Fern Grotto and then move to the Shrine of AllSeasons

Signal to appear: The statue sits in the Shrine all weekend. On Sunday morning, hopefully while participants are at breakfast, the statue's helpers will remove the statue from the Shrine, replacing it with the identical 'marble' chair, in which St. Lorelei sits in stillness

Activity/Info: Pansy Golden will shake the ritual-component tambourine as they move from Grotto to Shrine. (This should help Lorelei to hear the party coming!) Once they are in the Shrine (but hopefully before the party notices the change to the statue), Pansy repeats the words which the party spoke to begin the ritual: "The bound shall be free. The weak shall be strong. The lost shall be found."

Immediately after that, Pansy announces, bitterly: "Well, it didn't work! Big surprise. I'm not magic; I still don't have any idea where Lorelei's sword is! It didn't work!"

That's when St. Lorelei's statue says, "Oh, it worked." And then she rises from her chair.

The statue looks with interest at the people in the Shrine. She asks, "Who are you? What brings you to this place?" Presumably the party tells her why they're there, that they're looking for her sword.

Lorelei listens to this intently but with some confusion. She's very sorry, she tells the party. She wishes she could help them, but she never used a weapon of any kind.

Except... Lorelei pauses to consider. She asks the party to tell her again exactly why they've come. Hopefully they'll read her a portion of the letter from their Duke, or at least refer to the item they seek as the "sword of Lorelei." Once they do – or just after she has a sudden realization, if they don't happen to refer to it like that – the statue smiles. It's true what she told them, she says: she never used a weapon.

But when she came to World's Edge, she explains, she was not terribly welcome here. This was in the time before the village was settled, she says. It wasn't yet part of the Lyrian kingdom, and the people living here weren't protected by any Lyrian laws. Certain immoral people, blinded by greed and selfishness, arrived to take slaves from among the folk who lived here. Today, Lorelei tells them, she is considered a hero because she spoke out against that slavery. But at the time, hers was not a popular opinion. She certainly wasn't called a saint back then. More like a troublemaker.

Lorelei tells the party that yes, she was able to change the minds of some people, that she was able to help disable an evil system. But she didn't do it alone.

Instead, she explains, her sister Annika came with her. Annika had worked as a mercenary, and she took it upon herself to protect Lorelei... something that was often necessary. Slavers didn't want their profitable system shut down. First they tried to bribe her, and when that didn't work, they tried to kill her. More times than she could count, they sent armed thugs to silence Lorelei's words. The only reason Lorelei survived was because Annika worked tirelessly to protect her.

Lorelei tells them that, just as much if not more than she, Annika is responsible for dismantling a cruel and unjust system. But Annika never wanted attention for what she did. Many people in World's Edge – the same people who called Lorelei a hero, the ones who later made her a Saint – never even learned Annika's name.

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Instead, the statue explains, they referred to Annika as the Sword of Lorelei.

That, she thinks, must be what the Duke of Glendeep has need of: not a physical sword. But a person, a person sworn to protect another.

Of course, Lorelei says, Annika lived a very long time ago, just as Lorelei herself did. But the statue thinks the party has not come to World's Edge in vain: there is someone here who is marked by shadows. She gestures at Pansy's shadow ward pendant. "If you wish it, I believe you have the power within you. Will you become my new Sword?"

Pansy is startled by this. Didn't the statue hear her before, she asks? The ritual didn't affect her! She's not transformed into any sort of magical anything!

The statue shakes her head. "Most of us aren't transformed by magic, young one. Some of us are given magic, it's true. But some of us have something else. Something stronger. We transform ourselves. It's an act of will. But only if we are willing..." She looks at Pansy.

Pansy looks at the party. She is a little bit disbelieving, but she's excited as well. What, she asks them, should she do?

Again, hopefully, the party will encourage and support her! After a few minutes of this (enough to be satisfying/not so much it gets tedious) Pansy turns to the statue. "All right," she says.

"In that case..." says Lorelei, "You will have much work to do. Like I said, transforming ourselves is an act of will." She smiles. "And, perhaps, a little magic..." She touches Pansy lightly on her forehead, her sword hand and her chest while saying "Pansy Golden, through the strength of your head, your hands and your heart, let you be known henceforth as the Sword of Lorelei. Go, my child. Protect those who need it."

Pansy's eyes open wide as some sort of power comes into her. She feels... different, she tells the party. She has a lot of work to do. So much to learn! But she is on her way. Pansy thanks Lorelei.

Lorelei turns then and quietly leaves the Shrine, heading through Hillcrest and down River Run. (This is because the party is about to have a charge revelation scene in the Shrine and otherwise Lorelei will be trapped there a while. She also can't go in another direction because she'll encounter other parties.)

Item(s) to give this party: none from Lorelei, although she should make sure she has her "marble" Sacred Shield with her

Knights of the Golden Circle -- Ariel Jaffee, Katie Paugh & Kevin Kulp

Age: the Knights have all been dead for a long time

Usually found: unseen for years and years

The Knights of the Golden Circle were an order of knights who traveled about the kingdom, going where the need was very great. No one has seen them for many years now.

Keer

Time: 9:45 am Sunday (the Knights are the final step on Keer's party path.)

Where: The final encounter will take place in the Bower of Dreams. The Knights will be hidden out of sight (in the woods on the edges of the Bower) when the party arrives.

Signal to appear: As the final component of the summoning ritual, the party must blow a long trumpet blast. (The party may test the horn first, so the Knights should wait till they hear the long note sounded. Of course, if the Knights do show up a little early it's not a big deal.) When the horn is sounded, the Knights walk forward quickly but solemnly to stand at the very edge of the clearing. This creates a reasonable illusion of them "appearing out of nowhere" The Knights then make their way into the Bower to join the party.

Activity/Info: Throughout this encounter, the Knights should act with the grave dignity that befits spectral heroes of their stature. Although the Knights are already dead, they can speak freely to the participants.

When they have joined the participants in the Bower, the Knights ask "Who has summoned the Knights of the Golden Circle after so many years?" They also ask the party why they have been summoned. Theoretically, the party will talk about the Leviathan ravaging Keer and will ask the Knights to help with this matter.

The Knights tell the party sadly that there is nothing they can do to help. They say that there are no Knights of the Golden Circle anymore. The Knights apologize and begin to leave the clearing. (The Knights should proceed with leaving just long enough to make the party really worry that their mission has failed.)

Then, one Knight stops and asks the others to wait. He appears to be thinking intently. He mutters to himself about the party coming from an island, now after the Knights are all long dead. The other Knights start nodding as they listen to him; it should be clear that they have realized the same thing that the first Knight has. One of the other Knights then explains to the party: there was an ancient prophecy among their Order. It said: "When the Circle is shattered forever, the new Knights will come. They come from the mountain that rises not from the plain. They are the foes of the serpent who travels not on the ground. They know themselves not. But they are the Knights, and the Circle remains unbroken."

If the party isn't getting it, the Knights explain that Keer - an island - is a mountain that doesn't rise from a plain, and the Leviathan is a serpent that doesn't travel on the ground. The Knights say that, when they were dying, they believed that someone would come to them then to become the new Knights. When no one came, they believed the prophecy was false.

But this was the first time that anyone had managed to summon them since their deaths. This was the first time that they had had to refuse aid to those who needed it. Only now, in that grim hour, would the Circle truly be shattered. But now that the party is here, the prophecy is fulfilled after all! The party members are the new Knights of the Golden Circle!

The Knights ceremoniously place one gold pendant around each participant's neck and tie one bracer around each participant's forearm. (Each of the three Knights is wearing two pendants and two bracers, so each participant ends up with one of each. If the Knights keep the pendants tucked inside their tunics until they're needed, it makes it less obvious what's going to happen.) The Knights have the party kneel before them. The Knights knight each of the party members (laying their sword first on each person's right shoulder, then on the left shoulder) and say "By the power of my sword, may you be known now and forever as [insert participant's name here], Knight of the Golden Circle" or something like that. (If the Knights are able to memorize the names and descriptions of the participants from Keer before they leave the Basement, then they can call them by name when knighting them. But if this doesn't happen, or if doing this will add too much stress, ignore this!)

The Knights are filled with joy. Now that the Knighthood will continue, their spirits can finally rest.

Item(s) to give this party: the Knights' golden pendants and bracers

Professor Daniel Merriweather -- Erhard Konerding

Age: 68

Usually found: Twickinham University, Cultural Studies Department

Keer

When to approach a party: Sunday around 9:50am, after the party finishes their interaction with the Knights of the Golden Circle in the Bower of Dreams

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: The party encounters a somewhat frazzled, academic-looking man they've never seen before. (Since they "just happen to" encounter him, he should probably be hiding along Big Bow Trail just waiting for them to exit the Bower.) This man doesn't introduce himself by name, but it's Daniel Merriweather. He has no time to talk, he immediately tells the party. He has a noontime appointment to meet a colleague and then he'll need to prepare for the lecture he's scheduled to give at 3pm! Would the party be so kind as to tell him where he might find Lewis Bainbridge?

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!] Although the Professor claims to be in a hurry, he should stay with the party until he has revealed the following information in whatever order makes sense, and depending on what the party's doing/asking:

- He is indeed Professor Daniel Merriweather, and he is, obviously, alive. He doesn't need to say the former unless the party asks directly who he is, and he clearly doesn't say the latter. He's never heard of anyone named Dorito and he certainly hasn't heard that he's presumed dead.
- Professor Merriweather is arriving (he thinks) on the day of his scheduled lecture. Assuming the party tells him it was supposed to be last week, he is indignant. That can't be right, he tells them. The lecture is September 29th. That's today! (It is not.)
- The Professor was supposed to meet his colleague at noon on the previous Sunday. Once he learns today is 10/4, not 9/29, Merriweather realizes he is late for other appointments and needs to leave immediately. "Please extend my apologies to Lewis Bainbridge. Shame we can't meet up. One of the finest anthropologists I've ever worked with. Apologize to him for me. You'll do that, right?"
- Hopefully the party will hear Bainbridge's name and connect it with the similarly-named Bane. If they tell the Professor that they don't know Lewis Bainbridge - or if they ask him to describe Bainbridge - he tells them that Lewis is a large chap with a full black beard and glasses. (Bane himself doesn't wear glasses, but other than that, this matches his description.)

Having given this information, Professor Merriweather then hurries away. He's a week behind schedule and no amount of asking on the party's part will convince him to stay around for the trial.

Charge to which this info pertains: Dorito's, see page 105 for the whole story

The KPS Guy -- Morgan Harris-Warrick

The Hired Wolven Hit Squad -- Emily Bernier, Julie Leviter, Lindsay Daviau, Peggy O'Connell & Tricia Boynton

Age: varies

The KPS (Kingdom Parcel Service) Guy is underpaid and overworked, and he's currently running late on a delivery for some lady named Tanya Peacock.

The Hired Wolven Hit Squad have been contracted by an unknown person with a straightforward job: Be on Starwatcher's Hill on Sunday morning. When you see a group with a crown, retrieve it, killing anyone who tries to intervene. They have been paid 800 royals already and will receive 800 more upon completion. This is a great deal more than the KPS Guy is making, but unlike them, he will likely survive the encounter.

Noctara

When to approach a party: on Sunday after their party path is complete, around 9:30am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: This scene includes a lot of staff, not all of whom are present the whole time. Explaining the sequencing is easiest if it's presented as one big encounter, so please read the whole thing to find your name. This sort of encounter will henceforth be known as a Noctaran Clusterfuck.

On Sunday after their party path is complete (around 9:30), Tanya Peacock brings the party to the Makai camp. There, they find an agitated Kerrick Dealbinder. He has captured an intruder! This intruder is currently trapped inside a very large cloth sack. Dealbinder is periodically poking the sack and demanding that the intruder confess, which the intruder has thus far refused to do.

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

After the party presumably removes the intruder from the sack, they learn that it's Jack Johnson. This revelation should have a sort of zany, madcap feel to it in keeping with this charge, and in the beginning, all the staff present are talking at once. Dealbinder is trying to interrogate Jack, Jack is outraged that Dealbinder captured him but is otherwise proclaiming his unwillingness to talk, and Tanya is loudly insisting that Dealbinder give her the tiara. Ideally the party will have at least some ideas about what has gone on here, but even if they understand little, we hope they will take control of the scene and restore some semblance of order! Eventually, lead as much by the party as possible, the staff can reveal the following information:

- "Jack Johnson" isn't really a talent scout. His real name is Ethan Frank, and he's a palace guard in Dolorón, a job he hates (and is frankly terrible at.) He has his employee ID badge with him.
- The crown Dealbinder has isn't Tanya's missing tiara. It's part of the crown jewels of Lyria, and it was stolen on Ethan's watch. He's trying to return it before anyone else at the palace learns it's missing.
- The crown was stolen by a ring of jewel thieves people are calling the Gilt Crew. Surprisingly, Ethan was able to track some of them down. (Ethan is, in fact, a pretty smart guy. He just can't see well.) He knows there is a mastermind behind this heist, but not who it is. (As far as he's concerned, that doesn't matter; he just wants to return the crown.)
- Ethan heard rumors that the crown had been taken to World's Edge, so he came here looking for it. He hadn't been able to locate it... until Kerrick Dealbinder walked into the tavern wearing it.
- Ethan has been trying to steal the crown back from Dealbinder for the past several days, but every time he's tried, he's been thwarted. By the Makai.

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- Ethan has a note in his possession and eventually shows it to the party. It was sent to one of the members of the Gilt Crew by the person who masterminded the heist. It says: "*Leave the crown in the pre-arranged drop location. Once its authenticity has been verified, your share of the proceeds will be sent to you.*" It's signed not with a name but with a sabertooth symbol.
- It's likely the party won't learn all this information before being interrupted again (see below), which is fine. Still, the staff do ultimately need to convey the above info.

After the party has been interacting with Tanya Peacock/Kerrick Dealbinder/Jack Johnson for 5-10 minutes, Phineas Smirch enters the Makai camp. Phineas is oblivious to whatever drama is currently unfolding and he makes an announcement to Dealbinder: this is Dealbinder's lucky day, because Phineas is prepared to buy the crown from him for 10 royals! That's (Phineas thinks) 2 royals more than the crown is worth, and given that (Phineas thinks) Dealbinder stole the crown in the first place, this is pure profit for him! 30 seconds later, the KPS (Kingdom Parcel Service) Guy arrives and announces he has a delivery for Tanya Peacock. Sorry he's running late! Hopefully these additional intrusions plunge the scene back into chaos and the party can again gain control! Once they do, additional info is revealed:

- When Phineas went to bring Karla her breakfast tray, she was talking in her sleep, saying something about needing the crown. Obviously Phineas wants his little girl to be happy, which is why he's here with this extremely generous offer for Dealbinder.
- Tanya's package obviously contains the tiara she ordered from Tirothian Trading Company. 8 royals was probably overpaying for it. Tanya, however, is DELIGHTED by it. Once she realizes he didn't steal her crown, Kerrick Dealbinder is her new best friend. TWINNING!
- Phineas has no idea that Karla is the mastermind behind this heist or anything else. If the party seems to have no idea about this, Phineas can casually refer to her as Fang once. Hopefully this won't be necessary. If the party tells him about her involvement, he is proud but extremely surprised.

There are so many people involved in this scene that it's challenging to say exactly how it will go. The staff should convey their info as best they can and be ready for whatever. If something unexpected happens, we'll fix it afterwards.

Ultimately, Ethan won't leave the Makai camp without the crown. He and Tanya leave the camp with the party; the remaining staff should play this by ear. Because the party is about to get attacked, it is much easier if staff are at the rear of the party or at least the middle, rather than being out in front!

As the party is leaving the Makai camp, they encounter the Hired Wolven Hit Squad. Although there aren't terribly many Wolven in this squad, they are imposing foes. When they see the party, one of them says "They have it! Move in!" and then they engage. The Wolven put up a very good fight but are eventually killed. If the party doesn't think to search their bodies, Tanya says "Ooh, I wonder if they have any TREASURE?" They don't, but they do have a note, which reads: "*Half the payment is enclosed; the remainder will be placed in the usual location upon completion of the job. On Sunday morning, retrieve the crown from Starwatcher's Hill and leave it in the drop spot. Kill anyone who stands in your way.*" It, too, is signed with the sabertooth symbol.

If the party captures and/or magically questions any member of the hit squad, the Wolven reveal that they were paid 800 royals down with the promise of 800 more upon completion. They don't know who hired them. Their "drop spot" is a random obscure spot far out in the woods.

Charge to which this info pertains: Kerrick Dealbinder's, see page 76 for the whole story

T-Bone -- Greg Rothauser

Jersey Pete -- Rowan Scassellati

Age: and this is any bizness of yours exactly how?

T-Bone and Jersey Pete are the exact guys their names lead you to believe they are

P'loa

When to approach a party: Saturday after 10pm

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where *you* approach *the party*. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: T-Bone and Jersey Pete approach the party to ask if they can borrow a little money. T-Bone explains that they're short on money at the moment - real short, actually. Like, completely broke - and they want to buy a drink for the guy behind the bar 'cause he seems like a real stand-up guy. Jersey Pete explains that a week ago, him and the Bone both came into some unexpected funds. See, Pete was approached by an unfamiliar gentleman and hired to do a real important but also kinda peculiar task: all he had to do was walk into town and come into the tavern, and then he had to say he recognized the drawing hanging on the bar, that it was Mister Scurvy Jack Brigham. Jersey Pete tells the party that this was a strange sort of job but he was eager to do it on account of the unfamiliar gentleman paying him 75 royals for the job. T-Bone tells the party that he was real jealous of Pete lucking into this job, getting all that money just for saying a thing, but that two days later, that same gentleman came and hired T-Bone to do the same exact thing! Both men agree that it was a real good job and a real good week. Sadly, they have both spent their hard-earned salaries, almost certainly on alcohol. The men tell the party that they decided to come into town to see if the unfamiliar gentleman needed them to do any more tasks for him. Sadly, they haven't been able to find said gentleman anywhere. Imagine their surprise when they came into the tavern and find the man in the picture - the man they had to say was Scurvy Jack Brigham - behind the bar! Jersey Pete tells the party that they'd like to buy the guy a refreshing beverage, since it's because of him they got paid such good salaries this week. Of course, to be companionable, they should really have beverages themselves, too. To keep the guy company, that is. Sadly, they lack the funds to buy said beverages. Is the party able to help? *If the party asks*, neither T-Bone nor Jersey Pete is able to describe the unfamiliar gentleman who hired them, except that it was a man and they don't see him in the tavern now.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

Lady Elani Edgewater -- Marsha Gershon

Elani's Fae Companions -- Ben Warren, Blake Geno, Bri Taborn & Jen Morris

Age: Lady Elani is 28, and has been ever since she came to World's Edge 67 years ago. Fae ages vary

Usually found: Elani and the Fae will encounter the party near the Low Bridge, along the River Run trail

P'loa

Time: 10:30am Sunday (Elani and the Fae are the final step on the party's party path.)

Where: on the River Run trail, on the Hillcrest side of the Low Bridge. Elani and the Fae are hiding in the woods when the party approaches. We'll figure out during set-up where there's enough cover to make this work.

Signal to appear: Ned helps the party with their ritual (see p. 440) which pulls an enchanted box through the air (while Ned holds it, of course) 'til it abruptly lands on the dirt in the middle of the path. Hopefully the party starts looking under the box, so that they don't see (or hear, if the brook is making noise) the approach of people from the woods.

Activity/Info: Once the party notices her (or, in a perfect world, once she's quite close to them and can totally surprise them with her sudden presence), Elani says "Oh! You're from P'loa!" She looks around, a little confused. "But... this isn't P'loa. This is World's Edge. I remember this place. Why have you brought me here?"

The party will presumably tell her about their mission, to which Elani makes appropriately worried-sounding noises in response. While Elani is talking, the Fae stay loosely grouped behind her, not exactly providing protection or support, but looking like they could if they were needed to.

Hopefully at some point, the party will ask Elani a question or two, possibly covering such topics as "how come you're still alive?", "how come you're clearly not 95?", and/or "who are these leaf-bedecked people with you?"

In whatever order makes sense, Elani tells her story, assisted wherever appropriate by the Fae. She was very sad when she came to World's Edge; her grief over losing her fiancé followed her across the world, as she should have realized it would. She often went to stand on the Silverspan; at times she considered jumping as a way of escaping her sorrow.

On one such day, she looked into the lake and saw a small fish that was caught in the current in the lake right near the top of the falls. The fish swam and swam, making almost no progress as it tried to fight its way away from the falls. Finally it broke free and swam back into the lake, no doubt having already forgotten its struggle. Elani didn't forget, though. Trite though it sounds, it inspired her that the fish would fight so hard to stay alive. Elani realized that she, too, was caught in the current, as it were. She turned from the bridge and ran up into Hillcrest, continuing deeper and deeper into the woods.

At some point, everything began to spin around her. And then, suddenly, she was Someplace Else.

"Elani found her way into the land of the Fae" says a Fae. "It is incredibly rare for a human. She is quite exceptional."

Elani tells the party that time stands still among the Fae. You might think, given that, that grief would stretch on and on there, but this is not the case. "I healed faster among the Fae" Elani says. She lays her hand on the arm of one of the Fae men. "And eventually, I found new happiness to be had there."

But, Elani says, the party surely did not come here just to see how she was doing. If they haven't already, hopefully they'll ask then for the Jewel of the Waves.

Elani is wearing the pendant (under her top, so that it's not evident.) She gives it to them. "I must return now, back among the Fae. That is my home now. But I will always be P'loan, and I will always remember the people who risked so much to save our homeland." She clasps a hand of each of them in turn and then she and the Fae walk off into the woods.

Item(s) to give this party: the Jewel of the Waves

Jack Brigham -- John Nann

Age: 55

Usually found: at the helm of the galleon *Misery*. And for about three hours on Sunday, in World's Edge

Traveler Lore concerning Jack Brigham appears on page 211.

P'loa

Time: soon after 10:30am Sunday (Ned Crochett, Jack Brigham and Scarlet Billows are all part of the party's charge revelation, albeit not all there for all of it)

Where: on the River Run trail

Signal to appear: Ned is already with the party, having just completed their party path ending. He should wait until Elani Edgewater and her Fae have moved a decent way off, without requiring them to go absurdly far into the woods.

Activity/Info: After their encounter with Elani and the Fae, Ned picks up the box (which still has the ritual items inside it.) He says something about how he can return the box to the tavern... and then the box jerks suddenly in his hands. (Just as with the party path ending, of course, Ned needs to make it appear that the magically enchanted box has a mind of its own and that it's pulling him around.) The box leads Ned (and the party, we certainly hope!) back up the River Run trail toward Hillcrest.

While being pulled along, Ned frets aloud what could possibly be causing this strange behavior. The party collected those necessary items for the ritual, he says, plus an item that belonged to the person to they're trying to locate. They've already found Elani, obviously. Where in the world could they be going now?

If it occurs to the party that the one other component present is the box itself, great. If they seem bewildered, Ned points this fact out, saying that the box belongs to Bonnie and Solomon and asking rhetorically if the ritual is going to summon them next. Ned reminds the party that the box previously belonged to Scarlet. He certainly hopes it isn't going to summon her, since he has absolutely no desire to see her again! Of course, Ned says, Scarlet always claimed the box was a present from her rich boyfriend. He asks dismissively and rhetorically if maybe the box is summoning *him*.

(Again, the box doesn't pull Ned along in a totally straight line, or super-quickly. He needs to make the walk back to Hillcrest take long enough that the party has a minute or two to process what's happening, but not so long that it gets boring.)

Coming into Hillcrest, there is indeed someone there. Ned doesn't know it yet, but it is indeed Scarlet's ex-boyfriend: Jack Brigham. Jack has a hand on the hilt of his sword, though he hasn't drawn it. He looks vaguely hostile and slightly cautious... which isn't bad, considering that a minute ago, he was hundreds of miles away, standing on the deck of his ship. Most people would be panicked in such a situation, but Scurvy Jack isn't the panicking type.

If the party asks Jack who he is, he doesn't answer; instead he wants to know who they are and what they want. Hopefully the party can piece together how the ritual summoned a second person and explain it; if they're at a loss, Ned can provide nudges until everyone gets it.

Very soon after they encounter Jack, another person comes hurrying into Hillcrest: Scarlet Billows. Unlike Jack, she hasn't been magically summoned; she traveled here by mundane means. The party will have met Scarlet the day before during the alternate timeline, but although they remember Scarlet, she doesn't remember them. (Hopefully this won't be confusing for the party; Scarlet shouldn't let them get sucked into a conversation about yesterday's magical hijinks.)

[Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible! This revelation is even trickier than some others because Scarlet is going to give (or confirm) information that incriminates her. We've tried to make suggestions here of ways she can do this without it seeming weird.]

When Scarlet catches sight of Jack, she is completely shocked and very, very unhappy. Although the party doesn't necessarily know it, Scarlet and Cal are framing Solomon for piracy by making him appear to be Jack Brigham. The presence in World's Edge of the real Jack Brigham is an extremely unwelcome wrinkle in this plan!

Scarlet and Jack have a heated exchange during which they utterly ignore the party. Although exact wording is not at all important here, this might look something like:

Scarlet: You! What the hell are you doing here? *[This is the first indication Scarlet has met Jack before, a fact they haven't heard yet.]*

Jack: What the hell am I doing here? I have no idea! I don't even know where 'here' is!

Scarlet: You can't be here!

Jack: I have no desire to be here! I was onboard my ship and then I was suddenly here! I'm trying to get back there!

Scarlet: Well, you have to go! You'll ruin everything! *[Other than the vision, this is the first indication that Scarlet is also in on the plan to frame Solomon.]*

Jack: Don't tell me what to do, Scarlet.

The two continue to bicker until the party (hopefully) intervenes to get them to calm down. If they do, or if enough time has gone on without the party stepping in, Jack takes a second to stop and look around.

Jack: Hey, wait. Is this that little town where you owned the bar?

Scarlet: Shut up, Jack.

Jack: <amused> I still can't believe you sold it without knowing! *[Other than the vague reference in the vision, the party doesn't yet know anything about the buried treasure. They hopefully know that both Scarlet and Cal have tried to buy the bar; but they don't have any idea why. Hopefully they will question Jack; if not, he can repeat variations on this line. Again, it's better if they draw the info out of him instead of him just announcing it.]*

Scarlet: Shut. Up!

By the time the scene ends, the party needs to know that:

- Solomon isn't Jack Brigham.
- There's pirate gold buried under the tavern floor, hidden there by Jack while he and Scarlet were lovers. Scarlet only learned about the gold after selling the tavern.
- Now Scarlet and her current boyfriend Cal are trying to buy the tavern back.
- Since buying the tavern will be easier and cheaper if Solomon is locked up, Cal is using lies and subterfuge to make it appear that Solomon is Jack.

Since it shouldn't look like Scarlet is knowingly incriminating herself, Jack needs to keep moving this scene forward. He can ask the party what's going on, since he doesn't know anything about Solomon being framed. (If the party, for instance, says "Oh, you're the real Jack Brigham!", Jack says "I'm the only Jack Brigham! What the hell are you talking about?")

If the party is talking in front of Scarlet and Jack about Cal framing Solomon (but not acknowledging or realizing that Scarlet is in on this), then Scarlet can just go along with it.

If, however, the party acknowledges/implies/questions that Scarlet and Cal are working together or if they think Scarlet is acting alone, Scarlet should throw Cal under the bus. If the party hasn't already used Cal's name, she should do this at first simply by referring to Cal as "him", so she's not doing too much of the party's job for them. She might say "this is all his fault for being so sloppy" or "I told him some things I shouldn't have! Then he stole my Dawn Star and brought it here to do illegal things with it!"

Ultimately, Jack, Scarlet and Cal will be at the trial. (If the party is stressing because they're not sure Cal will be there, Scarlet can tell them she's pretty sure he will be. There's no real reason for her to say this, but we don't want the party fretting about it needlessly.)

If the party convincingly tells Scarlet that Cal is planning on double crossing her and taking the tavern for himself, she is furious. (This shouldn't be too hard a sell; Scarlet already knows Cal stole the DawnStar and she is by nature a suspicious person.) She is willing to go to the trial with the party, even if it means she goes down for this, if it means Cal also takes the fall.

Jack shouldn't distract the party while this complicated scene is happening, but at some point before this all ends, he needs to ask the obvious question: how is he supposed to get back to the ship? When Jack asks, Ned tells everyone that, when the party asked him for the cedarwood box yesterday, he did a little bit of reading about the Ritual of Togetherness. Apparently, summoned individuals will be magically returned to their place of origin approximately 3 hours after the summoning occurs. So Jack will be around for the trial without worrying that he'll be imprisoned by Justice Wilde for piracy.

Note: Because of camp construction and the Silverspan being inaccessible, this party's path-ending-plus-revelation-scene involves a bunch of walking: tavern to Hillcrest to Low Bridge to Hillcrest, then theoretically back to tavern. Doing the revelation scene in Hillcrest is more private and cooler, but if someone in the party is having mobility issues, we could move the revelation scene to the parking lot end of River Run. Hopefully this won't be necessary but it's noted here in case it's needed.

Charge to which this info pertains: Solomon Stillwater's, see page 142 for the whole story

the Ghost of Jon Golden -- Eli Hunt

Ghostly Chorus -- Alison Morris, Edgar Fisher, Jeff Yaus & Vanessa Robb

Age: varies, but one thing is certain: they're not getting any older

Usually found: this is a spiritual question that is above this handbook's paygrade. But on Sunday morning the ghosts will briefly be found in the graveyard, only by the party from Sythwan

Sythwan

Time: 10:15am Sunday (the ghost of Jon Golden is the final step on the party's party path; unbeknownst to the party or Jon, the ghostly chorus will also show up)

Where: In the graveyard, there is a simple gravestone **PROP** that says JON GOLDEN on it. The party will need to circle around the grave, so whoever sets up the graveyard (as well as the Ghost Dancers who re-set it!) should place this grave somewhere somewhat central in the graveyard

Signal to appear: Jon Golden and the other ghosts should be hidden somewhere out of sight when the party approaches the graveyard. If it is possible for Jon to be hiding somewhere different than the other ghosts, this is ideal. Jon will appear before the other ghosts do and being hidden in a different spot will reduce the chance the party sees the other ghosts when Jon appears. Possible suggestion: Jon could hide atop the small hillock that's on the right as you enter the graveyard.

When he is summoned, he doesn't need to come all the way down to speak with them. The other ghosts could hide in the woods beyond the graveyard.

Jon Golden's signal to appear is when the party completes their ritual, which works as follows: The group walks in a circle around the body or grave. The rest all follow. The one holding the chalice pours a small amount of water out while walking. The group moves once around the circle. They then turn inwards to face the body (or, again, the grave) and together recite the words "Speak to us, o fallen friend!"

The ghostly chorus stays hidden until Jon reaches the pre-determined portion of his song, at which point they begin singing as well, wafting from their hiding place(s) to join Jon and the party in the graveyard. The party should hear the other ghosts before they see them.

Activity/Info: When the party speaks their "Speak to us, o fallen friend!" line, Jon Golden steps quietly forward. He is shy and tentative; the party was told on Friday night that he was, in life, a shy man who mostly kept to himself. "H...hello," he says. "Do I know you?"

Presumably the party will tell him about their mission and about needing his song. When they mention it, Jon pulls a folded paper from his pocket. He knows right away which song they mean. (From a meta-game level, we want the party to see early in this encounter that Jon has actual sheet music. If they're not singers, they may otherwise spend the entire encounter thinking they actually need to learn to sing the song, and it would be a shame if this stressed them out rather than letting them focus on the interaction itself.)

Jon is surprised and pleased to hear that awareness of the song has spread as far away as Sythwan. "Pretty impressive," he says, "for a song that's never actually been sung."

Before he can explain this odd and surprising statement, he tells the party that he's truly sorry. They're going to be angry with him, and rightfully so, because although it sounds like things are bad in Sythwan, he can't share his song with them. Well, he admits. Not can't. But won't.

And then he explains: all his life, it was hard for him to make friends. He's shy; most people didn't bother starting conversations with him, and he lacked the courage to approach them. He moved through life basically alone.

He wrote this song – his masterwork, he thinks; as far as he knows, it's the only enchanted song in existence – not long before he died. He never actually performed the song, because he was saving it for the right time, and then... his time was up.

Except, he tells the party, it turned out there was something else on the other side of death.

Which was great, finding that out, except that... it turned out he was shy in the afterlife, too. And he couldn't help but wonder what it was going to be like to be alone... forever.

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But then, something happened. Somehow, maybe because this whole place is essentially enchanted, but... people here heard about his song. People wanted to ask about it, how he'd written it, what magics it would work. People were suddenly starting conversations with him! For the first time, he... he has friends.

But Jon Golden knows: the thing that makes him special is the mystery surrounding this song no one's ever heard. If he gives it to the party, it will be out in the world. The mystery will be lost. And the people who've been talking to him won't need to bother any more.

So... he's very sorry, truly. He knows how selfish he's being. But as far as he can tell, he's here in this afterplace forever. Now that he knows what it's like to have friends, he doesn't want to go back to alone. And if his song is no longer a source of interest, alone is what he'll be. Jon apologizes once more and turns to go...

Hopefully the party will speak up then! It doesn't matter much exactly what they tell him, but hopefully they'll tell him that people will still find him special and interesting and worth talking to if he shares the song. If they do a great job of telling him that he's worthy, that will be wonderful, but ultimately, Jon is going to listen for a few minutes and then... become convinced. (This also works if they instead impress upon him just how critical their own mission is, but it's obviously a little bit less of a feel-good scene that way.)

Ultimately, Jon agrees to share the song with them. He still believes, though, that he's probably going to lose his friends by doing so. Jon hands the party the ghostly song sheet – again, hopefully, signifying that the party doesn't need to actually learn the song unless they want to – and as he hands it to them, he begins to sing.

Jon's solo voice floats out over the graveyard for several seconds and then, suddenly, he's not singing alone anymore. Another voice joins in and another, and as they sing, the ghostly chorus moves out of their hiding places, joining Jon and the party in the graveyard. If the party joins in (or just a participant or two) that's great, but it's not required.

Jon brings the song to a reasonable stopping point and looks around, stunned. His friends are there with him. They tell him that his song is even more beautiful than they'd hoped. They're excited, later, to sing it with him again.

Jon raises a hand in farewell to the party. He tells them how much he hopes the song works to end the blight of sadness in Sythwan. Please, he asks them. Please share the song with the world.

He looks again, stunned, at his friends, who are waiting for him. "Thank you," he tells the party. And then Jon and his friends fade back into the woods.

Item(s) to give this party: the ghostly sheet music

(2/3 of) the Party from Center City

The Broker -- Matthew Scott

The Gamer -- Aaron Size

The Ranger -- Rich Longmore

The Trainer -- Lynn Chiavacci

The Companion -- Leah Shudiner

Age: varies

Usually found: usually, they're living normal lives around Lyria. This weekend, though, they're off having an adventure.

They're all participants at an Anotherworld Adventure Weekend. As the party from Center City, they're having a great time, but they've lost their Tender and Server on Friday morning and can't seem to find them anywhere.

Sythwan

When to approach a party: Sunday around 10:15am

Note: Unlike a Party Path encounter, this encounter gives info about one of the Charges. This is a case where you approach the party. Try to make it seem that the following subject just happens to come up.

Info to give the party indirectly, in conversation: *On Sunday around 10:15am*, the party will complete their party path ending in the graveyard. (Because this encounter will take a little while to resolve, the Ghost of Jon Golden and the Ghostly Chorus should leave the graveyard before the participants do, via Great Swamp Way. Otherwise they'll get stuck in the graveyard for a while!) After the party path ends, as the party heads back along Great Swamp Way, they encounter an oddly-dressed group of people arguing amongst themselves, looking at a map and clearly quite lost. The party doesn't know it yet, but these are Huxley & Quinoa's partymates. There's the Broker (wearing a suit and carrying a briefcase), the Trainer (in yoga pants, and wearing a whistle), the Gamer (with a hilarious t-shirt, cheap cape and pocket full of D20s) and the Ranger (in National Park Service uniform... because some things change, but a party always needs a ranger.) Standing right near them is someone in a t-shirt, jeans and sneakers: she's the Companion. And she is worried sick.

When they spot the party, there is a hurried conversation between them. [Note: As with all revelations, the way this scene unfolds depends a lot on the party. Ideally, the party takes initiative/asks questions/makes deductions. If they're not, the staff need to keep feeding them bits of information. Hopefully this sparks the party's interest and they then take the lead, but if not, staff need to slowly dole out info in as natural a way as possible. Again, let the party run the show if at all possible!]

The comments someone in this group can say, in order, are:

- 1) "Um, hello? We're sorry to bother you, but... have you seen two people who've lost their group?"
- 2) [Regardless of response to the above, because they're very unlikely to get anything from that] "It's been two days since we've seen them, and we can't find them anywhere. Could they have come here?"
- 3) "Wherever they are, I hope she's watching out for him. He seemed pretty clueless."
- 4) "Um, not to criticize, but... how come you guys [the party] aren't wearing costumes?"
- 5) [From the Gamer:] You guys, let's keep going! I haven't gotten to use my Pedantic Argument ability yet!"
- 6) [From the Broker:] "Ooh, maybe we have to bribe them! [Speaking overly loudly to the party:] If you help us, we'll give you 5... what are they called again?... 'doll – ars'." [Pulls out handful of dollar bills]

If the party is still clueless – or if they've grasped that these are some sort of weird participants but not that they have anything to do with Huxley and Quinoa, Silla approaches this group's Companion. Silla says "Um, do I know you? Because... you seem

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kinda familiar." The Companion says "I don't think so, but you seem familiar, too. I don't know; I'm just so worried. Our Server and our Tender are missing, and I am going to be in so much trouble."

If that still doesn't spark any insight in the party, then this group can start describing Huxley and Quinoa physically. Note that they don't use the names "Huxley" or "Quinoa." Also note that if the party says "Wait, you're talking about Huxley and Quinoa!" this doesn't mean anything to this group, although they can say "I don't know who that is... unless those are their made-up names."

Hopefully some combination of this will enlighten the party, but if they possibly can, it would be great if the party understood what was going on before they all wander back to the tavern! Once the party has caught on, the Broker/Trainer/Gamer/Ranger can confirm that yes, they're participants at an Anotherworld Adventure Weekend. The party from Center City will stay with this party through the trial but should of course let the (real) party do all the talking.

Charge to which this info pertains: Huxley & Quinoa's, see page 136 for the whole story

The Genie of the Lamp -- Dave Korka

Age: ???

Usually found: in the lamp. Obvy.

Uri-Kesh

Time: 10:30 am Sunday (The Genie (along with Esmerelda) is the final step on Uri-Kesh's party path.)

Where: The final encounter will take place in one of the Roamer tents. The Genie needs to be hidden in one of the other tents when the party arrives. After the party is inside the tent, he can hide just outside that structure (he should have a cloak on, so he's not so obvious!) until the party rubs the lamp. Or, if we have a lot of Roamer cloaks/blankets lying around, perhaps the Genie could actually be hidden in the corner of the tent, "disguised" as a pile of blankets. When the summoning happens, he could "pop up" suddenly. Either way, the Genie and Esmerelda should figure out the best way to work this.

Signal to appear: To summon the Genie, the party must rub the lamp and call out the magic words: "Ali-kazar Sembah Ahshewez!" (The letter from their Duchess tells the party this.) The Genie should not appear until the party says the words; rubbing the lamp is not enough!

Activity/Info: Hopefully, the party will remember that Duchess Azalea's third wish is for her Genie love to come back to her (this information is in the letter from the Duchess). When the party tells this to the Genie, he is very happy. He loves Azalea too, and was heartbroken to leave her before. He tells the party that he's ready to get started right away. He will follow the party around for the remainder of the weekend (what little there is of it.)

Note: Duchess Azalea's letter should make it clear to the party that only one person can summon the Genie every 1000 years. The party is able to summon him because they are carrying out Azalea's bidding. But if the party attempts to make a wish that is not Azalea's, the Genie will tell them that she is still his master and that he cannot grant their wish. (This is important so the party doesn't suddenly become super powerful!)

Item(s) to give this party: himself!

and last but not least, EVERYBODY ELSE

the Companions

Ari (Arden) -- Susan Gerow

Clementine (Clairia) -- Britt Rothauser

Dodi (Dolorón) -- Maisie Sturtevant

Elvie (Elsewhich) -- Christine Huebbe

Gloucester (Glendeep) -- Brian Neff

Keifer (Keer) -- Bob Marriott

Nadia (Noctara) -- Sherry Rinell

Polo (P'loa) -- Amos Meeks

Silla (Sythwan) -- Lori Nadig

Urving (Uri-Kesh) -- Bill Sabram

Wade (Waylon) -- James Surano

the (other) Wolven Captains

Dresden -- Margot Holmes

Fury -- Jess Schoolman

Gaspar -- Morgan Harris-Warrick

Hatchet -- Dave Korka

**Starring Sarah San Clemente, Aaron Size
& Leah Shuldiner as our fabulous chefs!**

...and Lance Nathan, as the Storyteller

Friday Night Fight Coordinator -- Peggy O'Connell

Skeever 1 -- Bri Taborn, Gretchen Albright & Marléna Soble

Skeever 2 -- Brace Peters, Jess Schoolman & Michelle Nathan

Skeever 3 -- Erin Geno, Lindsay Daviau & Morgan Harris-Warrick

When: Friday, 8 – 10pm

Where: Friday Night Fight Coordinator is in the tavern / Skeever combat locations are listed below

Goal(s): ensure that each party leaves the tavern at a time that allows them their own individual combat encounter

On Friday night, each party will leave the tavern accompanied by their 3rd Friday Encounter. While walking to their 4th Friday set-location, each party will be attacked. There are three groups of monsters out, each of which will fight three or four parties. Which parties they face is dependent on which set-location the party is going to.

Skeever 1 (fighting parties going to the Makai, Crabtree & Evelyn's and Inspirations Unlimited) -- Elsewhich, Glendeep, Sythwan, Waylon

(These monsters wait under the lights at the entrance to River Run, just past the parking lot.)

Skeever 2 (fighting parties going to the FireWaterEarthAir B'n'B (in Rosedale) and the Roamer camp) -- Dolorón, Noctara, Uri-Kesh

(These monsters wait under the lights on the way toward Rosedale.)

Skeever 3 (fighting parties going to the Peacock Family Singers campsite and the Valerius House) -- Arden, Clairia, Keer, P'loa

(These monsters wait under the lights by the basketball courts, just past the parking lot.)

Important information for the Friday Night Fight Coordinator:

Once one party that is encountering a given monster group leaves the tavern, other parties that are encountering those same monsters shouldn't leave for at least 10 minutes. (15 minutes is probably safer unless it's getting late.)

3rd Friday Encounters have been told to check in with you before leaving, but because this is a newish system, you should keep tabs on these people as much as possible. 3rd Friday Encounters are:

Group 1 -- Kira (Elsewhich), Kora Peacekeeper (Glendeep), Miscellania (Sythwan), Bailey (Waylon)

Group 2 -- Jpeg (Dolorón), Natasha (Noctara), Tinker Bill (Uri-Kesh)

Group 3 -- Nix Valerius (Arden), Pascal Valerius (Clairia), Elly Peacock (Keer), Stevie Peacock (P'loa)

This isn't really your responsibility, but if you're able, it would be great if you could also make sure that parties leave the tavern ready to fight. We're not explicitly saying "You're going to get attacked", but we don't want people carrying a stack of papers and with their weapon rolled up in their cloak. Lastly, as is hopefully obvious, a party shouldn't leave the tavern without all of their participants and their Companion!

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We are still working on developing a smoother system for this. We will discuss prior to Friday night and will keep trying to improve the system!

Thank you for doing this!

Important information for the Friday Skeever encounters:

In most ways, these are “standard” Skeever encounters, but there are a few differences: First, these monsters will give each party a technomagical wand component as part of their loot-drop. Treasure pouches for this are specially designated, and these monsters should be sure they have the special pouches rather than regular Skeever treasure pouches, when they leave the Basement.

In addition, the Skeevens should give each party one (only one!) pouch, even if the party neglects to say “Searching” after the combat.

Lastly, these monsters, like all Skeevens, are deceitful and tricky. **HOWEVER**, these Skeevens should not play tricks like “Skeever medic” (“My friend is hurt! Please come help him!”) that effectively punish the party for demonstrating compassion. There are all sorts of tricks these monsters can play that are funny and teach the parties Skeevens can’t be trusted. But we *want* the party to be their heroic selves; Friday night is a bad time to penalize them for being so. Please check with the EMs if you’d like clarification on this!

(It’s also worth noting that many participants are confused and overwhelmed on Friday night. Overly-elaborate tricks just bewilder them. Keep It Simple, Skeevens!)

Soul Speaking Coordinator -- Henny Admoni

When: Saturday, 10pm – completion

Where: in the tavern

Goal(s):

- a) make sure staff are in place so that Soul Speaking can start as soon as possible after the timeline is restored
 - b) make sure that parties are sent to Soul Speaking in an order that reflects how tired they are
 - c) make sure there is a steady flow of parties to all Soul Speaking locations
-

The job of the Coordinator is to move staff and participants along so that we can give all parties a great Soul Speaking experience before everyone is too tired.

In the past, we have had difficulty getting parties through Soul Speaking for two reasons: (1) it was not clear that staff - the Officiants (keepers running Soul Speaking) and the Nightingales - were in place so that parties could be sent to Soul Speaking, and (2) there were delays in getting parties out to a Soul Speaking location when the staff were ready for them. It is our hope that the Coordinator will help smooth out these rough parts.

The first job of the Coordinator is to make sure the Nightingales are at the Soul Speaking locations as quickly as possible, ideally leaving the Basement while the participants are at the ritual. It is fine if not all Nightingales are there for the first party – it's better to start without one or two Nightingales than to delay the first party by ten minutes. That said, there are some constraints on the parts being sung, and the Coordinator will need to make sure that the group going out has at least a minimal representation. (The Nightingales can tell you this themselves.)

Once participants are back from the ritual, Obsidian will speak quickly to the tavern to remind everyone of the importance of the holiday. The goal is to get the first party to each location as soon as Obsidian has made the announcement. Ideally, this is a party that is more tired than others, but again, it's better to get *some* party out to each location rather than to poll every party. Check with the EMs initially, and later on with individual Companions to gauge the order that parties need to be sent out.

There will be an Officiant in each Soul Speaking location and this person will then preside over the Soul Speaking activity itself. There will be staff assigned to help with "shuttling" parties back and forth from these areas, and these staff will report to the Coordinator. (See page 484 for a list of officiants and helpers, and for more Soul Speaking details.) These helpers will bring parties out to an "on deck" location that is away from the chaos of the tavern, close enough to the ritual so that you can tell when a party leaves, but far enough back so that don't disturb the quiet and privacy of the previous party. The helpers will stay with a party until they are in with the Officiant, and then return to the Coordinator to get the next group ready to go to the "on deck" location. Helpers are there to make sure that the party does not fragment – no, it's not a good time to go to talk to someone about an item – and to help entertain them while waiting. Often, simply letting the party talk about their different experiences is enough to keep them entertained.

In the past, we tried to ensure that parties went to the side of the camp where their cabins were located. (Parties who sleep in Rosedale went to the Bower, etc.) While this is a nice rule of thumb, please don't feel that you need to be strict about this. It is far better to send a party to the "wrong" side but allow them to get to sleep sooner than to have one side finish hours after the other.

Although the Coordinator job primarily involves interacting with staff rather than participants, the Coordinator is in the tavern while doing this. If yours is a role that can be in the tavern without causing problems (vis-à-vis charges, etc.) then you'll be dressed in your normal costume; otherwise, you can pull on an Ander costume while coordinating.

Thank you for doing this!

Party Path Ending Coordinators -- Betsy Rosenblatt & Kayla Schlenz

When: Sunday, 8:30 – 11am

Where: in the Basement

Goal(s):

- a) make sure party path ending encounters are in place before penultimate steps go out
 - b) make sure timing- or location-specific charge revelation encounters are in place as needed
 - c) make sure no other party-path-related situations slip through the cracks
-

On the EM table is the EM Notebook. Toward the end of this book are two pages you'll need: Sunday Morning Events by Time and Sunday Morning Events by Party.

Every party-specific event – charge-specific scenes, penultimate steps and final steps – that happens on Sunday is listed on both pages. The job we need you to do is twofold:

- 1) Check off each event after it successfully happens.
- 2) Look ahead, timing-wise, to ensure that staff are ready for (or will be ready for) the events that are *going to* happen

To better explain this, here's an example from the Sunday Morning Events by Party page. Note that these encounters and times are from an old plot; all the real encounters for the current plot are in the EM Notebook:

breakfast	C	P'loa	Demora
10:15 am	P	P'loa	Hinkle
10:30 am	U	P'loa	Elani Edgewater + Fae
10:30 am	C	P'loa	Jack Brigham (for real)

At breakfast, Demora has a piece of charge information (C) to give the P'loans. Hopefully Demora remembers that she has to do this, remembers the specifics of the information and also remembers to let you know when she's done this encounter, but we suggest you verify all three. In particular, since it's charge information, it's wise to check with Demora: ascertain not just that she told the party the information, but if at all possible, see if she thinks they listened and/or understood it. (She may not know, but it's still good to check. If we know they understood or know they didn't, we can plan accordingly.)

Hinkle is the party's penultimate step; he told them yesterday he'd meet them in the tavern at 10:15am to give them the item. Hinkle should know not to give out this item until you've given the okay, but it's good to check in to be certain he knows this.

After the party meets with Hinkle, they'll head out to encounter Elani Edgewater and the Fae, followed by a surprise charge-revelation encounter with the real Jack Brigham. Here's the (slightly) tricky piece: Although we've estimated that it'll take the party 15 minutes to get from the tavern to the spot where they'll encounter Elani and then Jack, those staff need to be ready to go long before 10:30am. Ideally, they'll be in costume by 10:05 or so and can head out then, leaving Hinkle time to meet the party at 10:15am.

However, if it's 10:10 and the Fae are still getting into costume, Hinkle needs to wait to give the party the item. Often, in this case, the penultimate step should go into the tavern and make an excuse, so that the party doesn't wander off.

In general, we usually check off penultimate steps and ultimate steps as soon as these staff head out, but only check off charge steps once the staff has told us the encounter happened successfully. You're welcome to do this however works for you!

Thank you for doing this!

Trial Coordinator -- Mirin Scassellati

Assistant Coordinators -- Mike Robb & Zak Terry

When: Sunday, 10am – noon

Where: in the Basement and/or in the tavern

Goal(s):

- a) prep the staff as much as possible for the trial
 - b) prep the physical tavern space as much as possible for the trial
 - c) let the EMs know about any questions or issues
-

The trial is, of course, a complicated scene with a lot of moving parts, made more complex by the fact that we often don't know what the participants will do. It's not the EM's intention to offload all the management of this, only to outsource some aspects of it as possible.

Information about the trial is split into two different parts of the Staff Handbook, the Plot Overview and the At The Trial portion of the Charges section.

Various tasks which would be helpful, in no particular order:

- 1) Ensure that lunch is starting on time so that we can begin the trial as close to noon as possible.
- 2) Ready the tavern for the trial, including making sure there's adequate space by the bar, seats saved for any key characters who arrive at the last minute, and space for the Prosecutor to stand.
- 3) Verify that any needed props (gavel, charge posting) or practical items (mug of water, a stool if needed) are in place.
- 4) Talk with the Key Players listed in the At the Trial section.
 - a) if we know what the party is thinking/planning, let them know
 - b) verify that they understand the key points of the scene
 - c) verify that they understand the tone of the scene
 - d) if the scene between staff characters is an argument, a love scene, etc., talk to the staff involved, either helping them choreograph this or verifying that they're in agreement with how it'll work
 - e) If they have specific lines specified in the Plot Overview or in a separate script, ensure that they know them
- 5) Talk with the people listed in the Plot Overview who have lines/actions during the trial.
 - a) verify that they're comfortable with those lines and/or run through them a few times
 - b) verify that these people know where they'll be in the room
 - c) if someone needs to suddenly enter the room, figure out how they'll know when to do this, possibly drafting another staff person to sit near the door and cue them

It's unlikely that you'll get through all of these. They'll have to be done piecemeal as staff are available. It'll still be a hit-or-miss process, but at least we'll hopefully address more potential questions/issues than we otherwise would!

Thank you for doing this!

Staff Photographers -- Bailey, Ember, Geneva Sprink & Pearl Bryce

the Staff Photography Activity

Activity: In this plot, we are asking Bailey (Blake Geno), Geneva Sprink (Jess Schoolman), Ember (Mirin Scassellati) and Pearl Bryce (Tricia Boynton) to assist us with an administrative task while out as their regular characters. This is helping us get pictures of various staff groups on location.

All of you are wandering characters, which means it's likely you'll get to at least some of the set locations in your travels. If you can be there when there's not a party around, please get multiple pictures of staff. First and foremost, we're looking for several posed shots of the entire staff group that's at that location. After you get that, we'd love additional shots, either smaller groups of staff there posing and/or "action shots" (the Makai doing the Cup of Insight, the Roamers tending their fire and hanging clothes on their clothesline, etc.)

Normal Otherworld photo requests still apply:

- Please take lots of shots! People blink. The more people who are in a picture, the more shots to take. It stinks to be doing a slideshow and to have to choose between shots where a different person has their eyes closed in each one.
- Hopefully this isn't an issue in set locations, but don't include ugly stuff (handbooks sitting around, milk crates with beverage supplies) in the pictures. (After the picture is done, please help the set location people stash these items out of sight!)
- The best pictures tend to be in bright shade. Dappled shade makes weird patterns on people; full sun washes most photos out. If in doubt, try the picture in a couple different areas of the set location. If there's not an optimal place, a washed-out photo is much better than nothing!
- Horizontal ("landscape mode") photos are better than vertical ("portrait mode") ones!
- If possible, please transfer the pictures to the Basement computer when you return. If there's not time, please be sure to send us the pictures after the weekend is over!
- If there's time, let the Basement know which set locations you got pictures of. Better yet, if you see the other people doing this activity, tell them so that they can try to get pictures of different groups. Thank you!!

Educational Goal(s): to get good pictures of our awesome staff people!

Item(s) needed for this challenge: a camera or phone. Otherworld will have ones on hand, but if you have a camera you like using, we would be grateful if you could bring it with you to Camp!

Staff Travelers -- Pascal Valerius, Diesel, Charlie Peacock, Kerrick Dealbinder, Celeste Wilde, Irena Montalvo and Valentina

Travelers & the “Fraternity of the Road”

Activity: Each participant party has one traveler, and there are several staff travelers as well. You’re one of them!

The participant handbook says that “Travelers belong to a loosely organized “fraternity of the road” and bear tattoos on the back of their right hands that mark them as such. Travelers are adaptable and observant, and they excel at making connections, both between facts and among people. They use these skills in various employments—as guides, ambassadors, diplomats, writers, or explorers—and to assist their friends and their fellow travelers.”

Travelers’ most important skill is their ability to Learn from Experience. Here’s what the handbook says about that: “During the course of the adventure, the party may find or be given black envelopes. Any paper within is viewable only by travelers.

On each of these papers, the traveler will find a question of some kind. Some are riddles or puzzles; others are observational challenges, requiring the traveler to have noticed and remembered something he has seen during the course of the weekend.

The traveler may not show these papers nor discuss their contents with anyone except other travelers. (Note that, in addition to a traveler in every party, there are also staff-character travelers. The traveler may ask any of his fellow travelers for assistance with a puzzle and may assist others in turn.)

Once a traveler believes he has an answer to the question on a given paper, he presents the paper to his Companion and tells her his guess. If he is correct, he will receive a reward, which might take the form of treasure, a magical artifact, or some item or ability that will benefit the traveler and his party. The act of guessing destroys the paper; thus, only one traveler can answer a given question, and there are no second guesses allowed.”

As a traveler, it’s possible/likely that a participant traveler may come to you for help with one of these black-envelope puzzles.

Lance will send you a copy of these puzzles before the event. WE AREN’T EXPECTING YOU TO MEMORIZE THEM, not that you were planning to. It’s good to read through them once. Here’s Lance’s tips on how to help a participant traveler with a puzzle:

The primary tip is to do all the things you always do when interacting with parties. Use common sense; don’t give red herrings; take cues from the Companion (perhaps they’re desperately in need of whatever the traveler can do, or the traveler needs the sense of accomplishment of solving something; or perhaps they’re not at all in need of it, or the traveler needs the sense of accomplishment of solving something themselves). Similarly, think about what you would do if a participant asked for help with any other challenge (a riddle, the mind of a madman, etc.): you don’t want to give them the answer, but you may want to offer a nudge in the right direction.

There are often ways to let the participant do the work even when they’re asking for help. For instance, sometimes just asking “Well, what have you tried already?”, and having them talk through their thought process, is enough to make them realize what they’re missing. Rather than offering a hint, try brainstorming with the participant.

For example, suppose the riddle is “Which World’s Edge inhabitant can have the syllables in their name swapped to get the name of a bone?” You might know that the answer is “Murphy”, but what you want is to help the participant solve this on their own. To this end, ask them what they’ve tried. If they say “Well, I tried thinking of every inhabitant I can name,” they may realize themselves that coming at it from another angle (i.e., trying to think of the names of bones) may be easier. If they’re still stuck, prompting them to name bones, even walking them through it a little (“Let’s see, there are some bones in the leg; some in the arm...”) may help. The next step, less subtle and more pointed, would be to list bones for them (“ulna, radius, femur, skull, hip bone...”)

Sometimes the right thing to do is set a puzzle aside and come back to it. You might not be in the right frame of mind, or might need a new perspective, or might not even have all the information you need yet (perhaps you haven’t met the staff member whose name can have their syllables swapped). Admitting you can’t solve something is hard, but it’s often better than beating your head against it.

The ultimate advice is one you’re almost certainly following already, which is to be a friendly person. Even if you can’t give them any help with the puzzle, asking them how their day is going so far and seeing if they need some water or whatever will make the traveler feel welcomed, which is what the fraternity of the road is all about.

Educational goal(s): to help establish the travelers as liaisons between parties and between parties and staff characters

Item(s) needed for this challenge: none, but all staff travelers should remember to wear their tattoo on the back of their hand!

Party Paths

The following pages contain summaries of each party's activities throughout the weekend. They are just that – summaries – and can clearly not explain all the complexities of each party's interactions. They are intended primarily to fill two needs:

- 1) They provide a broad overview to the party's companion, so that s/he is informed of the general direction the party will be taking
and
- 1) They provide each staff person with a chance to see how their interactions with a given party fit into the larger scheme of that party's mission.

Arden

Arden's color is dark green; its crest is an oak tree.

Investigating the charge against: Bracken

Companion: Ari (Susan Gerow)

Mission letter:

My loyal subjects,

I write to you now hoping you can help in Arden's hour of need. As I believe you know, the Duke and I have never been blessed with any children, and as I am no longer such a young woman, I assumed that the Von Marvin line would perish with us. This has always been a personal sadness for me, but it is also a public one. I tell you in confidence that there are many petty and unscrupulous men among my advisors; when Arden is left without an obvious heir, I fear that these men will battle each other for the position. This will surely be to the detriment of our fair duchy.

Then, this spring, a wondrous miracle – I realized that I am with child! Leif's and my heir will be born before the first snowfall! It would seem, then, that all would be well in our household as our prayers for ourselves and for the future of Arden have been answered. Sadly, this is not so.

For centuries now, the birth of every noble child of Arden has been heralded by the lighting of a sacred candle placed proudly in the golden Sconce of the Wood; this holy item's powers help ensure a bright future for the baby. Alas, the Sconce was stolen from us almost eight years ago by a vile scoundrel named Rook. At the time, we did not pursue the villain as we should have. As I said, we believed we would never be blessed with a child of our own and this sadness made us lax in our duties to the duchy.

Now, we pay the price for that negligence. Our advisors are already looking for a reason to discredit our heir in hopes that one of them may someday claim the title of Duke for himself. There is now foul talk circulating that says that, since our baby's birth will not be marked by the lighting of the holy candle, he or she is not really a true child of the Von Marvin line at all!

If these wicked men go to war for control of the duchy, Arden will be torn apart in the process. Our baby must be established as the true and rightful heir to the duchy's throne, and to do that, the Sconce of the Wood must be found and returned to its rightful place in Arden.

I consider it highly likely that the villain Rook has no idea of the might or heritage of the candlestick. To him, I am sure, it is just a chunk of valuable metal. I have asked my sages for help in finding what might have become of the Sconce. Their magic has told them some things – they say that it is in the neighboring duchy of Moreth, in a tiny village called World's Edge, and that they do not believe that Rook ever sold the item. Perhaps he lives there now, with the Sconce adorning his table. More likely, he has hidden it there in some secret cache of plunder. The sages could tell me no more, but suggested that a Ritual of Location, cast in World's Edge itself, might provide more information.

In the hope that the sages are correct, I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to a woman who resides there, Aria Morgan. She is my bookkeeper's husband's second-cousin and is said to be a good and kind soul. I have asked her to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge; I'm sure my message will arrive before you do, and that she will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many of the citizens of World's Edge and may also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure that you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Arden, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each one of you possesses unique skills that will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I wish you much luck. I pray that a Ritual of Location will indeed find the Sconce and that you can bring it home to Arden. May you be successful on your mission and return to aid the duchy in this hour of great need!

With hope and gratitude,

Duchess Regina Von Marvin of Arden

Contact: Aria Morgan

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

2nd Friday night encounter: Ursula Smirch

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

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3rd Friday night encounter: Nix Valerius

Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Isaiah Cooke

Activity/Goals: illiterate letter #1 challenge; communicating despite obstacles

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

Set Location: at the Valerius house

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

Reckonings 401 Professor Ditherson Friday, Sept. 17th

Various rituals exist for divinings (learning info. about particular subj.) Rit. of Location is one such. (best option? how compares to Spell of Summation?)

To perform, we need:

*a Star of Direction
sm. quantity of locus root
an argentum heart
a limelight
a chaos pendant
a spirit stone
a cowry (sp?) shell
citrine shards
riverglass jewelbox*

Eight ritual participants required; casting ability not needed (so – better than Summation Spell in this regard).

All eight sit in circle, Eldest puts on chaos pendant. Each person holds one item. All pass items (slow) around to the right. Eyes are closed whole time. While passing, all say: "Let all be known. Let all be revealed" (whispering) repeated until all items passed full circuit. When each participant back holding item had at start, eyes opened again. Revelation is granted. (Questions: what happens if item has been destroyed? This material on test???)

Rationale: Isaiah Cooke has been sorting through the papers of a Valerius great-uncle who flunked out of the Crystal Spire.

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

The mists of the dream swirl around you, orange and red like sunrise. The air is warm upon your skin; you feel the hot pulse of your heartbeat.

There is a woman walking toward you, her hair blown by the sultry breeze. She glows crimson and plum, magenta and aubergine. She holds out a hand to you, an offering, and in her palm, a heart. No horrifying savagery, this, but a token of love. And yet, no lacy frippery, no precious beribboned sweetheart's token. This heart is scarlet and silk, ruby and satin, and it is her own.

The air around her grows warmer still. It drips honey upon her skin. She cups her hand, letting it pool in her palm. She never takes her eyes from you, but she squeezes her fist, hard, and then opens it to show you. There in her hand is a crystal, orangey-gold, the color of jungle cats and flames. She encloses the gem in her fist once more. Your heartbeat is thunder now, impossibly loud, when she opens her hand again the stone is shattered into ten thousand topaz pieces.

She holds forth her hands once more, and now one palm holds the crushed jewel, the other the heart. She spreads her arms wide. "Take," she says, her voice made of amber. She laughs and her eyes are hot and knowing, and then the darkness rises around her and you see no more.

Explanation: The vision shows the citrine shards and leads the party to Valentina.

1st Saturday morning encounter: Kiko Truthspeaker

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates

Item: locus root

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, bring them back to the Makai Camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Buzzkill

Activity/Goals: perfectly good bucket challenge; practicing brainstorming, building on partymates' ideas

Item: none (he'll give them the chaos pendant in the tavern at 9:45am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 11am-6pm

Usually found: Crabtree & Evelyn's

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Pascal Valerius

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: star of direction

Times available (roughly): 8am-1pm

Usually found: at the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Karmin Smirch**Activity/Goals:** Smirch jingle challenge; being creative, working collaboratively**Item:** riverglass jewelbox**Times available (roughly):** 9-11am, 1-4pm, 6-8pm**Usually found:** at the Smirches' shop**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Valentina**Activity/Goals:** BS! challenge; recounting fun adventures, being creative**Item:** citrine shards**Times available (roughly):** 10am-4pm**Usually found:** in the Roamer camp**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Charlie Peacock**Activity/Goals:** perfect square challenge; working as a team, communicating in unique scenarios**Item:** cowry shell**Times available (roughly):** 1-6pm**Usually found:** in the Peacock Family Singers' camp**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Moxie**Activity/Goals:** test of 10 challenge; acknowledging different areas of expertise within the party**Item:** riddle leading to the argentum heart**Times available (roughly):** 10am-5pm**Usually found:** in the cultists' compound in Greystone Clearing**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Obsidian**Activity/Goals:** philanthropy challenge for Stevie Peacock; solving open-ended problems, taking moral responsibility**Item:** spiritstone**Times available (roughly):** 8am-12noon, 2-4pm**Usually found:** wandering**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Ghost Theater**Activity/Goals:** ghost theater challenge; taking responsibility for each other's safety, communicating non-verbally**Item:** limelight**Times available (roughly):** 4 – 8pm**Usually found:** in the Ghost Theater**Riddle Text:***Argentum**– author unknown, from Anthology of Verse of Western Lyria*

*That lovely warm and laughing girl
 More dear to me than all the world:
 The light that glowed within her hair...
 The scarlet gown that she would wear...
 Oh, the light in her eyes!
 Oh, the heat of her sighs!
 Oh, my sweet bonny prize!
 Bewitched me as I watched her there.*

*When the night was cold and lonely,
 Burned for me and for me only.
 She kept away the bitter chill.
 Her home upon that wintry hill
 Was kept all alight
 With the sounds of delight,
 As I lay through the night
 Beside her, as young lovers will.*

*Time did pass and I grew bolder
 Breathing on her rosy shoulder.
 As the light of day's expiring
 Still she danced on, never tiring.
 The time we spent alone
 In that spot 'long the Rhone,
 The delights we had known,
 Served just to increase desiring.*

*I pressed my girl for more and more
 But got more than I'd bargained for.*

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*Once I feared that I would shame her,
But her love it had enflamed her,
And my subtle fashion
Was only a flash in
The face of her passion
Then there was nothing would tame her.*

*Eyes that looked but to extol her
Saw that I could not control her;
For this love, it had exceeded
Anything I'd wanted, needed.
I cried out to the sky
"A wretched man am I!
Now one of us must die!"
And the mindful heavens heeded.*

*Then the icy rain poured down
And she was driven to the ground.
She was snapping, hissing, crying
As she danced her dance of dying.
No matter what you have wished
Your heart, it is anguished
When love is extinguished.
Those who say different are lying.*

*Years now hence, I find feet steering
Me toward that once-happy clearing
I was so young then, so undaunted...
Now though, my tired heart is haunted.
Though I am bent and old,
Her grave is ashen-cold.
Her sin? If it is told
Is this – giving what I wanted.*

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: argentum heart

Location to which party is directed: Hopefully the party will guess that the "she" in the riddle is actually a fire. If they follow the location references ("long the Rhone" and "her home upon that wintry hill") they will be led to Winterhill Clearing. In the clearing is a fire-circle, and a fist-sized silver heart is hidden amongst the ashes.

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The murk of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, but only barely. The lantern glows black. The air pulses and throbs with sound, the drums like the beating of a mighty heart. It is everywhere, reverberating through you. A needle-thin lance of light pierces the darkness. It beams brittle-bright against the crystals and then splinters into a million rainbow shards that shatter, scatter, fall to the floor, trampled beneath the pounding feet of the mob. And o, the crowd! They are many but they are one, a writhing mass of limbs and sweat and want. It is the darkest hour but they are miles from sleep, driven into a welcome mass madness. They raise their voices but you cannot hear them over the great chanting thrum. They are anonymous here, this disordered order, held secret under the black lamp, lit shimmer-dark by its unearthly light. If the dawn is coming, it is no concern of theirs, and they gyrate in the hot velvet shadows and then the throbbing and the wanting and the writhing pulls you under and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows the Order of the Black Lantern and suggests that it is a club of a different sort than the party (and Bracken) might have originally thought.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the chaos pendant from Buzzkill

Scheduled for: 9:45am Sunday

Location: Buzzkill will meet the party in the tavern

Sunday morning final step: battling Morgoth for the Sconce of the Wood

Scheduled for: 10am Sunday

Location: the entrance to the Wild Lands

Clairia

Clairia's color is white; its crest is an eagle.

Investigating the charge against: Danny Donovan

Companion: Clementine (Britt Rothauser)

Mission letter:

My good people,

I write to you now with a heart heavy with worry. I am filled with concern, not just for a troubled young friend, but for our duchy as a whole. Forgive me. In my anxiety I do not explain myself well.

As I am sure you already realize, the death of Duke Winston was a sad blow to our duchy. Barely past his prime, he should have had many good years of governance left. Still, his heart was not strong, and it was his time to go. His son Matthew, though only fourteen years old, has assumed his proper place as Duke now.

Matthew is sensible and thoughtful; he will make an excellent leader some day. I mean no disrespect to him – in truth, I care deeply for the boy – when I now say that his age and inexperience are problematic at present. Perhaps this would not be so if it were not for the presence of Seymour and Tillman, Winston's unscrupulous younger brothers. Each feels that the ducal mantle would rest better on his own shoulders, and the two work in concert to undermine Matthew's every move.

Already this deficiency in Clairia's highest office is being felt. When Matthew authorized the giving of alms to the poor, Seymour was mysteriously unable to find the keys to the ducal treasury. Caravans of food that Matthew ordered sent to the orphanages were held up in some sort of bureaucratic nonsense of Tillman's devising. In truth, Matthew is as wise and good as his father, but he needs some force to give strength to his governance. His decisions are always correct, I feel, but they are meaningless without some power to ensure they come to fruition.

Last night I fell asleep while contemplating these woes. I dreamt of a man with powerful chiseled features. His hair and eyes were black as coal and his robes were a marvelous shade of red. Strength emanated from the man like light from a flame. I sensed that here was a man whose every edict was carried out, as he intended it. No one would dare toy with the plans and designs of this man.

And in my head, just before I awoke, a deep voice spoke, saying "The staff of Ignatius must be brought to Clairia."

The dream suggested that the staff could somehow be found in the duchy of Moreth, in a tiny village called World's Edge. In the hope that my dream holds real meaning, I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to someone I believe is currently in residence there, a woman called Moxie. She is a distant relation of my cook's next-door neighbor and he assures me she is a good and kind soul who can be trusted. I have asked her to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge; I trust my message will arrive before you do, and that she will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many citizens of World's Edge and also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Clairia, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each one of you possesses unique skills that will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I wish you much luck. I pray that the staff of Ignatius may indeed be found, and that it will lend the much needed strength to Matthew's leadership. May your mission be successful in bringing aid to our duchy!

With hope and gratitude,

Master Timothy Stone, head tutor to the ducal house of Clairia

Contact: Moxie

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

2nd Friday night encounter: Brimstone

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

3rd Friday night encounter: Pascal Valerius

Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

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Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Lenora Graves

Activity/Goals: icky liquor challenge; practicing brainstorming, building on partymates' ideas

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

Set Location: at the Valerius house

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

Have been interested lately in this idea of summoning the staff of Ignatius from the Elemental Plane of Fire. Must find time to try this, assuming can find needed materials. (Note to self: why are pants so much smaller than they used to be? Causes chafing and other discomfort. Larger pants for all! Write letter to Editor on this subject.)

For summoning staff, research indicates that the following are needed:

fool's gold

small quantity of featherflame herb

favor from the Court of Mirrors

silver amulets from the summoner's homeland (one for each summoner)

a phoenix egg

gold essence

a winterheart gem

a dragon's-egg ring

a carbon key

When ready to summon, put on amulet. Kindle a small fire. Place fool's gold, favor, egg, heart-gem, ring, and gold essence equally spaced around fire.

Cast the herb and the key into the fire while calling out the magical ritual words in a grand and strong voice. (Note to self: why are the younger casters today all muttering their ritual words? Treason, I say! Comes from improper nutrition. Write letter to Editor on this subject.)

Ritual words as follows: "Flame and fire, smoke and soot. We summon you, o staff. Come to us now from the Plane of Fire, for our need of you is great. Incineradum!"

Ritual must be performed in correct spot. horse-ring on left side of Gilded Way while walking from tavern toward house. Staff will not appear exactly in same spot but more likely nearby, most probably between two horse barns.

Rationale: This paper was found among the belongings of Petrus Valerius, a caster. Lenora Graves is cataloging these papers.

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls and burns around you and then lightens just barely. Charcoal tendrils of smoke wisp upward. You stand before a great iron door, impossibly huge and burnt-blackened. The handle sears your palm, but for naught: it is locked tight.

Behind you, you hear the hiss and crackle, and you turn. She is there, stepping forth from the ashes, rising phoenixlike from the fire and she studies you blaze-blasé. Her eyes are pale cold blue and her hair is pale cold bronze and her skin is pale cold cream, but she is cloaked in soot-black and she smolders. The coals blossom red and orange around her and she steps in foglike on little cat feet, her gaze never leaving you.

She moves assured to the great door, and at her touch it swings open. She holds out one graceful hand and when she opens it, you see the key rest easy on her palm, and then the smoky pitch darkness rises up once again and you see no more.

Explanation: The vision shows the Carbon Key and will (hopefully!) lead the party to Ember

1st Saturday morning encounter: Dramina

Activity/Goals: marble maze challenge; working as a team

Item: dragon's egg ring

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, bring them back to Inspirations Unlimited

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Adina Valerius

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: none (she'll give them the silver snowflake amulets in the tavern at 10am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Usually found: at the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Kyson Wayseeker

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates

Item: featherflame herb

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Natasha

Activity/Goals: BS! challenge; recounting fun adventures, being creative

Item: winterheart gem

Times available (roughly): 12noon-8pm

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Jack Johnson

Activity/Goals: perfect square challenge; working as a team, communicating in unique scenarios

Item: fool's gold

Times available (roughly): 11-6pm

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Cal Coleman

Activity/Goals: observation challenge; paying attention to their surroundings, including each other

Item: gold essence

Times available (roughly): 8am-4pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Bartleby Sprink

Activity/Goals: what a surprise! challenge; creative problem-solving of open-ended problem

Item: riddle leading to the phoenix egg

Times available (roughly): 8-11am, 1-4pm, 6-8pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Ember

Activity/Goals: photography challenge; noticing natural beauty, getting good photos

Item: carbon key

Times available (roughly): 8am-4pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: the Court of Mirrors

Activity/Goals: gauntlet challenge; developing trust and rapport, practicing communication

Item: favor from the Court of Mirrors

Times available (roughly): 4-8pm

Usually found: in the Court of Mirrors

Riddle Text:

*The phoenix-bird is sleek and red
With gold pin-feathers at its head
And oh, it makes a wondrous sight
When taking to the sky in flight.*

*Though not for these it earns my love,
But for the way it lifts above
The ashes cold and bleak. It flies
Up living after some thing dies.
Lilybeth was sweet and fair
With grace and strength beyond compare,
And Frederick was good and kind
With handsome face and clever mind.*

*Lilybeth lived on the hill,
Where deer run free and wind blows chill.
She called to Fred'rick; Thus said she:
"Will you my lifelong husband be?*

*A small snug house is waiting here;
It can be ours within the year.
Come live with me our lives to meld
Here where my family's always dwelled."*

*"I'm sure your house is very fine,"
Said he. "But better still is mine.
Shielded here from cold and snow
Here where the sweet wild roses grow.*

*Truly I wish you as my wife,
Here to share of all of my life.
So leave that place and come to me
And ever happy we shall be."*

But Lilybeth was stubborn too

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Said she "I will not come to you
And leave my family waiting here
In this fine place I hold so dear."

Said Frederick "Well I shan't leave.
And for my part I can't believe
That you so resolute must be.
That now you ne'er will marry me."

Though Lilybeth was obstinate,
Her heart was filled with sad regret.
She took a walk her mind to ease
Amongst the quiet of the trees.

She walked downhill and mourned her loss;
No bridge nor water did she cross
But wandered where the path ran steep
And woods were dark and still and deep.

And Frederick was rueful too
He left his house and walked out through
The village there. He turned then from
The places full of rush and hum.
No want had he for ale or talk,

And so away then he did walk
To cross the water's misty track
And bear on then and not look back.
Instead he chose the ill-used trail

Off to the left. Then hill and dale
He walked. He passed through glade and glen,
Past great grey stones then down again.
And then he saw, to his surprise,
Lilybeth before his eyes.

And she stopped too and stared on back
At him before her on the track.
The happy stream ran cold and clean,
Oblivious, it passed between

Where both they - staring, silent - stood
In that most green and lovely wood.
Beth took one step; one dainty foot
Across the stream she slowly put

Then stopped. No further would she go
To cross to him. She told him so.
To prove he would, he too did step.
One foot on his own bank he kept.

Like hers, his love shone in his eyes,
Like her, he would not compromise.
And thus they stood there till their death,
Young Frederick and Lilybeth.

Offers making, answers wielding.
Always loving, never yielding.
In their same form I now do stand,
One foot upon each separate land.

One wish, one life, one heart, one mind,
Two shores, two bodies intertwined.
Like the phoenix-bird I grow
Up where they stood so long ago.

The lovely phoenix-bird, it flies
Up from the place where some thing dies.

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: the phoenix egg

Location to which party is directed: The places where Lilybeth and Frederick are described as living are Hillcrest and Rosedale, respectively. When the two lovers walk, the paths they take are both along the 'Rhone Trail to the place where the trail fords the Summer Stream. At the ford, there is a tree that straddles the stream. The tree has two trunks. The egg is hidden in one of the knots of the tree.

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, lightens, till it is bright blinding white as snow on a hillside, dead spectral white as Noise in a pipe.

They stand ghostly pale before you, their skin like old porcelain. They shimmer opalescent, not long for this world. Faded, nearly faded away. They speak soundless and you almost pass by unheeded, but o, do not. Stay, children of the frozen white land, for they have a message if only you are able to hear it.

The ivory smoke rises up, blooming around you like flowers of bone and frost, and then clears again. The letter sits unheeded in a pocket, cloud-crumbled and forgotten. Washed, nearly washed away. Its writing is drowned but this is its true tale to tell, if only you are able to read it. She is there with you then, the young woman, and her eyes burn angry as fire. She has lost the crown which sat paper-perfect upon her brow, has lost so much. The truth could heal her, could rest dove-peaceful against her breast if only you are able to tell it. You open your mouth to speak and then the pearly smoke rises once again and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows both the ghosts of the Morg and Honoré's letter to Aria, both of which are faded but also have important messages for the party.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the silver snowflake amulets from Adina Valerius

Scheduled for: 10am Sunday

Location: Adina will meet the party in the tavern

Sunday morning final step: summoning the Staff of Ignatius and Ignatius himself

Scheduled for: 10:15am Sunday

Location: both the Staff and Ignatius will be hiding in the horse barns

Dolorón

Dolorón's color is rose; its crest is a crown.

Investigating the charge against: Catherine Carmichael

Companion: Dodi (Maisie Sturtevant)

Mission letter:

My most trusted subjects,

I write in hopes that you can help with a distressing matter.

We citizens of Dolorón are fortunate to live in the most beautiful of Lyria's duchies, home not just to the palace of the King himself, but also the finest theaters, concert halls, museums and gardens. I have much love for all these cultural gems, but to me, the brightest jewel in Dolorón is the Great Library, the largest of its kind in our kingdom.

There are some who would be surprised by my statement. The Library lacks the spectacular architecture of the Dolorón Opera House; it is not situated high on a hill like the Crown Garden of Roses. Its façade is in truth rather drab, and those walking the long corridors between shelves may find its carpets worn and its lighting dim. But on its shelves, there lie the greatest treasures in Dolorón: the writings of the wisest minds in our kingdom and beyond, accessible not just to the wealthy and privileged, but to all.

But now, those wise voices are being silenced. Forgive me. In my concern, I am getting ahead of myself.

Several years ago, one of the Head Librarians, a man named Tesoros White, became convinced only a few people should have access to the Library, seeking to preserve the books in perfect security by locking them away from what he considered the unworthy public.

White slowly grew more and more fanatical in his disdain for the Library's egalitarian mission, eventually going so far as to hire guards to keep "undesirables" from "his" books.

Tesoros White was ultimately relieved of his authority... but at that time, he placed a curse upon the Great Library. It was a slowly-unfolding enchantment, and a quiet one... fitting, I suppose, for a library. First, words began to disappear from pages. Then paragraphs and whole pages simply vanished. Some books are now nothing but collections of blank pages. Tesoros White felt the public did not deserve to read these works, and when the Library refused to lock the books away, he made the very words themselves inaccessible.

I realize this matter might appear trivial. As curses go, it seems minor. There are no flames, no earthquakes, no blood. But for centuries, the Great Library has served to lift up the citizens of Dolorón, the poor as well as the rich, the ignorant as well as the educated. There are many born in poverty who climbed above their humble beginnings using these books as a kind of ladder. But now these books are disappearing.

My trusted advisors have sought some sort of enchantment to remove the curse. They believe they have found one, and have procured the needed components, all save one: pixie dust.

Perhaps you, like me, believed that pixie dust wasn't real, but apparently it is. And apparently, acquiring some is critical if this foul curse is to be lifted. In hopes that this elusive substance may be procured, I ask you now to journey to the duchy of Moreth, to a tiny village called World's Edge, where my advisors think it may be found. I have already sent a message to a gentleman named Mick Peacock whom I believe is currently in residence there. He is my pastry chef's wife's second-cousin, and is said to be a charming fellow. I have asked him to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge; I trust my message will arrive before you do, and that he will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many citizens of World's Edge and also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Dolorón, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each one of you possesses unique skills that will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I wish you much luck. I pray that pixie dust is indeed real. May you find some to lift the curse and return the precious words to our Great Library!

With hope and gratitude,

Duchess Adelia Bellefleur of Dolorón

Contact: Mick Peacock

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

2nd Friday night encounter: Lexia**Activity/Goals:** getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"**Item:** none**3rd Friday night encounter:** Jpeg**Activity/Goals:** walking to their set location / experiencing combat**Item:** none**4th Friday night encounter:** Phyllis Fieri**Activity/Goals:** what-tree-would-you-be? challenge; learning how others see you, being creative**Item:** paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)**Set Location:** at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale**Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:***Darling Phyllis,**I've been terribly busy of late but today is your lucky day: I've found time to write!**None of the other fellows here in my new office has the slightest idea what he's doing. They're lucky they have me; otherwise the whole place would fall to pieces! I have to spend half my day correcting other people's ignorant misconceptions, but I suppose that's the price one pays for superior intellect.**Just the other day, one of the chaps here – Bigsley is his name – said something about "a pinch of pixie dust", but when I queried him on the subject, it turned out he knew nothing about the stuff, even confessed he thought it wasn't real. Not real! I had to spend most of my afternoon enlightening him.**Probably you're in the dark on the subject just as old Bigsley was, so I'll tell you what I told him: pixies are as real as you are, but a good deal more magical, of course. They're small beings, most of them, although every once in a while there's one that grows nearly human-sized. Lucky is he who's treated to the sight of them cavorting in a woodland glade, all bedecked in their bright finery and lifting their wee jolly voices in laughter!**As for pixie dust, it's powerful stuff. It's not easy to conjure up, of course. Even attempting the ritual requires a extensive collection of magical components:*

- merula-fruit cordial*
- a silver incense-burner*
- whiteleaf sage*
- limelight*
- a signalstone ring*
- a gemwing butterfly*
- water from the River Sigh*
- a seafoam sphere*
- a snake-eye talisman*

*After you've acquired all those things – I'm speaking rhetorically here, of course; this isn't the sort of complicated thing you yourself would want to try – you need to bring them all to the base of a great hill. Over in World's Edge, you'd go to the base of Overlook Hill, on Autumn's Path, I'd assume. You'd light the whiteleaf sage and set it inside the incense burner. Then you'd pour out half the merula-fruit cordial out onto the ground, right there at the base of the hill.**From that point on, the rite would have begun, and none of the people performing it should speak save what the ritual calls for. Those present should arrange themselves in a line, single file, and walk slowly up to the crest of the hill, with the first holding the chain of the incense burner and the last holding the cordial. Once there, they should arrange themselves – still silent, mind – around the ashes of an old fire. The limelight and the gemwing, the river water and the ring, the seafoam sphere and the snake-eye talisman should all be placed atop the ashes. Then all those present should place their right hand atop the incense-burner and their left atop the bottle of cordial. They'd then move their hands in a circle, pouring out the remainder of the merula cordial onto the ashes. Whilst pouring it out, everyone must say together "Let it be done, let it be done, let it be done!"**And if everything has been done correctly: voila, pixie dust!**But I fear I've neglected you horribly in this letter. No doubt you're clamoring to know how I'm doing, and who can blame you? Overall, I've been well, although busy as noted. I expect a promotion any day now. After all, I'm already running the place! I dined out with Humphrey last Saturday and the cod was overcooked. I gave the serving girl several pointers which I'm sure she appreciated. The weather here has been uncomfortably warm, which as you know I cannot abide. I have read several new books, but I fear you'll have to wait to learn my opinion of them. I warn you that it may be more than a week till I can write again. So frightfully much to do when one is as important as I!**Best regards from your favorite, Howard***Rationale:** This letter was sent to Phyllis by a long-ago gentleman admirer.**Keeper's Saturday morning dream:**

The darkness of the dream rises grave-somber around you and then clears, lightens, but only a little. You see her there emerging from the chrysalis-shadows to stand before you, burnished gleaming in the gloom. Her gentle wings flutter-tremble in the mournful air. The years have touched her face, beating moth-gentle against her skin, but she has made a friend of time. She has known the touch of death but she is alive and she is all things beautiful and Bright.

There is a flickering movement, shimmering like jewels in the corner of your vision. It moves toward her, drawn toward her light, fragile but unafraid. Golden topaz and rose-pink rubies glitter on its glimmering wings, a sparkle in the deathly darkness. She sees it, this woman who has seen so much, and she understands the promise of salvation in its glitter-brilliant flight. She reaches out a soft hand, the wind rustling the aqua-azure luster of her skirts. She is morning instead of mourning, and the wee baublebeast senses this. It lands, shining shimmer upon her glistening copper hair and then the dream enfolds safe around her and you see no more.

Explanation: The vision shows the gemwing butterfly and will (hopefully!) lead the party to Eugenie Bright.

1st Saturday morning encounter: Crabtree

Activity/Goals: perfectly good bucket challenge; practicing brainstorming, building on partymates' ideas

Item: snake-eye talisman

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, bring them back to Crabtree & Evelyn's

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Malachi

Activity/Goals: managers & peons challenge; finding new methods of communication, practicing teamwork and cooperation

Item: none (he'll give them the merula-fruit cordial in the tavern at 9:45am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm, 4-8pm

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Isaiah Cooke

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: riddle leading to the silver incense burner

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Usually found: at the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Kora Peacekeeper

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates

Item: whiteleaf sage

Times available (roughly): 9am-4pm

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Pansy Golden

Activity/Goals: cheer up, Ned! challenge; solving open-ended problems, thinking about other's perspectives

Item: seafoam sphere

Times available (roughly): 8-3pm

Usually found: in the Inn at World's edge, or wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Stevie Peacock

Activity/Goals: pitchpipe challenge; working as a team

Item: signalstone ring

Times available (roughly): 8-11am, 3-8pm

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Eugenie Bright

Activity/Goals: observation challenge; paying attention to their surroundings, including each other

Item: gemwing butterfly

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Bracken

Activity/Goals: web-weaving storytelling challenge; being creative, highlighting other's stories

Item: water from the River Sigh

Times available (roughly): 8-11am, 1-4pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Ghost Theater

Activity/Goals: ghost theater challenge; taking responsibility for each other's safety, communicating non-verbally

Item: limelight

Times available (roughly): 4 – 8pm

Usually found: in the Ghost Theater

Riddle Text:

May 16, 938

Dear Diary,

Last night, I had the strangest dream. When I woke, it was so crystal-clear in my mind that I wrote it all down.

In the dream, I saw an elderly woman, dressed as a Keeper would be on a holy day, and when she looked at me, I saw that she had a green gem in the middle of her forehead, so I knew she was a High Priestess of Spring.

In her hands she held the chain of an incense burner, bright silver, and the smoke from it wafted all around so thick I could scarcely see her. She was chanting and I assumed it was a prayer, but when I listened, I realized it was a strange poem instead. This is how it went:

Listen, listen, raise a cup
To those who serve, who liftest up
The high-born ones: the kings, the sires,
For they are naught without their squires.

Pierre who ruled us, great was he!
In our kingdom fine and free,
Near the hearty river's flow
And where the bright-red roses grow.

In stony silence he would stare,
That flinty monarch, King Pierre.
In all our kingdom there could be
None other large and fine as he.

Squires a-plenty had our lord
All proud to serve him we adored.
Many served him, all because
Of just how grand and great he was.

But one foul day the earth did shake
And cruelly did our great king take,
Laying him low and toppling down
Our brave bulwark who'd worn the crown.

Oh, brave Pierre who'd sat the throne,
Our hearts did crack to see him prone!
And this we swore, though he was downed,
We ne'er would lay him on the ground!

Midway are we, no steps yet taken,
There betwixt that glade forsaken
And the span of promised peace.
There you'll find us, without cease.

Small though we are, we bear aloft
Pierre who ruled our simple croft.
Great though he is, we will not let
His body fall; we bear him yet.

Listen folk, hearken to me:
Beneath his body there may be
A treasure found for those deserving.
Where we are waiting, we are serving.

A prize you'll seek, a prize you'll find,
But as you do, bear this in mind:
Gold may tarnish, gems may spill,
But true allegiance never will.

Listen, listen, raise a cup
To those who serve, who liftest up
The high-born ones: the kings, the sires,
For they are naught without their squires.

After she finished chanting, the smoke obscured her completely.

Then the dream changed very dramatically. My mother was there, but she was an octopus. It stopped making much sense after that.

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: the silver incense-burner

Location to which party is directed: Along Big Bow Trail, halfway between Peaceful Crossing Bridge and the entrance to the Forsaken Forest, is a large rock, fallen over but still held up by a collection of smaller rocks. The incense burner is underneath.

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens with the shady filtered glow through branches. At the base of the tree, a nest of twigs. It is too small, shoddily made. This wee barracks of sticks, sharp and uncomfortable. Nothing is nearly good enough.

Nearby you see him, robin rose-breast. Poor sad thing, his dull brown-black wing hangs broken. He hops piteous, limp-limbed in his distress, easy prey, and his squawk is a wretched lament.

The light is fading. In the dusky gloom, you almost miss it: the shimmer-glint beneath his feet. Perhaps you are mistaken? But no, it is there. The flash of gold in his talons. He clutches it close and reaches out greed-grasping for more.

Night marches in on swift soldiers'feet. You can barely see, but there is a sound, the feathered beating against the air. Just before he takes flight, the robin turns your way. His glittering eye meets yours. He cocks his head - o! clever trickster! - and then with one strong unfettered flutter he takes to the sky and is gone and then the darkness is complete and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows Vernon Gill and suggests both that his injury is feigned and also that he's motivated by greed.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the merula-fruit cordial from Malachi

Scheduled for: 9:45am Sunday

Location: Malachi will meet the party in the tavern

Sunday morning final step: conjuring the pixie dust (and, unexpectedly, pixies)

Scheduled for: 10am Sunday

Location: at the top of Overlook Hill; the pixies will be hiding behind the Prosecutor's Pavilion

Elsewhich

Elsewhich's color is grey; its crest is a bunch of grapes.

Investigating the charge against: Evelyn

Companion: Elvie (Christine Huebbe)

Mission letter:

My most loyal subjects,

Throughout my reign I have always found you to be devoted and dependable subjects of the duchy of Elsewhich. For this reason I call upon your aid now, in this time of dire need. Only you can save my beloved daughter and Elsewhich's hope for a peaceful future.

As you know, my daughter Lilith was born quite late in my life, after it was supposed that Ash and I would never produce an heir. As all mothers do, I loved this child purely for her own self. I also rejoiced that the duchy now had a clear successor to the throne and so would be spared dreadful chaos, in the form of political fighting between my dishonorable brothers, when my life someday comes to a close.

Now, on the eve of Lilith's eighth birthday, she lies pale and silent with some grave illness. The local keepers have found nothing wrong with her, yet she grows weaker and weaker with every passing day. They have tried to treat her with their healing prayers, but to no avail. Once Lilith was full of songs and laughter. Now she is perilously near death.

I believe that my dear one's sickness is no natural disease, but rather a magical illness. Several nights ago, I dreamed that a great stone hung around Lilith's neck, but that it might still be possible to lift it from her. The dream suggested that a cure might somehow be found in the duchy of Moreth, in a tiny village called World's Edge. In the hope that my dream is actually true, and not just a mother's desperate wish, I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to a local woman named Electra; she is my tailor's wife's cousin and he says she is a good and kind soul who can be trusted. My letter should arrive before you do, and I have asked her to meet you when you arrive there. All of Elsewhich will owe you gratitude if only you can find some cure.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many of the citizens of World's Edge and may also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure that you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Elsewhich, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

There is one more thing I should tell you, which may or may not prove helpful to you: When this sickness first came upon Lilith, she was delirious and burning with fever. She kept whispering "Bring me the cup", but when water was brought to her, she would not drink it. I do not know what this might mean, but we must overlook nothing in our search for a cure.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each one of you possesses unique skills which will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I pray for the success of your mission. May you come home bearing a cure for my darling child and hope for the future of Elsewhich!

With deepest gratitude,

Duchess Elana Silver of Elsewhich

Contact: Electra

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

2nd Friday night encounter: Ember

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

3rd Friday night encounter: Kira

Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Kerrick Dealbinder

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates, encouraging self-reflection

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

Set Location: Makai camp

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

Honored Mr. Dealbinder and other Makai friends:

As I said, this remarkable cup confers the most wond'rous of healing powers. Remember, however, that the astounding potency of its magic cannot be made manifest without a specific collection of components and a carefully-conducted ritual. As I give you this cup in repayment for your unsurpassed hospitality (and that delicious cider!) I will include that list of components, along with the concise directions for the ritual, herewith:

a golden laceleaf pendant
fine Elsewhichian wine (a great quantity thereof!)
a heliotrope candle
a small quantity of folly dust
the Magic Cup itself (of course!)
doveroot seeds
an amethyst sphere
cat's-eye jewelbox
gospel weed

Lastly but perhaps most important, you must find someone who has magic within, but knows it not. The pendant is worn by that individual. The doveroot seeds, amethyst sphere, cat's-eye jewelbox, gospel weed, and the folly dust are placed gently (no splashing!) in a large container of Elsewhichian wine. Everyone present must then gather round, as the heliotrope candle is lit, and the Ritual Words spoken three times. The Ritual Words are as follows:

Let us now this magic do. Let these words be spoken true. When this cleansing rite is through, let this Cup be made anew.

While everyone is speaking the person wearing the pendant must then wash the Cup in the enchanted wine. This ritual will release the healing magic in the Cup. The next person to drink from the Cup will be healed of all illness!

Mark my words: this is a splendidly robust enchantment, and one that you should be loathe to forget. Commit the list to memory, or else be sure to keep this written account safe! You shall forevermore be glad you did.

In your lifelong service, Dartmoor,

Wandering Merchandiser

Rationale: This letter was left with Dealbinder by a wandering peddler

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, lightens, to the ivory pewter half-light of dawn. It is time at last! Her day, they call it, but truly it is their day. After so long. In the distance, like a tintinnabulation, you hear it: a pinging, a dingding, a ringing. You are wanted. You are called.

She moves silver-bright toward you, her joy a chime in the air. Her laughter peals snowy white and her eyes sparkle. Above her, the very trees tinkle and jingle to sound the happy news. From one amber-golden bough, a leaf shakes loose. Eaten away by insects and time, it is a gilded filigree against the heavens.

She walks lightly to greet the day. A breeze rustles around her and the honey-colored leaf falls, delicate and perfect, to rest in her cupped palm. She gazes curious upon it, wondering what to make of it. Ask not for whom she tolls, for you know she tolls for you. And then the shining shimmer light intensifies and rises and you see no more.

Explanation: The vision shows the gold laceleaf pendant and will (hopefully!) lead the party to Belle Bishop

1st Saturday morning encounter: Mila

Activity/Goals: grab-bag storytelling challenge; being creative, working collaboratively

Item: amethyst sphere

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, bring them back to the Roamer camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Teknos

Activity/Goals: marble maze challenge; working as a team

Item: none (he'll give them the Elsewhichian wine in the tavern at 9:45am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 10am-3pm

Usually found: at Inspirations Unlimited

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Danny Donovan

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: crummy magic chalice

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: at the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Belle Bishop

Activity/Goals: what-tree-would-you-be? challenge; learning how others see you, being creative

Item: gold laceleaf pendant

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Set Location: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Donna Peacock

Activity/Goals: perfect square challenge; working as a team, communicating in unique scenarios

Item: cat's-eye jewelbox

Times available (roughly): 12noon-8pm

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Fenwick Michaels

Activity/Goals: charmed I'm sure challenge; learning names, getting comfortable, being creative and silly

Item: gospel weed

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm, 6-8pm

Usually found: at the prosecutor's pavilion

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Pearl Bryce

Activity/Goals: double-mute charades challenge; collaborating with another party, communicating despite obstacles

Item: riddle leading to the heliotrope candle

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Samuelson

Activity/Goals: what a surprise! challenge; creative problem-solving of open-ended problem

Item: doverroot seeds

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm, 6-8pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: (mad) Lincroft Spence

Activity/Goals: mind of a madman challenge; working as a team, examining behaviors

Item: folly dust

Times available (roughly): 4 - 8pm

Usually found: Lincroft Spence will be in front of the tavern whenever he's available for this challenge

Riddle Text:

Dearest Elizabeth,

Dearest Cassandra,

Dearest Kathryn,

Dearest Margaret,

By the time you read this, I shall be far, far away. Forgive me that I could not stay here and be your faithful husband. I am a wandering spirit, and the road again calls out to me. As you know, you have always been my only love. Those others meant nothing to me.

In leaving this day, I do what I must to stay happy and free. And I know that if I am happy, you are happy too, my sweet, for so great is your love for me. Yet still I fear you will pine for me; I have had that effect on others in the past. To soothe your lonely heart, I have left behind a treasure for you, a magical candle. It is a most marvelous item, capable of working much beneficial magic, and it's that purple color you like, except that you have the fancy name for it. Remembering your love of riddles and stories, I have left you this clue. Follow it, and it will lead you to the treasure's hiding place:

*We two sisters stand together,
Separate still but joined forever,
Heads to sky and feet to earth,
In sun and rain and windswept weather,*

*As we have stood since long ago.
Listen now our tale to know:
We will tell you all there is
About our home along the bow.*

*Fair were we, and strong and clever,
With skin as brown as sparrow's feather,
Our dainty feet upon grey rock
Like slippers of the softest leather.*

*Suitors came there to endeavor
Our sweet bond to finally sever,
Spoke to us "O forest sisters,
Cleave apart and to us tether."*

Six-score paces they had taken

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*From the ancient wood forsaken.
All the way to autumn's walk?
Oh no, friends. You are mistaken.*

*We sent them all away dejected.
"Our sister-bond shall be protected."
Tossed our spring-green hair defiant
And their love-suits all rejected.*

*But as for you, you give us pleasure,
And so we'll tell: we have a treasure!
It can be yours. 'Tis ours to give you:
Bold and bright in equal measure.*

*The candle burns but does not blind us;
Plain to tell: it is behind us.
Know this, friends, 'tis up to you;
All you need to do is find us.*

*We two sisters parting never,
Heads apart but feet together.
And the light that we've kept hidden?
It shall be yours now and ever.*

*I must close now. Goodbye, my dearest Margaret. I will always remember your beautiful blue eyes.
Ever faithful, Arturo*

postscript - Unless you were the one with the brown eyes, in which case please disregard.

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: heliotrope candle

Location to which party is directed: Walking "south" on Big Bow, approximately 120 paces beyond the entrance to the Forsaken Forest, on the left side of the path there are two joined trees with their roots spreading over a grey rock. The candle is hidden behind the trees (that is, away from the path.)

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The mists of the dream swirl around and then slowly dissipate. Before you, you see a young girl, not yet ten years old. She is pale and wan, her dark eyes huge in her small face. She is watching you, entreating.

She lays in a large wooden bed elaborately carved with grapevines and hummingbirds. Covered with heavy grey velvet blankets, the child still shivers. Her eyes never leave you. Ancient silver rings glint on her small fingers. She pulls the covers tightly up around her chin, but the mist of dawn is stealing into the room. Its whitish haze obscures her from your sight.

When it clears, you see another girl, older than first, but only just barely grown to womanhood. Her clothes are simple, the green of the grass, the white of the snow. Her face is unmarked, but when you squint, you can see the tattoo traceries that await her. Muscles flex in her capable arms. She strides forth, purpose in her step.

Somehow, she has entered the other's luxurious room. Her simple clothing is out of place here, but if she notices she gives no sign. She moves straightaway to the bed. Her strong tanned fingers are gentle when they caress the tiny pale face in the bed.

While you watch the young woman, a light begin to glow, seemingly within her chest. You wait for her to notice, but she is oblivious to it. It glows purple, like a light shining through a colored lantern, brighter and brighter. It glows within her, this warm and magical light, and she knows it not.

The young woman holds forth a cup, and in a voice old beyond her years, says "Take, little one. Take and drink." And the pale little girl in the bed smiles at last.

Explanation: The vision (hopefully) suggests that Kira is the one who has magical ability but doesn't know it, and that she is thus the one who can successfully do the ritual with the magic cup.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the Elsewhichian wine from Teknos

Scheduled for: 9:45am Sunday

Location: Teknos will meet the party in the tavern and will then lead them to the wine

Sunday morning final step: consecrating the magical healing cup with Kira

Scheduled for: 10am Sunday

Location: Kira will walk with the party to Winterhill Clearing, where she will perform the ritual

Glendeep

Glendeep's color is pale green; its crest is an arch.

Investigating the charge against: Aesthetika

Companion: Gloucester (Brian Neff)

Mission letter:

My good people,

As you well know, we lucky residents of Glendeep have long enjoyed a peace and prosperity that many of our land-dwelling friends can only dream of. Perhaps that very peace has made us complacent, even careless.

Forgive me. My great worry has robbed me of my ability to speak clearly. Let me take you into my confidence and fully explain:

In the long-past days when Glendeep sat on land like all the other Lyrian duchies, there was great inequity between those of noble and common birth. The noble families – mine very much included – lived in luxury in the great castles, while poorer families barely survived, left to eke out an existence farming the stony hillsides and often called upon to send their daughters and sons to fight and die in endless territory skirmishes.

Happily, recent generations have seen a much more equitable life for all of us. But not all the noble folk of Glendeep consider these changes to be a positive development.

I have only recently learned that a small but powerful faction of noble families wish to return our duchy to a system of greater disparity between rich and poor. They want to reinstate brutally high taxes on commoners and to conscript those who cannot pay into a military force "to defend Glendeep", although presumably the only defense needed would be against those who oppose their oppressive rule.

Rest assured that I will defend a more equitable Glendeep as long as there is breath in my body. But of course I will not live forever.

After hoping so long for a child, my wife and I have at last been blessed with the birth of a young son. It has been suggested that this faction might attempt violence against my boy, either to use him as a twisted sort of bargaining chip, or possibly to supplant my family altogether.

I am desperate to protect young Elijah, partially of course because of a father's great love, but also because I fear for Glendeep's future. But I do not know exactly who among the other nobles may prove traitorous, and my wife and I cannot watch Elijah constantly and also govern.

I sought the counsel of my most trusted advisor, Glendeep's High Priestess of Spring, asking how I might protect my sweet son. After much prayer on the subject, she relayed a dream she had, which is cryptic but perhaps presents a shred of hope.

The dream suggested that Elijah will be kept safe if we can use something called a "Ritual of Reclamation" to acquire the sword of Lorelei. I have never heard of anyone called Lorelei, nor do I know why her sword is special, but I have great faith in the High Priestess. According to her, the sword may be found in the duchy of Moreth, in a tiny village called World's Edge. In the hope that Glendeep and my own sweet son may be kept safe, I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to a woman named Celeste Wilde whom I believe is temporarily in residence there. Ms. Wilde is my bookkeeper's husband's second-cousin and he assures me she is a delightful and trustworthy soul. I have asked her to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge; I trust my message will arrive before you do, and that she will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many of the citizens of World's Edge and may also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Glendeep, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each one of you possesses unique skills that will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I wish you much luck. I pray that the sword of Lorelei is indeed in World's Edge and that a Ritual of Reclamation can find it. May you be successful on your mission and return to aid our duchy as well as my own family.

With hope and gratitude,

Duke Galileo DelMar of Glendeep

Contact: Celeste Wilde

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

2nd Friday night encounter: Adina Valerius

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

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Item: none

3rd Friday night encounter: Kora Peacekeeper

Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Kemma Runereader

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates, encouraging self-reflection

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

Set Location: Makai camp

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

K.R. – Here's that rite we were talking about. Can't think what you'd actually use it for, but of course there's plenty I don't know about. Best of luck to any poor sap who actually decides to try it, since the list of ritual components is a mile long.

Ritual of Reclamation (Seasons forbid anyone name these damn things something monosyllabic) Gather together:

*a rose-quartz orb
a revels cup
a brimstone egg
a viper's-eye pendant
a ghost key (whatever the hell that is)
a quantity of folly dust
devil's-fire whiskey (these old school ritual-writers were soused half the time, I think)
a spring tambourine
a shadow ward*

As if acquiring all that wasn't already a big enough pain in the ass, the first step of the ritual is "place the shadow ward on someone and wait at least one year, and preferably five years or longer." So I hope the sap doing the ritual isn't in any sort of hurry.

Once you're ready to begin (if you haven't already died of old age) gather together seven people: the one who's got the shadow ward on, plus six others. None of them need to be keepers, though it doesn't hurt if they are.

Pour the devil's-fire into your revel's cup; have one person carry the cup. Have another one hold the rose-quartz, another the brimstone egg, another the ghost key, another the folly dust. Put the viper's-eye pendant on another. Give the tambourine to the person with the shadow ward.

Start your ritual in holy ground BUT (more pain in the ass) NOT the holy ground where you'll complete the ritual. Here in World's Edge, I'd choose Fern Grotto, for reasons that'll be clear in a minute.

All together, the seven people speak these words: "The bound shall be free. The weak shall be strong. The lost shall be found." Then they form a line with the ward-wearer first. She shakes the tambourine while the whole group walks to holy ground. (See, if you took my advice and started in the Grotto, you only have to listen to the damn tambourine while you walk to the Shrine of AllSeasons. You're welcome.)

No one but the ward-wearer may speak. As they enter the holy ground, she alone repeats the words: "The bound shall be free. The weak shall be strong. The lost shall be found."

And then presto, I guess, the ward-wearer can do... something? Find a lost thing, presumably? It better be something really great, if you've spent "preferably five years or longer" getting ready for the ritual. But hey, what do I know?

Anyway, good seeing you again. Tell Wayseeker that if he leads you off any cliffs, he'll have me to answer to. – O.

Rationale: This is a note Obsidian wrote for Runereader, detailing a ritual he's read about but never seen performed.

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, lightens, to a blanched ghostly white. The army of the dead is on the march, grim and silent, their tattered banners limp in the lifeless air as the column approaches the mighty barred gate. Row upon wraithlike row they move forward, their milky spectral eyes on the man at the head of the endless parade.

Alone of them all he sees you, he who is living flesh, this raven-coated Phantom keeping watch over a platoon of pale ivory spirits. They follow him, these faded revenants, knowing that the entry before them is locked and that the door will open only to him. Shade-touched he stands, watchful eyes on the coming storm, his brow gloom-cast.

He pulls something then from his pocket, glinting silver-frost in his hand, and the haunted souls behind him surge closer. The world is bleached white as a false smile, but in his solemn scowl they see the truth. Pewter-bright in the quiet air you hear the phantasmal click of the lock, and as one they raise their ghastly voices in a soundless cheer. Then the great door opens at last and the night rushes out to enfold him in its welcoming arms and you see no more.

Explanation: The vision shows the ghost key and will (hopefully) lead the party to Umberto (Shadow) Dunn.

1st Saturday morning encounter: Karla Smirch

Activity/Goals: Smirch jingle challenge; being creative, working collaboratively

Item: brimstone egg

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, bring them back to the Smirches' shop

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Pansy Golden**Activity/Goals:** cheer up, Ned! challenge; solving open-ended problems, thinking about other's perspectives**Item:** none (she'll meet them in the tavern at 9:30am on Sunday, wearing the shadow ward)**Times available (roughly):** 8am-3pm**Usually found:** in the Inn at World's edge, or wandering**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Poppy Golden**Activity/Goals:** combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team**Item:** revel's cup**Times available (roughly):** 8am-1pm**Usually found:** at the Valerius house**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Umberto Dunn**Activity/Goals:** what-tree-would-you-be? challenge; learning how others see you, being creative**Item:** ghost key**Times available (roughly):** 8am-12noon, 2-4pm**Set Location:** at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Mick Peacock**Activity/Goals:** pitchpipe challenge; working as a team**Item:** spring tambourine**Times available (roughly):** 12noon-6pm**Usually found:** in the Peacock Family Singers' camp**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Bane**Activity/Goals:** test of 10 challenge; acknowledging different areas of expertise within the party**Item:** devil's-fire whiskey**Times available (roughly):** 8am-12noon, 4-8pm**Usually found:** in the cultists' compound in Greystone Clearing**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Edwin Davies**Activity/Goals:** observation challenge; paying attention to their surroundings, including each other**Item:** viper's-eye pendant**Times available (roughly):** 9am-4pm**Usually found:** wandering**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** Kazmira**Activity/Goals:** managers & peons challenge; finding new methods of communication, practicing teamwork and cooperation**Item:** riddle leading to the rose quartz orb**Times available (roughly):** 8-10am, 2-8pm**Usually found:** in the Roamer camp**Saturday unscheduled encounter:** (mad) Lincroft Spence**Activity/Goals:** mind of a madman challenge; working as a team, examining behaviors**Item:** folly dust**Times available (roughly):** 4 - 8pm**Usually found:** Lincroft Spence will be in front of the tavern whenever he's available for this challenge**Riddle Text:**

*Rosie Ro some things did know
Of roses pink or white as snow.*

*Sweet Rosie lived, that winsome dame,
In the place that matched her name.*

*Miss Rosie then did think to go
To see the jolly Roamers, oh!*

*And in her hand, a rosy sphere
So perfect-smooth, she held it dear.*

*She walked a bit, Miss Rose, alone,
But stopped before she reached the 'Rhone.*

*And there she paused, to drink a cup
Where the fog had long rose up.*

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*Miss Rosie she was rarely daunted
But now she worried for she wanted*

*That precious sphere kept safe, and so
Miss Rosie Ro, she crept below.*

*She hid it there, to safely store
It, 'mong the rocks, to roll no more.*

*Miss Rosie Ro, she stayed four score
But now, alas, she lives no more.*

*And silent-sleeps beneath the hill.
The sphere? It maybe sits there still.*

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: rose quartz orb

Location to which party is directed: among the rocks underneath Misty Bridge

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens just a bit to the icy azure sky of pre-dawn. The air crackles with cold, and the silent hills slumber under their cerulean blanket of snow. The last stars sparkle crystalline January above.

Only the boy is awake. Soon he will light the fires and begin his early chores, but for now he is the master of the realm. The chill sits easy on his skin, for he is winterborn. He flexes his fingers and takes up his pen. Upon the snowy expanse of his page, a world is made. Characters and creatures spring to life in ink.

The first yellow rays glimmer across the heavens. The sun bursts forth, shining gold in the royal morning. The boy tips his head in the sudden brightness, surveying his work. It is good, he knows, and yet too he is coming to realize the wrongness of it. Ill-done but too late to stop. His sigh is a frigid whisper. He stretches a slender arm up up until he can dip his brush into the honeyed light and then paint it shimmering across his art. In the bright beautiful reflection off the page, you see the boy's eyes. They are deep icy blue as a frozen river and they cloud with guilt and fear. He looks at you imploring and then the darkness rises up again and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows Frost painting and suggests the guilt he feels at what he's being made to do.

Sunday morning penultimate step: meeting up with Pansy Golden (wearing the Shadow Ward) who then accompanies the party

Scheduled for: 9:30am Sunday

Location: Pansy will meet the party in the tavern and will then accompany them to their party path ending

Sunday morning final step: doing the Ritual of Reclamation (and, unbeknownst to them, animating the statue of St. Lorelei)

Scheduled for: 9:45am Sunday

Location: the ritual will be performed Fern Grotto and the Shrine of AllSeasons

Keer

Keer's color is light blue; its crest is a keera-fish.

Investigating the charge against: Dorito

Companion: Keifer (Bob Marriott)

Mission letter:

My loyal subjects,

As you well know, we island-dwellers of Keer have long borne the assault of marauding pirates who seek the plunder of our fair shores. For many years we have repelled these attacks with a fierceness that is a credit to our people.

When the pirate Mikos was captured and sentenced three years ago, he swore he would have revenge on me for bringing him to justice. He placed a curse upon the island, and said he would summon a creature from the deep that would lay waste to our duchy.

It now appears that his rantings were all too true. There have been numerous sightings of a huge creature rising up out of the sea, with a black neck taller than a ship's mast, and rows and rows of wicked teeth. I would not believe it had I not seen it for myself; it can only be the great beast Leviathan. Already three ships have been ravaged attempting to reach the Scallop Bay. Two of them washed up, destroyed, upon the southern shore. The third was dragged down into the watery depths, and no trace of her has yet been found. How long can we survive if our mighty harbors cannot be reached safely? And how long before Leviathan turns its hunger and rage upon the island itself?

All this past week, I have sought the counsel of my wisest advisors, but none can say what we should do. Then last night, I had a dream which seemed to present – if not an answer – at least a shred of hope.

In it, I dreamt of the Knights of the Golden Circle. I trust you are not all so young that you do not know the legend of the Knights – how they were a force for good, traveling about the kingdom, going where the need was very great. No one has seen them for years and years now, and I daresay many now believe that they never really existed at all.

The dream suggested that they could somehow be found in the duchy of Moreth, in a tiny village called World's Edge. In the hope that my dream is more than just a delirious wish for salvation, I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to a woman who resides in that region, Ms. Belle Bishop. She is my bookkeeper's wife's second-cousin, and is, according to the wife, both brilliant and delightful. I have asked her to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge; I trust my message will arrive before you do, and that she will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many of the citizens of World's Edge and may also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure that you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Keer, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each one of you possesses unique skills that will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I wish you much luck. I pray that the Knights of the Golden Circle do indeed still exist and that they can help us. May you be successful on your mission and return to aid the duchy in this hour of great need!

With hope and gratitude,

Duchess Mariella Kincaid of Keer

Contact: Belle Bishop

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

2nd Friday night encounter: Kyli Talespinner

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

3rd Friday night encounter: Elly Peacock

Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Shaun Peacock

Activity/Goals: pitchpipe challenge; working as a team

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

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Set Location: the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

The Knights Of The Golden Circle

told by Shaun Pecok

writtun by Mara

Wunce upon a time, many many years ago (before Shaun was even born! when Obsiddien was a little baby!) there were some wonderful knights called the Knights of the Golden Circle. They were the best knights in the whole land – brave and strong and good. Whenever a person truely needed help, they could magically call upon the Knights and the Knights would always come and help them. Here is the way that someone would summon the Knights:

The person would need to gather together:

*a perfect sphere of earth
a perfect sphere of air
a perfect sphere of fire
a perfect sphere of watter
limelite
a fortshun's wheel pendent
a horn of sumoning
a ring set with a glimmergem
a nightstone ring*

When all those things had been gathered, the person needed to stand in just the right place. In World's Edge it would be the Bowwer of Dremes. One person would hold the earth sphere and another person would hold the air sphere and another person would hold the fire sphere and another person would hold the watter sphere. They would be four people, so they would stand in a diamond-shape. In the center of the diamond-shape would be two more people. One of them would hold the horn of sumoning and put on the nightstone ring and the glimmergem ring. The other person would hold the limelite and put on the fortshun's weel pendent. That person would say Summoned are you, oh Knights. Great is our need. O heare this our plea. Just when they finished with the words, the person holding the horn of sumoning would blow it loud and for a long time.

Then, if the need was really truely great, then the Knights would come.

Nowadays, there are no Knights of the Golden Circle anymore, which is very sad. Even if there were, you probably couldn't summon them because their are so manny things you wood need.

The End

Rationale: This is a story a child wrote for Shaun, after he told her the legend of the Knights.

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and lightens, but only slightly. The air is cold and grey and bitter, and you are aware of the creaking of the great wheel. He is chained in a dark place. His master rants and raves and lashes out, but cannot be appeased. He ducks his horned head in fear. Magic swirls writhing chaotic within him, but he is only a servant here. The wheel creaks and turns.

The dream lightens. His master is dead; he is his own master now. He walks a springtime path and the air is fruitful with promise around him. He has found a place, and more than a place, a home. The air is gentle upon his skin and he swishes his tail in appreciation, but even in the warm buzzy breeze of the April air, the low squeaking of the wheel sounds. Turning, turning, always turning. That which was up shall be down.

The vision has grown darkly uncertain. He has tried to care for those he loves, but he has stolen from them instead. Perhaps now they will hate him, will drive him from their midst? He will be alone once more. He is afraid, and he fingers the pendant that hangs at his throat. The only constant is change, and then the wheel spins once more and the dark rises up and you see no more.

Explanation: The vision shows the Fortune's Wheel Pendant and will (hopefully!) lead the party to Brimstone

1st Saturday morning encounter: Jpeg

Activity/Goals: test of 10 challenge; acknowledging different areas of expertise within the party

Item: ring set with a glimmergem

Usually found: in the cultists' compound in Greystone Clearing

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Al Bishop

Activity/Goals: what-tree-would-you-be? challenge; learning how others see you, being creative

Item: none (he'll give them the horn of summoning in the tavern at 9:30am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 12noon-6pm

Set Location: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Sylvie Valerius

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: perfect sphere of air bubble necklace

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: at the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Kovi Woundtender

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates

Item: perfect sphere of fire candle

Times available (roughly): 9-3pm

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Nina Bliss

Activity/Goals: charmed I'm sure challenge; learning names, getting comfortable, being creative and silly

Item: perfect sphere of water bottle

Times available (roughly): 10-5pm

Usually found: at the prosecutor's pavilion

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Electra

Activity/Goals: philanthropy challenge for Bracken; solving open-ended problems, taking moral responsibility

Item: nightstone ring

Times available (roughly): 10am-1pm, 4-8pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Brimstone

Activity/Goals: one good sock challenge; practicing brainstorming, building on partymates' ideas

Item: fortune's wheel pendant

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm, 5-8pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Huxley

Activity/Goals: managers & peons challenge; finding new methods of communication, practicing teamwork and cooperation

Item: riddle leading to the perfect sphere of earth

Times available (roughly): 8-10am, 12noon-6pm

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Ghost Theater

Activity/Goals: ghost theater challenge; taking responsibility for each other's safety, communicating non-verbally

Item: limelight

Times available (roughly): 4 – 8pm

Usually found: in the Ghost Theater

Riddle Text:

Ewe whose eke per affection list ant whom ye!

Hit wilt bee oars; ewe own lean kneed two he damn eye a device.

Firs ago toothy feel twitch bell longs tootie barren. Tern no waif rum the hat lay cough song sand dig owe all long dew-eyed rode hat peril hulls there if her art. Foe hollow hittin' till hit combs toothy lit tall pat honor rite tango rye tear. Trample long force ever all mini its, sand goad hound endowin' endowin'. Key puff hollow winged a tray ill butt doughnut letterfeat ghetto tally wed. Den a pup pup pup one saggin', huff coarse sundae tray all. Aft terra why all, yew lick hum tootie lit tall louses. Elm host dare! Ago ant ooh duh whole leap lace, an wok pastor po' Dee am. Key pa wall kin. Dell eat all tray ill wills splittin' spa lit ones Moor. Goat tootie Ander deep hath - eyes shell knot hell yew which; yule justify end hit yore is elf - ant hen her each in two deck old. Owe, hits fairy coal! Butt doughnut Dee's pair; hairs does fear fir yew two clay am!

NOTE: This riddle will likely need to be replaced for this plot. We can't know that for certain till we're at the camp, and we can't write a new one till we're at the camp. Please stand by.

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: the perfect sphere of earth

Location to which party is directed: in the Shrine of AllSeasons, a small path leads past the altar. Following it down to the water (there are several paths; the party will have to check them all), the sphere is in the lake itself (at the very edge.)

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, brightens, whitens, to the flat pristine perfection of a blank page. Stretched across its expanse are row upon row of characters you can almost but not quite read.

The man is there, solid and secure. He reaches his hands to the sky full of words and they are his and he is theirs. How he loves them, luxuriating in this world of written ideas! He is the king of this domain, but he is a king in exile. He pines for the words. At night when he sleeps upon the unfamiliar ground, his hand dreams of his pen. He has learned so much and o! to have a page such as this on which to scribe out all he has seen and experienced! To compose is to make reality, and he drifts draftless, currently unmoored. Soon he will be able to write. Soon but not now. The world flips and inverts.

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The woman is there, afraid and uncertain. She lifts her hands to shield her head, but the words in the sky swell and storm and sleet down harsh upon her. They pile up slippery around her feet, and when she looks at them, they twist and tumble and refuse her pitiful deciphering. Her brain aches and struggles but no! no respite is there. She is languishing in this language, linguistically sickened. Never will she understand this feat that young children find trivial. She does not belong here. The world spins and changes once more.

The man and the woman stand before each other, together but apart. They could be made whole, but where are the words now? Will they find them before it is too late? You can read no answers and then the darkness swirls up black as ink and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows Bane with all the words he cannot (in his undercover guise) write and Dorito with all the words she cannot (because of her dyslexia) read.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the horn of summoning from Al Bishop

Scheduled for: 9:30am Sunday

Location: Al will meet the party in the tavern

Sunday morning final step: summoning the Knights of the Golden Circle

Scheduled for: 9:45am Sunday

Location: the Bower of Dreams

Noctara

Noctara's color is purple; its crest is a dragon.

Investigating the charge against: Kerrick Dealbinder

Companion: Nadia (Sherry Rinell)

Mission letter:

My loyal subjects,

I write to you now to request your aid with a rather sensitive and awkward matter.

More than ten years ago, I bestowed a gift upon a cousin of mine. Although we are only distant kin, he is a fine fellow and I have always thought highly of him. Anyway, he is an adventurous sort who for reasons unbeknownst to sane folk decided to leave Noctara and become - Seasons preserve us! - a sailor. Still, he makes visits back to the home country now and again, and on one such I presented him with the Crystal Chalice, an item which has been in our family for years. It is a pretty thing to look upon, and some even used to claim it had magic powers. Anyway, I gave it to Somerley - that's my cousin's name - as a gift and then thought little more of it. One piece of ornamental bric-a-brac looks about the same as any other to me, and Seasons know we've got enough of it around the castle, although don't tell my wife I said that.

But I'm getting off my subject here.

Last week, Nero - my court caster, that is - was doing some research or somesuch, and perhaps he waved his arms when he should have wiggled his fingers or something, but anyway the matter went all awry and the long and the short of it is he's gone and turned himself into a newt.

As you can imagine, we're quite eager to set him right once again, and he seems rather anxious about the matter himself, although truth be told it's a little hard to say. This brings me to the matter at hand. As I mentioned already, some people used to claim that the Crystal Chalice had magical powers, the specific nature of which was transformative. There's hope that, if the stories are true, we might be able to use the chalice to put Nero back as he was meant to be, assuming of course that we can convince the little fellow to drink out of it.

The awkwardness arises from the fact that I gave the chalice, as I said, to Cousin Somerley, who then took it half a world away and sold it to some fellow – of course he has no idea who – in Uri-Kesh. My court sages were able to use some ritual or somesuch to figure out that the Chalice is now in the duchy of Moreth, in a tiny village called World's Edge. I'm guessing whoever bought it from Somerley must be a traveler himself. Or maybe the chap who bought it sold it to someone who then sold it to someone who travels... anyway, it's apparently in World's Edge, however it got there.

In the hope that you can find the fellow who bought the Chalice – and that he'd see fit to send it back to Noctara for Nero's sake – I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to a woman who resides there named Eugenie Bright; she is my groundskeeper's wife's second cousin and is said to be a good and kind soul. I have asked Ms. Bright to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge; I trust my message will arrive before you do, and that she will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you'll no doubt encounter many of the citizens of World's Edge and may also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I'm sure that you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Noctara, leaving everybody you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each one of you possesses unique skills that will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I wish you luck and thank you sincerely. Your success will mean a great deal for poor Nero and for our duchy.

With hope and gratitude,

Duke Humphrey Crumbert of Noctara

Contact: Eugenie Bright

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

2nd Friday night encounter: Bonnie Stillwater

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

3rd Friday night encounter: Natasha

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Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Aleeya Witchborn

Activity/Goals: managers & peons challenge; finding new methods of communication, practicing teamwork and cooperation

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

Set Location: Roamer camp

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

Dear Bonnie,

I have looked into that matter you asked me about, and I believe I've found something. It's not going to be easy, but then, whatever is? You'll need to assemble a rather strange collection of items, as follows:

*a small amount of mortality dust
an azure riverstone
a limelight
an amethyst obelisk
a heart of darkness
an emerald star
aventurine shards
a copperstone crown
a jester's egg*

I have a few ideas about where you might find some of these, although not all of them, alas. Wishing you much luck,

Aleeya

[written across the bottom: Friends from Noctara – According to Bonnie, if you're able to find the above and are still interested in claiming the Chalice, you should meet her at Serenity Point on Sunday morning at half past nine. She asks that you please be on time. – A.W.]

Rationale: Bonnie writes a confidential note and sends it to Aleeya via the 3rd Friday. After Aleeya reads it, she pulls out a note she'd already written to Bonnie and gives it to the party, after she (pretends to) write the note at the bottom.

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

In the darkness of the dream, you first become aware of the music. It is a sprightly little tune, made for dancing and hopping and whirling. The light increases, ever so gradually, and you see her, a fool, leaping and bobbing and spinning to the happy little song. She is dressed in fool's motley, half gold, half silver, patchworked together as is customary among those who clown for their livelihood.

Stitched tidily straight down the middle. She tells a joke, a harmless little folly, and then falls over, laughing. Silly little fool.

Behind her, you can slowly begin to see her audience. A... man? Maybe. He watches the fool with his watchful loving hopeful eyes. His... muzzle? No. No, his face. His face curves up in a smile. Long has he waited to smile.

In his veins, his blood is a patchwork. He is mongrel, mutt. He is stitched together, a little of this, a piece of that. In his own way, he is perfection. He is still, watching, and only the foolish little clown moves. She is oblivious to her audience, dancing for the joy of dancing alone. In the fool's hands – what? – a stone, an egg? She tosses it high into the air and catches it without looking. And then, although she had shown no sign of seeing the other, she turns suddenly and presents it, placing it into the other's paws. No, into his hands. Into the other's worthy hands. The little clown bows low after bestowing this gift and then the dream rises up and everything again is darkness.

Explanation: The vision shows the jester's egg and will (hopefully) lead the party to Bailey.

1st Saturday morning encounter: Santiago West Valerius

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: copperstone crown

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, bring them back to the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Tanya Peacock

Activity/Goals: pitchpipe challenge; working as a team

Item: none (she'll give them the azure riverstone in the tavern at 9:15am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Kyli Talespinner

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates

Item: riddle leading to the amethyst obelisk

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Cary Montalvo

Activity/Goals: what-tree-would-you-be? challenge; learning how others see you, being creative

Item: mortality dust

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Set Location: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Dorito

Activity/Goals: test of 10 challenge; acknowledging different areas of expertise within the party

Item: heart of darkness

Times available (roughly): 8am-3pm

Usually found: in the cultists' compound in Greystone Clearing

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Bailey

Activity/Goals: curiosity challenge; calling attention to party behavior

Item: jester's egg

Times available (roughly): 8-11am, 1-4pm, 6-8pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Samuelson

Activity/Goals: what a surprise! challenge; creative problem-solving of open-ended problem

Item: emerald star

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Pearl Bryce

Activity/Goals: double-mute charades challenge; collaborating with another party, communicating despite obstacles

Item: aventurine shards

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Ghost Theater

Activity/Goals: ghost theater challenge; taking responsibility for each other's safety, communicating non-verbally

Item: limelight

Times available (roughly): 4 – 8pm

Usually found: in the Ghost Theater

Riddle Text:

*Now it is time for us to rhyme:
To sing a song of sisters three
Prisoners of geometry.*

*And then a poem about their home:
They lived where only shadows go
(All this was many years ago.)*

*The sisters stayed in forest glade,
Off the swampy trail, close by
The silent place where sleepers lie.*

*Let us tell this of the eldest:
Her gown was charcoal-grey and plain
And know that Delta was her name.*

*Say a little of the middle:
Trina she was called. Her gown
Was russet-red so dark 'twas brown.*

*Before we're done, the youngest one:
'Twas as Angel she was known.
Her gown was goldish-white in tone.*

*But this story makes us sorry,
For though each by herself was good,
They did not act as sisters should.*

*Our sisters fair no love did share.
From the time when they were small,
The topic mattered not at all –*

*These sisters three could not agree:
If one said "black", another "white",
The third said "grey" ... and then they'd fight.*

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*Dispute begun, three tongues did run,
As each one sought to win the bout,
Not caring what they fought about.*

*So Sister One with words spared none:
"Your foolishness I must refute;
My scorn for you grows more acute."*

*And Sister Two spoke harshly:
"You Must know you are making scant sense
And your words go off on tangents."*

*And Sister Three said, "Seems to me,
For witlessness there's no excuse.
I beg you, do not be obtuse."*

*And in their eyes: "No compromise!"
Nothing could their minds appease;
More vexed each then grew by degrees.*

*"This fight's not done!" in unison
They cried, content to wait the night
Till someone else would say "You're right."*

*None would give in; each was driven
To be right, but none conceded.
Days passed, weeks – then months – unheeded.*

*How long they've been in wooded glen!
Our sisters three, respect demanding,
In that clearing still are standing.*

*So do not be like those sad three.
The moral of this simple story:
Say you're wrong. And say you're sorry.*

*For our meaning bears repeating:
Though your argument's profound,
The winning's in the middle ground.*

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: amethyst obelisk

Location to which party is directed: The party is directed to Shadownook ("where only shadows go", "along the swampy trail") ("close by the silent place where sleepers lie"). (NOTE: we are referring here to the NEW Shadownook location, along Great Swamp Way, near the Graveyard. NOT the old clearing near Autumnnook!) Hopefully they will notice the many triangle references in the poem (Delta, Trina, Angel, acute, tangents, obtuse, degrees, plus the fact that it's organized by trios.) In Shadownook, they will find three flat triangular stones on the ground (one grey, one brown and one gold/white); the obelisk is (shallowly) buried in the ground an equal distance from the points of the triangles. ("the winning's in the middle ground")

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, lightens, to the glimmer-glow of midday. The sun is a bright amber jewel in the pale blue brocade of the sky. The little princess sits before you, sleekly content upon her cushioned throne, and why should she not be, her whole world perfectly gold and cerulean around her? On her brow, a shimmering corona alights. She is cosseted and coddled, beloved golden catkin, opulent and indulged pet. She raises a hand, languid, to grasp her treasure but then... what is new, sweet pussycat? Is it a trick of the yellow light? Only a minute before, there was a diadem, diamond-perfect upon her guileless brow, but now where is it? Gone completely? You see this register in her eyes and a sudden sharp brightness rises in her face. She opens her pretty kitten mouth and within it you see, fierce and deadly, her glistening razor teeth. Only then do you realize, now that it is too late. Her gilt is apparent. Her eyes flash brilliant and her incisors find your throat and then the darkness rises feline-quick around you and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows Karla Smirch, the coddled kitten with saber teeth, and shows what she will do to protect "her" crown.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the azure riverstone from Tanya Peacock

Scheduled for: 9:15am Sunday

Location: Tanya will meet the party in the tavern and will then accompany them to their party path ending

Sunday morning final step: Bonnie Stillwater

Scheduled for: 9:30am Sunday

Location: Serenity Point

P'loa

P'loa's color is turquoise; its crest is a sailing ship.

Investigating the charge against: Solomon Stillwater

Companion: Polo (Amos Meeks)

Mission letter:

My loyal subjects,

I write now hoping you can help in P'loa's great hour of need. By now, surely word has reached even the most remote villages of the great whirlpool which opened in the sea between Okina and Makalei. Two weeks ago, I was outside the ducal palace on the side of Mount Okina when I heard a sound unlike any I ever heard. It sounded as though the sea itself was drawing a deep breath. I turned and looked out across the waves toward Makalei, and it was then I saw a swirling darkness appear in the ocean. At first it was only a strange valley, and then before my eyes, it grew into a sucking vortex. I could only watch, horrified, as a midsize fishing boat was caught in the churning waters. Her crew shifted the sails, frantically seeking wind to break free, but in the end the ocean was stronger than any wind could be, and she was pulled down beneath the waves. No trace of the ship nor her crew has been found.

Even though shipping routes have been dramatically altered between these, our two most populous islands, the whirlpool is growing slowly but surely bigger, and since that day, four more ships have been lost to this maelstrom.

I have sought guidance from my most trusted advisors, and at last they believe they have discovered the maelstrom's cause. Understanding it requires a very brief history lesson. Almost eighty years ago, there was a P'loan diver named Lio who was reputed to be the most courageous and skilled of any the islands have ever known. People said Lio could stay underwater for five full minutes before surfacing; people also said that he could find treasures beneath the waves even in the darkest part of the night. Whether those are true I cannot say, but it is a matter of record that, at eighteen, he dove off a ship anchored due west of Makalei Bay and surfaced with a pearl so large and perfect that people would later call it the Jewel of the Waves. Lio always claimed that the ocean had made a gift of the pearl to him. "I wake every day and thank her for this most precious honor", Lio used to say.

Lio died at the age of 88. That was two weeks ago... on the very day that the maelstrom appeared. Strange as it seems, it is hard to imagine that this is a coincidence. My trusted advisors, men and women who base their decisions on logic and science, have stood before me with somber faces and claimed: "This is the cause of the whirlpool. The ocean wants her pearl back."

Fantastical as it seems, I would of course not hesitate to cast this treasure into the sea. It would be worth any cost to still the whirlpool, that desperate hungry mouth that cannot be sated. But alas, the Jewel of the Waves is not here in the islands, nor has it been for years.

Not long after finding it, Lio made a gift of the pearl to the Duke's daughter. Elani was a great beauty, and on her 25th birthday, Lio had the pearl set into a pendant and presented to her. People say she never took the pendant off.

Elani's story, though, is not a happy one. Engaged to be married, she and her betrothed Kano climbed the steps beside Diamond Falls to the overlook, but the ground was slick with moisture, and Kano fell to his death. Elani, understandably, was heartbroken. She claimed that she could never look on the beautiful land of P'loa again, and she traveled alone to the Lyrian mainland. Her letters said she was journeying inland, seeking some sort of solace, but then the letters stopped coming. Painful though it was, it appeared that Elani wished no further contact with anyone in P'loa, and her family respected her wishes.

Elani was my great, great-aunt, although she left the islands long before I was born. We know that she eventually reached a tiny village called World's Edge, in the duchy of Moreth. If Elani is still alive, she would be 95 now. A greatly-advanced age, to be sure, but not impossible for we hearty P'loans.

I realize the chance Elani or the Jewel are still in World's Edge is a very small one, but it appears to be our only hope to still the great maelstrom. Because a very small chance is better than none, I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to a gentleman named Koreos; I met him when he traveled to P'loa and found him both forthright and personable. I have asked him to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge; I'm sure my message will arrive before you do, and that he will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many citizens of World's Edge and may also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of P'loa, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each of you possess unique skills that will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I wish you much luck. I pray the Jewel of the Waves may be found and that you can bring it home to P'loa. May you be successful on your mission and return to aid the duchy in this hour of great need!

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With hope and gratitude, Duke Kai Edgewater of P'loa

Contact: Koreos

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

2nd Friday night encounter: Obsidian

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

3rd Friday night encounter: Stevie Peacock

Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Joni Peacock

Activity/Goals: perfect square challenge; working as a team, communicating in unique scenarios

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

Set Location: the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

I, Jed Thimble, being of sound mind and old body, do hereby and forthwith and henceforth lay out this accounting of what's for who: My oldest, Peggie, is to get the house, on account of she's the one who's cleaned it ever since her ma passed, and that seems only right. My middlest, Little Jay, is to get the cows, on account of how they like him best, and there's no sense making a cow mad and expecting anything but nasty thinnish milk from her.

My littlest, Binnie, is to get whatever cash can be scraped together from selling the rest, and my apologies that it's not more.

All of mine are to keep track of this ritual, which has come in handy more times than I can count over the years. Did a nice job putting this together if I do say so myself.

I don't know that this ritual has a big fancy name. In my head I always called it the Ritual of Togetherness, and since I'm the one who's having it set to paper, I guess that's as good a name as any.

A Ritual of Togetherness is for when you need to find a person, including a person who's laying cold in a grave. It's not necessarily for bringing you to them, or them to you. It's for bringing the both of you together. That's why it's called that.

Here's what you need:

- a strong cedarwood box*
- something what belonged to the person you want to find*
- a fluorite crystal*
- a seekingstone*
- a shimmerstone orb*
- a small bunch of leatherleaf herb*
- favor from the Court of Mirrors*
- ashes of a lightning-struck oak*
- black diamond shards*

Getting the stuff's the only hard part of the ritual. Once you've got it, all you need to do is go to the person's last known location, then put all the stuff in the cedarwood box. Give it just a minute or two for the magics to all get familiar with each other – and then you're on your way!

This ends my last will and testament. Signed this September 3 – Jed Thimble's mark

Rationale: Joni wrote out this will for the illiterate caster who created the ritual.

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

The dream begins dark, like night, like death. For the longest time you see nothing at all, and then, like lightning flashes, you begin to see glints and sparks. Glittering stabs of light, sparkling off a huge stone which sits, sooty as the all-encompassing black that surrounds it.

Behind the stone, you see a woman – no, a girl – or maybe a woman after all, dressed in black and blue, like a bruise. She touches the stone, very lightly, exploring its facets with her fingertips. Then she steps back, slowly, deliberately, and brings one boot down on the stone and it shatters, fractures, into a million pieces. They are arrayed at her feet, jagged, sharp as razors, as teeth, as knives.

She smiles then, mocking, but you are unsure if she is laughing at herself or at you or at the darkness itself. She scoops up the fragments of stone in her hand and squeezes them hard. You flinch, willing yourself to turn away rather than see her blood dripping blue onto the floor. But you look anyway and see that there is no blood, and that the original gem sits, cool and perfect, in her hand. The past behind her is shattered, broken and destroyed and swept away, but she is whole, cool and smooth and unscathed in the darkness. The light glints off her smile and then there is a flash and all is again black.

Explanation: The vision shows the black diamond shards and will (hopefully) lead the party to Nix Valerius.

1st Saturday morning encounter: Vernon Gill

Activity/Goals: illiterate letter #2 challenge; communicating despite obstacles

Item: leatherleaf herb

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, do this challenge in a quiet corner of the tavern or outside

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Ned Crochett

Activity/Goals: memorial challenge; develop party identity, articulate who they are & what they value, be creative

Item: none (he'll give them the cedarwood box in the tavern at 10:15am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 8-11am, 3-8pm

Usually found: in the Inn at World's Edge, or wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Nix Valerius

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: black diamond shards

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: at the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Kira

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates

Item: ashes of a lightning-struck oak

Times available (roughly): 8-11am, 1-4pm

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Quinoa

Activity/Goals: grab-bag storytelling challenge; being creative, working collaboratively

Item: seekingstone

Times available (roughly): 8-10am, 12noon-6pm

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Irena Montalvo

Activity/Goals: what-tree-would-you-be? challenge; learning how others see you, being creative

Item: fluorite crystal

Times available (roughly): 12noon-6pm

Set Location: at the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Angelica Sprink

Activity/Goals: what a surprise! challenge; creative problem-solving of open-ended problem

Item: tortoiseshell comb (formerly Elani Edgewater's)

Times available (roughly): 11am-3pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Lincroft Spence

Activity/Goals: writer's block challenge; tell stories of their exploits, including 'negative' ones

Item: riddle leading to the shimmerstone orb

Times available (roughly): 8am-12noon

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: the Court of Mirrors

Activity/Goals: gauntlet challenge; developing trust and rapport, practicing communication

Item: favor from the Court of Mirrors

Times available (roughly): 4-8pm

Usually found: in the Court of Mirrors

Riddle Text:

*Look at the sun; it shines alone
And sparkles like a shimmerstone.*

*Look at the Roamers, dancing free,
But it's not here your prize will be.*

*Look at the paths, a choice to make;
The foolish way you must forsake.*

*Look at the bridge and mind your stride
Till safely on the other side.*

Look at the field of noble name;

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There's nothing here for you to claim.

*Look at your legs; it's time to walk;
Head off toward friends and ale and talk.*

*Look at your sword, and for its sake
No peaceful path is yours to take.*

*Look at the stone, a spot to bide --
It's here along your left-hand side.*

*Look at your feet, so tired, so sore;
Maybe rest a minute more.*

*Look at the ground, so hard, so cold;
What treasure maybe does it hold?*

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: shimmerstone orb

Location to which party is directed: Hopefully the party will follow along with the directions in the riddle, starting off in the Roamer camp, turning out to the left (avoiding Fool's Errand), crossing Garth's Plank, walking through the Baron's Field and heading toward the tavern (friends and ale and talk), avoiding Big Bow Trail (which leads to Peaceful Crossing) but instead finding the stone "bench" that's along the left side of the trail. This bench is very near the intersection with the 'Rhone Trail (but not on the 'Rhone.) The orb is buried in the ground in front of the bench.

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens to a ruddy glow. Murky russet light filters into the... barn? No, smaller. Barely a shack, this. A henhouse, maybe. The autumn air is amber-thick here. In the warm grainy shadows, the fox lurks. His orange fur is faded but he is sleek still. Agile and hungry, he waits. Coiled in the corner, the snake watches, tasting the promise in the air. Her crimson scales shimmer and her red tongue flickers, beautiful but deadly.

Harvest time. The fruits of the hunt, ripe for plucking. Pumpkins and burgundy grapes and the golden yolks of stolen eggs. The fox and the snake move together, entwining, all sinew and muscle and want. Flesh and greed, the rust-ruby afterglow of avarice. They will pair together so long as it benefits. Watchful eyes and readied teeth. When the other's usefulness is spent, they will be discarded, destroyed with a quick snap of teeth, a sharp crack of bloodied bone.

Below the dust-dark floorboards, it waits hidden, all glimmer-glow and shining. Both of them can sense it, gleaming rich and lustrous. Hunger and want. Soon, so soon, it will be theirs. Well, no. Not theirs. His, perhaps, or hers. The air shimmers with menace and bounty and then the dark grasping desire rises up thick all around and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision suggests that Cal (the fox) and Scarlet (the snake) are working together, albeit only temporarily, and also hints at the treasure hidden beneath the tavern floorboards.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the cedarwood box from Ned Crochett (who stays with the party for their party path ending)

Scheduled for: 10:15am Sunday

Location: Ned will meet the party in the tavern and will then accompany them to their party path ending

Sunday morning final step: doing the ritual of togetherness (and unbeknownst to them, meeting Elani Edgewater & the Fae)

Scheduled for: 10:30am Sunday

Location: the ritual will be performed in Hillcrest (as near as possible to the Silverspan Bridge) and will lead the party through Hillcrest and then to the Low Bridge

Sythwan

Sythwan's color is gold; its crest is a stallion.

Investigating the charge against: Huxley & Quinoa

Companion: Silla (Lori Nadig)

Mission letter:

My good people,

I write to you now with a heart heavy with worry. I am filled with concern for our beloved duchy, and, in truth, for all of Lyria. Forgive me. In my anxiety I do not explain myself well.

Several months ago, I received word of a situation in the village of Amaranth, in northwestern Sythwan. A foul pair of sorcerers, a husband and wife, had attempted to use their magic to extort money from the folk of that village. When the people of Amaranth courageously fought and defeated the couple, I thought the matter resolved. There were reports that the wife had screamed out a curse with her dying breath, but since she and her husband were indeed killed, this was not a cause for concern. I see now that I was optimistic and naïve.

After scarcely more than a week had passed, the crops growing in Amaranth began to wither. The leaves and stems of the wheat slowly faded from their normal healthy green; the kernels of young corn shriveled and decayed on the cobs. And then, whatever strange blight was affecting the fields settled in the hearts of the villagers as well. Physically, people were well, but a sort of quiet despair descended over this formerly vibrant community, and no healing or medicine has been able to relieve it.

As if this situation was not dire enough, this affliction is seeming, slowly but perniciously, to spread outward from Amaranth. First the crops surrounding the village languished, and then so too did those poor folk who live in the countryside beyond the barony proper.

Whatever this cursed scourge is, it is foul and it is spreading.

We have had some success moving people away from the afflicted area. The sadness that sits so heavy upon their hearts is pushed aside, but they are still like faded copies of their former selves. It is a partial solution at best. And since the malady continues to creep slowly outwards, it is presumably only a matter of time before it overtakes all of Sythwan, then all of the kingdom.

One week ago, I was visited by Ellaria, High Priestess of Sythwan and my trusted advisor and dear friend. Ellaria is a sensible sort, not easily given to fanciful speculation, but for the first time in many days, I could see hope in her eyes.

Like all keepers, Ellaria's dreams are portents from the Seasons themselves, so I knew she was not speaking lightly when she reported dreaming of a man she had never seen before. In the strange way of dreams – even holy ones, it seems – she knew that his name was Golden. This seems a fitting moniker; for in her dream, the man began to sing, and though he sang a song about the night, light began to glow soft and gold within him. As he sang, Ellaria saw the failing stalks of wheat begin to revive and the hearts of the people gladden once more.

The idea that a song might lift this curse seems a mad hope, but since Ellaria's dream is all we have, my sages went to work. They have found reports of a man named Golden, a composer of songs who resides in a faraway village called World's Edge, in the duchy of Moreth.

In the hope that the sages are correct, I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to a young woman named Pearl Bryce whom I am told is currently in residence there. She is my tailor's wife's second-cousin and is said to be a good and kind soul. I have asked her to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge. I trust my message will arrive before you do, and that she will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many of the citizens of World's Edge and may also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure that you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Sythwan, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each one of you possesses unique skills which will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I wish you much luck. I pray that you can find this man Golden and convince him to return with you to Sythwan, where his song might lift the curse that is even now creeping outward from Amaranth. May you be successful on your mission, bringing aid to our duchy in this time of great need!

With hope and gratitude,

Duke Robert Aubrey of Sythwan

Contact: Pearl Bryce

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

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2nd Friday night encounter: Poppy Golden

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

3rd Friday night encounter: Miscellania

Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Melados

Activity/Goals: marble maze challenge; working as a team

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

Set Location: Inspirations Unlimited

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

Oraculos Ritual:

An investigation into its components and properties

Prepared by Cyn Standish

for Professor DeMeo's MAG671 Course

Abstract:

In this paper, the author will consider the little-used but extremely powerful Oraculos Ritual, a rite which might, if performed correctly, allow the practitioners to communicate with an individual who had been deceased as long as half a year. Oraculos was first researched as a rite at the Crystal Spire Academy by the esteemed magic partnership of Stonem and Willoughby (Higgenson, Toward Elemental Understanding) and is seldom used because of the cost and difficulty of locating the required components and the high possibility that the ritual will fail. (Op cit.) However, the author will herein attempt to demonstrate that the difficulty in performing the rite is offset by its tremendous power and will then move forward to consider new research which suggests that the effects of the Ritual may in fact be even more significant than previously believed. (Lyrian Magical Coalition, unpublished thesis #764)

Introduction:

The Oraculos Ritual, as it is currently conceived, has a number of required components:

- a cloudite ring*
- ashes from an ancient fire*
- a riddlestone ring*
- an eternity pendant*
- a bejeweled chalice*
- a celadon egg*
- a filigree'd mule pendant*
- moonstone shards*
- a quantity of folly dust*

At least six people are required for the performing of the rite, although none need be trained in the magical arts. (See Berenstein's influential work Magery for an interesting discussion of other spells which share this unusual property.) Once the items are attained, those performing the ritual must proceed to the location of the deceased's body, or as close to it as is possible. Along the way, they must stop at a water source rich in occult energy. (The author is perhaps biased in considering this step to be a rather simple one, having grown up near just such a water course. So brimming with occult energy was this "Sheldon's Pond" that many who were not casters could feel it rising off of the water.)

The tallest of the six holds the jeweled chalice; it is filled with water from the previously described source and is then carried full the rest of the way. Once they have arrived at the body of the deceased (or at the deceased's grave, should burial have already occurred) the group is arrayed smallest to tallest. The first dons the filigree'd mule pendant and holds the container with the moonstone shards. The next wears the riddlestone ring and the cloudite ring. The next holds the celadon egg. The next holds the folly dust. The next holds the ashes and wears the eternity pendant. And the tallest holds the chalice. (Higgenson, ibid.)

The group walks in a circle, with the smallest leading, around the body or grave. The rest all follow. The one holding the chalice pours a small amount of water out while walking. The group moves once around the circle. They then turn inwards to face the body (or, again, the grave) and together recite the words "Speak to us, o fallen friend!"

If the ritual is done correctly and the request is made with pure hearts, the ritual should work.

For several years now, it has been the belief of the academy that... [Here the paper trails onto another page.]

Rationale: Melados has found a portion of a caster's old school paper

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream presses down around you, heavy and empty as midnight. A thousand miles of night sky stretch above. Harried clouds scud 'round the full moon, which hangs directly above, pearlescent and silent.

In the wild night streets, he walks. He is a young man, brash and brave, and in his hands are the shining scales and shimmering sword of justice, lustrous and silver and true as the contented moon. His hair is the dark brown-black of the unfaltering path and his feet move him sure and steady forward. The same stars that gleam bright overhead also spark in his eyes and at his belt. The night is his.

Winds blow. Dark clouds rise and fall around you and the years flood past.

In the halls of the mighty, he sits. He is older now, bent and bowed, and in his heart, the darkness and fear of midnight weigh heavy. His hair is the pale pewter of the pitiless constellations, which glisten and mock, always out of reach. He belongs still to the night, but he has grown so tired. Do they hang still at his belt, his scales, his sword, his stars? If they do, he is too weary to wield them.

The ceiling of this room is naught but the night itself. His dark eyes never leave yours, but he reaches up, impossibly high, till he holds the moon. It burns coldly, searing his palm. He sets it upon the bench before him and then sharp and sudden brings his gavel down upon it. It shatters into a thousand jagged pieces before him and in that split second, you see the young man in him again, courageous and confident, and then the dark miasma of the dream rises up once again and you see no more.

Explanation: The vision shows the moonstone shards and (hopefully) leads the party to Orion Wilde.

1st Saturday morning encounter: Elliot Peacock

Activity/Goals: perfect square challenge; working as a team, communicating in unique scenarios

Item: celadon egg

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, bring them back to the Peacock Family Singers' Camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Tinker Bill

Activity/Goals: grab-bag storytelling challenge; being creative, working collaboratively

Item: none (he'll give them the bejeweled chalice in the tavern at 10am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Honoré Valerius

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: cloudite ring

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: at the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Kazim Firestarter

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates

Item: ashes from an ancient fire

Times available (roughly): 11am-4pm

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Ursula Smirch

Activity/Goals: Smirch jingle challenge; being creative, working collaboratively

Item: filigree'd mule pendant

Times available (roughly): 12noon-8pm

Usually found: at the Smirches' shop

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Bonnie Stillwater

Activity/Goals: memorial challenge; develop party identity, articulate who they are & what they value, be creative

Item: riddle leading to the riddlestone ring

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Usually found: in the Inn at World's Edge, or wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Orion Wilde

Activity/Goals: charmed I'm sure challenge; learning names, getting comfortable, being creative and silly

Item: moonstone shards

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: at the prosecutor's pavilion

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Aria Morgan

Activity/Goals: philanthropy challenge for Brimstone; solving open-ended problems, taking moral responsibility

Item: eternity pendant

Times available (roughly): 8-10am, 12-3pm, 5-8pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: (mad) Lincroft Spence

Activity/Goals: mind of a madman challenge; working as a team, examining behaviors

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Item: folly dust

Times available (roughly): 4 - 8pm

Usually found: Lincroft Spence will be in front of the tavern whenever he's available for this challenge

Riddle Text:

*Underneath me you'll find what you need
(So once this you read, you had better take heed.)*

*Come ye and visit me; take what you wish from me.
(Dumb me! Crumb me! Attached to my tummy!)*

*Some rush over me, some rush under me.
(Blunder me! Wonder me! Find me and plunder me.)*

*I sit here so still; I see the world go by.
(From low! From high! Oh dear! Oh my!)*

*Seek underneath me for water or gold.
(But there's nowhere to hold; it's dreadfully cold!)*

*Five of us handsome Wood Brothers there be.
(Next-to-the-first is the one who is me!)*

*If you are clever then me you shall find
(Refined! Defined! Leave no one behind!)*

*And then as I've told you you'll get what you wish.
(A kiss! Amiss! Please don't take the fish!)*

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: riddlestone ring

Location to which party is directed: the "speaker" in the riddle is a bridge. The next-to-the-first of the five wooden bridges (that is, counting them in the order the stream passes under them) is Peaceful Crossing. The ring is attached to the underside of the bridge (near the "upstream" edge.)

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

[NOTE: This is a vision unlike any other, because this vision will be completed at the camp, and it describes the party.]

*The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens just a bit, to the dusky confines of a small room. A cabin, the walls rough-hewn wood. All around, they come awake in stages, these Wild Riders from a land of honey and grain. On one bed, a *NOUN* with *COLOR* hair. A *NOUN* with *NOUN* like *NOUN*. [Describe the Sythwan 2024 partymembers.] They are weary still but they waken, knowing there is much still to be done. At home, their people grow sick and weak, waiting for the golden notes which will make them hale and whole once more.*

*And around one bed, the loving touch of *SEASON* hangs warm and close. *PRONOUN* is waking, the sacred dreamdark still swirling about *PRONOUN* brow. *ONE SENTENCE PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF KEEPER PLUS MAYBE REFERENCE TO SATURDAY'S EVENTS* *PRONOUN* is the dreamer and the dream.*

The light is growing. The day will soon begin. But first there is this. It hangs shimmering on a wall, silver-perfect. A window, a looking-glass, a soul vision. They gather before it, these strangers who are now kin. They look curious into its cool glittering depths.

And then faces on the other side! A woman with hair like dark gold and man with a beard like pale silver. Their garish-bright clothing is... strange for not being strange? They peer back, through the glass. It is... a refraction? A reflection? None can say. But in a way that is hard but also easy to understand, you are they and they are you.

The dream begins to swirl up again, compelling and mysterious and sure. You have been called to this place. Adventure tugs your heart to action. You are needed here. And through the pane and through the pain, it is the same for them. Their hearts too were called. It is the same for them. And then the darkness grows and thickens and you can see no more.

Explanation: This vision shows the party from Sythwan looking through a mirror at Huxley and Quinoa and suggests that they are all adventurers of a certain kind.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the bejeweled chalice from Tinker Bill

Scheduled for: 10am Sunday

Location: Tinker Bill will meet the party in the tavern

Sunday morning final step: the ghost of Jon Golden and the ghostly chorus

Scheduled for: 10:15am Sunday

Location: the Graveyard

Uri-Kesh

Uri-Kesh's color is red; its crest is a tower.

Investigating the charge against: Eugenie Bright

Companion: Urving (Bill Sabram)

Mission letter:

My loyal subjects,

I write to ask your help, not on behalf of our fair duchy, but on a more personal matter. I do not take this step lightly, but at this point, my heavy heart sees no other option.

Perhaps some of you have already heard the rumors - and if so, I can now confirm that they are true: about three months ago, I came into possession of a very special lamp, a magical lamp that had a Genie inside it. He is a Genie of tremendous power. And now - alas!

- because of my foolishness, he has forsaken Uri-Kesh. But I am getting ahead of myself.

When I found the lamp, it had been long-dormant. He is a Genie of the type that can only be summoned once every one thousand years. It so happened that over a millennium had passed since anyone had chanced to rub the lamp. I remembered a story my grandmother had told me years before, about a Genie that lived inside just such a lamp. I had never believed the story, but for a lark, I spoke the magic words that would supposedly call him - "Ali-kazar Sembah Ahszewez!" You can imagine my surprise when he appeared before me! And thus it was that I was the lucky one who brought the Genie forth from his enchanted resting place.

As you are no doubt aware, Genies grant three wishes to their summoners. In answer to my first wish, the Genie completed – in less than a day! – a splendid new hospital in Mal Allaz, which as you know is one of Uri-Kesh's poorest cities. It was his magic that laid the mosaic floors and furnished the soft clean beds, but it was his generous heart that made him stay to help the newly-hired doctors spread word of the facility through even the worst of the slums.

I wanted time to consider my two remaining wishes, so the Genie accompanied me back to the palace in Aliz Bazaar. Every day, we walked together through the marketplace and he told me of the many things he has seen. I found him to be compassionate and wise and sensitive. But here the story grows dark.

We quarreled one day, and in the heat of anger, I foolishly spoke the words I have regretted ever since: "I wish you would just go away!" The moment I finished the words, the Genie disappeared back within the lamp. Less than ten minutes later, a thief entered the castle courtyard.

Spying the shining lamp, he grabbed it and hastily left the area. His actions were surely the work of my Genie's magic, designed to carry out my ill-spoken wish.

Since that sad day, my court sages have sought information high and low, trying to trace the whereabouts of the thief, a man called Shade. Day after day dragged by, but finally they have tracked his path to a tiny village called World's Edge in the duchy of Moreth. In the hope that the lamp can be found and retrieved to its rightful place in Uri-Kesh, I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to a gentleman who is temporarily in residence there named Bartleby Sprink. I met Mr. Sprink when he travelled through Uri-Kesh and know him to be a good and kind soul. I have asked him to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge. I trust my message will arrive before you do, and that he will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many of the citizens of World's Edge and may also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure that you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Uri-Kesh, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each one of you possesses unique skills which will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I pray for your rapid success. I do not worry that anyone else will have summoned the Genie because of the millennium restriction, but I fear that Shade will again have moved on before you reach your destination. The Genie is the only man I have ever loved and my only wish – if he too desires it – is that he return home to me.

Please, please find the lamp and bring it back to Uri-Kesh. With hope and gratitude,

Duchess Azalea Stargazer of Uri-Kesh

Contact: Bartleby Sprink

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

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2nd Friday night encounter: Umberto Dunn

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

3rd Friday night encounter: Tinker Bill

Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Esmerelda

Activity/Goals: grab-bag storytelling challenge; being creative, working collaboratively

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

Set Location: Roamer camp

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

Good people of Uri-Kesh,

We Roamers understand that you need to use our Lamp. At the request of Archon Mila Wayfarer, I have prepared this list of items – each highly-sought and valued by the Roamers – for which we are willing to make such a trade. As I'm sure you understand, the trade can occur only if all of the items are collected.

I wish you the best of luck, although I must warn you that we have sought many of these items ourselves, to no avail. Some are very costly, others extremely rare. You seem like a persistent bunch, however, and I See great things in store for all of you.

The items are as follows:

a sterling silver heart box

a love potion in a fancy bottle

a magical Cryptstone brandy-cork (This remarkable item, when used to cork a flask of normal water, will turn the flask's contents to finest brandy in a fortnight. Dimitri's always wanted one.)

an aquamarine looking-glass

a favor from the Court of Mirrors (no idea how you'll get this one, but Natasha is insistent)

a gilded conchshell

a pendant set with a fire-gem

a silver shield pendant

a bottle of callibogus rum (Malachi wants this. It is nasty stuff, but rare. To each his own, I suppose.)

Blessings upon all of you as the Rites of Remembrance is upon us,

Esmerelda

p.s. Does one of you have a lover with dark and sultry eyes? You had best not stray from home for too long. I am not certain this person is entirely faithful.

Rationale: Esmerelda wrote the note for the party before they came to ask for the lamp. The Sight is helpful like that.

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream is lit only by the cold silver of the crescent moon and the sparkle of the stars. The snow reflects back the deep blue of the sky. He makes his way through the grey and twisted trees. He is an old, old man now, he tells himself, but something in the way he moves suggests that his muscles and bones have not forgotten the ways of the warrior. It is his favorite kind of night, clear and crisp and very very cold.

He goes to sit beside her in the graveyard. Soon, he tells her. Soon I am coming to meet you after all this time. But in his heart he hears her voice, sweet as it has always been: Wait. Your time will come soon enough. And I will still be waiting for you.

From his old black satchel he pulls a box shaped like a heart. He opens it carefully and from it he takes a handful of dried rose petals, whisper-pink-colored, her favorite. Look what I have brought you, he says, laughing. A little of your Spring in the very heart of my Winter. And he scatters them atop the snow which is her blanket. Soon, he whispers to her again. Soon but not tonight.

And straightening, he closes the box again. Sterling silver, it is. Bright and untarnished and true. Even after all these years.

Explanation: The vision shows the sterling silver heart box and will (hopefully) lead the party to Obsidian.

1st Saturday morning encounter: Celeste Wilde

Activity/Goals: charmed I'm sure challenge; learning names, getting comfortable, being creative and silly

Item: aquamarine looking-glass

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, bring them back to the prosecutor's pavilion

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Diesel

Activity/Goals: test of 10 challenge; acknowledging different areas of expertise within the party

Item: none (he'll give them the callibogus rum in the tavern at 10:15am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 12noon-6pm

Usually found: in the cultists' compound in Greystone Clearing

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Lenora Graves

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: riddle leading to the silver shield pendant

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: at the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Kullis Toolforger

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates

Item: gilded conchshell

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Phineas Smirch

Activity/Goals: Smirch jingle challenge; being creative, working collaboratively

Item: love potion in a fancy bottle

Times available (roughly): 10am-1pm, 3-8pm

Usually found: at the Smirches' shop

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Milton Peacock

Activity/Goals: perfect square challenge; working as a team, communicating in unique scenarios

Item: pendant set with a fire gem

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm, 4-8pm

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Obsidian

Activity/Goals: philanthropy challenge for Stevie Peacock; solving open-ended problems, taking moral responsibility

Item: sterling silver heart box

Times available (roughly): 8am-12noon, 2-4pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Katherine Carmichael

Activity/Goals: double-mute charades challenge; collaborating with another party, communicating despite obstacles

Item: cryptstone brandy cork

Times available (roughly): 8-12noon, 2-4pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: the Court of Mirrors

Activity/Goals: gauntlet challenge; developing trust and rapport, practicing communication

Item: favor from the Court of Mirrors

Times available (roughly): 4-8pm

Usually found: in the Court of Mirrors

Riddle Text:

My dear Mr. Petrus Valerius,

Hoopahoppa! I am so enjoying our correspondence! I've hidden a little something for you – a silver shield pendant! I trust I haven't made the riddle too easy for you; have fun!

Yours, Stratego

*Giant Tom was tall and strong;
His silver sword was eight feet long,
And Worlogs fled from him because
Of just how very big he was.*

*Giant Tom, he liked his ale.
He drank it from a wooden pail.
And drunk or sober, he was mean
As any man the world had seen.*

*Giant Tom would stride around;
Said he: "You see, I run this town.
And no man dares oppose me. Why?
Because no man is strong as I."*

*"There's stronger things than men, that's true.
I must show I can best them too.
For it must undisputed be
No thing no where is strong as me."*

He left the houses on the hill;

*He walked and then he walked on still
Up toward the glen of wintry name
But first he stopped to stake his claim.*

*He swung his mighty sword around
And cut the grass and bushes down.
He cleared a space in which to stand
And mock the weak and fragile land.*

*Tom then laughed a mighty laugh
And sliced the ancient stone in half
Just to prove he could, and then
He sliced the halves in half again.*

*Said Giant Tom "It's plain to see
The earth itself's no match for me.
And lest there's doubt I'll prove I'm right
No living thing withstands my might."*

*And then he saw me standing tall
Resplendent in my gown of Fall
And seeing me, he laughed out loud,
But I stood unafraid and proud.*

*"You are no match for me," he said
And swung his sword above his head.
Deep in my breast he sunk the blade;
From heart to feet a gash he made.*

*The gentle wind was soft and calm;
It blew and swirled 'round Giant Tom.
And from the air Tom caught a chill
And soon he lay there, deathly ill.*

*A giant scar I still do bear;
An ancient wound in the place where
His giant sword did slice my skin
But couldn't touch my soul within.*

*And still the stones are strong and grey
There where the woodland creatures play
And still the rain falls soft and sweet
Upon the treasure at my feet.*

*And still I stand where then I stood
In that most green and lovely wood.
And still the wind blows softly on
But nothing's left of Giant Tom.*

*Let that my story's moral be:
That be you tall and strong as he,
You've weakness too. And don't forget
A gentle one may best you yet.*

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: the silver shield pendant

Location to which party is directed: This riddle item is in a slightly different spot than it was! The riddle mentions walking away from Hillcrest toward Winterhill Clearing, pausing along the way in Greystone Clearing. There is a tree on the edge of Greystone with a very long slice in it. The pendant used to be hidden in the slice, but it has grown too snug. The newly-added stanza references the “treasure at my feet”, the pendant is at the base of the tree, under some debris.

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, but only a little. Dusky-dim memories rise up mourning-black all around. Onyx and jet, grim and sedate. You see his hand upon the gleaming silver head of the cane. Respectable, yes, oh yes, and admired.

Outside the grand old house, the garden grows lush and wild and fertile. The velvet petals are soft, crimson-dark and beautiful above the treacherous razor thorns. They have fed well, these blustery blossoms, their sustenance poured like sweet wine down upon the ground that they may suckle and grow strong. It nurtures and nourishes, but the scent rises thickly toxic up, sweet like rot and ruin, of clotted choking death. Be careful. Keep your hands clean.

Inside the house, all is tranquil hushed. On the table, a crocheted doily, and upon the lace a bottle. The amontillado within glows warm amber, all mellow-gold. She has earned this, yes. The decanter open, the spirit breathes. It pours out tawny in the glass, caramel and lovely. But...

Wafting up invisible, the putrid stink. Death oh death, it hangs undetected in the afternoon air. The deed is done the cork replaced the spirit breathes no more and then the deceitful ebony mists rise up once again and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision suggests the toxic rose fertilizer in the bottle of sherry and possibly also ties this to Edwin Davies.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the callibogus rum from Diesel

Scheduled for: 10:15am Sunday

Location: Diesel will meet the party in the tavern

Sunday morning final step: Esmerelda (and, unbeknownst to the party, the Genie of the Lamp)

Scheduled for: 10:30am Sunday

Location: the Roamer camp

Waylon

Waylon's color is orange; its crest is a lion.

Investigating the charges against: Milton Peacock

Companion: Wade (James Surano)

Mission letter:

My most trusted subjects,

I write to you now of a disturbing incident which took place over five years ago. It began with a small but extremely powerful and ruthless group of casters who decided that they could - through a mixture of magical and mundane violence - seize control of the Waylonian Casters' Guild, thereby achieving a very large measure of wealth and political influence. The duchy militia was called in to restore the peace. The details do not matter; suffice it to say that for various tactical reasons, it was determined that a surprise nighttime attack by the militia would result in the least casualties to both sides.

And so it would have, if the attack had actually been a surprise.

Instead, it was clear that the casters had expected the militia's actions, and that they had adequate advance warning to stage an elaborate and effective ambush. Over half of the duchy's elite guard - including my own son Mithran - were killed in the ensuing rout.

The group of casters was subsequently subdued and tried for their crimes. It was also plainly apparent that someone else - someone outside their organization - had informed them of the exact details of the militia's plan. We found evidence that someone was compensated very well for this act of treachery. And we found enough clues to give us a very strong idea who this someone was.

Her name was - is, rather - Ursula Smirch. She was working as supplier to the guardhouse, and in a position to learn much, apparently. Mrs. Smirch was accused of selling this information to the casters, and she stood trial for this crime. But to all our queries, she managed to provide an answering explanation. Since the evidence against her was very strong, the court allowed the casting of Truth magic upon her. Under the power of the magic, she declared her innocence and was subsequently released. She and her family left the duchy not long after.

You must understand that I am greatly pained by the loss of my son and the others who died needlessly. Nevertheless, I would shudder to pursue a person whose innocence our courts had determined. But in this particular case, I know in my heart that Ursula Smirch is guilty. I could see in her eyes that she was laughing at us. I do not know how she managed to defeat our truth-magic, but I am quite sure that she did.

Recently, I have learned of an obscure and difficult spell, called Testimony. It is said to be very powerful.

The Smirch family, I have learned, now makes their living in the duchy of Moreth, in a tiny village called World's Edge. In the hope that this arcane magic can finally bring Ursula to justice, I ask you now to journey to that distant village. I have already sent a message to Lord Santiago West Valerius. Lord Santiago is himself Waylonian by birth, although he has since married into the family of Baron Honoré Valerius, of World's Edge. I have met Lord Santiago on several occasions and am confident he can be trusted absolutely. You may speak openly to him and to any member of the Valerius family. I have asked Lord Santiago to meet you when you arrive in World's Edge; I trust my message will arrive before you do, and that he will be expecting you.

I fear I can tell you little about the village to which you journey, save that it is tiny and provincial. It is the sort of place in which the old ways are still very much alive. Probably you will find it to be pastoral and rather dull. Regardless, there are of course dangers present on any journey. This is the case everywhere, but in Moreth – an area of unusually potent magical energy – it is especially true. Truly, there is no telling what you might encounter there. Protect yourselves and each other.

I realize that this journey will take you away from home during the upcoming Rites of Remembrance, and I thank you for agreeing to this mission. Although it is of course possible to observe this sacred occasion and honor our beloved dead wherever we might find ourselves, it is not lost on me what I am asking of you. Know that both your service and your sacrifice are greatly appreciated.

On your quest, you shall no doubt encounter many of the citizens of World's Edge and may also meet travelers from other parts of Lyria. I am sure that you know how important it is that you act as ambassadors of Waylon, leaving all you meet speaking well of our fair duchy. If anyone will know more about the spell of Testimony, surely it will be someone in that most magical land of Moreth.

The six of you have been carefully selected for this mission. Each you possesses unique skills that will prove invaluable during this quest; remember this when you encounter hardship along the way. I wish you much luck. I pray that your actions may at last bring justice to a situation where there has been only deceit and sorrow.

With deepest gratitude,

Duke Gareth Orion of Waylon

Contact: Santiago West Valerius

Activity/Goals: introducing the party to the companion, getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

2nd Friday night encounter: Fenwick Michaels

Activity/Goals: getting comfortable interacting in the "otherworld"

Item: none

3rd Friday night encounter: Bailey

Activity/Goals: walking to their set location / experiencing combat

Item: none

4th Friday night encounter: Evelyn

Activity/Goals: perfectly good bucket challenge; practicing brainstorming, building on partymates' ideas

Item: paper listing the items the party will need to acquire (as well as the info about who to get them from)

Set Location: Crabtree & Evelyn's

Paper listing the needed items/explaining how to use them:

Hello, dearest Evelyn! I was so excited (and more than a little surprised) when you wrote that you had gotten married! My dear, your letter was woefully short on details. You must tell me everything! What does she look like? Is she delightful in every possible way? I hope she is not making excessive... how shall I say?... demands upon you.

All here is well. Tabitha II has been sick with some sort of tummy trouble and Mr. Flufferman cut his poor little paw on a rough stone, but other than that, the whole family is well. Mouser McMouserson and Puffball both wanted me to ask you when their Auntie Evelyn is planning another visit?

I have been busy at work recataloging all the spellbooks, components, etc. They've hired a series of new girls to help out, but honestly, the handwriting on these younger set of casters... Well, suffice it to say that I don't know what they're doing on the weekends at school, but it's not practicing their penmanship as we used to do!

I saw an interesting spell cast last month. It lacked the finesse with the casting that they used to drill into us, but it was nevertheless very interesting. It was called Testimony, and used on someone reputed to be otherwise immune to Truth-magics. Lacking in diction the caster may have been but it certainly was effective after it was cast!

Anyway, components for the thing were

- one bottle of elderberry wine*
- a jade egg*
- a quantity of folly dust*
- a bit of water from the Talian Sea*
- a skull cup*
- bloodroot essence*
- an agate orb*
- a smokestone jar*
- an eternity mirror*

They gathered up six people for the casting, and none of them needed to be a caster; although it certainly wouldn't hurt if they were, of course. One held the egg, another the jar, a third the orb and yet another the mirror. The seawater, bloodroot essence and the folly dust were poured into the wine, and the whole group walked around the bottle, saying "Love above beauty / Faith above hope / Truth above all / Veritas veritas veritas"

That served to charge the wine, apparently, and it was poured into the cup and given to the target. Only the first person to drink it is affected by the spell. Really, it was all very interesting.

I heard from Missa and Katharina that they'll be at Reunion next year. Are you going? Let me know, because I'm not going if you're not going!

I'll close now as Princess PurrPurr is asking Mommy for her supper. Please give my best to your bride!!!! Ann

Rationale: This is a letter to Evelyn from another caster who's an old friend.

Keeper's Saturday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens... but only partially. The sky above you is divided, equal shares for the night and the day. The sun and moon wait, and watch. She stands in the space in between, belonging to them both and neither and yet also wholly her own. Her hair and her skin are inked all the colors of the rainbow and she contains multitudes.

The smoke from the trash fires billows up toxic and for a second she is obscured. When it clears, you see her again. Her eyes are fierce upon you and her jaw is set ferocious but the color is drained from her. She is ash and eggshell, silent and watching. Her gaze never leaves you and she raises the cup to her lips and drinks, slow and deep. You cannot look away from her, but her lovely skin fades paler and paler and then blows away like dust in the chill wind. She is watching you still, her visage now only chalky bone, her absent eyes still somehow upon you. She raises her jet-black mug and as the whiskey pours pale into her skeletal mouth, the dream-dappled smoke rises once more and then you see no more.

Explanation: The vision shows the skull cup and (hopefully!) leads the party to Equinoxious.

1st Saturday morning encounter: Cameron Light-Astor

Activity/Goals: what-tree-would-you-be? challenge; learning how others see you, being creative

Item: water from the Talian Sea

Set Locations: meet party in tavern, bring them back to the FireWaterEarthAirBnB in Rosedale

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Dimitri

Activity/Goals: BS! challenge; recounting fun adventures, being creative

Item: none (he'll give them the elderberry wine in the tavern at 9:30am Sunday)

Times available (roughly): 1-8pm

Usually found: in the Roamer camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Carmina Bordeaux

Activity/Goals: combat teamwork challenge; becoming more comfortable with combat, working as a team

Item: eternity mirror

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Usually found: at the Valerius house

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Kable Worldwatcher

Activity/Goals: cup of insight challenge; learning about partymates

Item: bloodroot essence

Times available (roughly): 8am-2pm

Usually found: in the Makai camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Solomon Stillwater

Activity/Goals: memorial challenge; develop party identity, articulate who they are & what they value, be creative

Item: riddle leading to the jade egg

Times available (roughly): 8-10am, 12noon-4pm

Usually found: in the Inn at World's Edge, or wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Dusty Peacock

Activity/Goals: perfect square challenge; working as a team, communicating in unique scenarios

Item: smokestone jar

Times available (roughly): 10am-3pm

Usually found: in the Peacock Family Singers' camp

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Equinoxious

Activity/Goals: test of 10 challenge; acknowledging different areas of expertise within the party

Item: skull cup

Times available (roughly): 10am-4pm

Usually found: in the cultists' compound in Greystone Clearing

Saturday unscheduled encounter: Geneva Sprink

Activity/Goals: what a surprise! challenge; creative problem-solving of open-ended problem

Item: agate orb

Times available (roughly): 8-10am, 12noon-4pm, 6-8pm

Usually found: wandering

Saturday unscheduled encounter: (mad) Lincroft Spence

Activity/Goals: mind of a madman challenge; working as a team, examining behaviors

Item: folly dust

Times available (roughly): 4 - 8pm

Usually found: Lincroft Spence will be in front of the tavern whenever he's available for this challenge

Riddle Text:

Dear Engelbert,

Thank you so much for the lovely tea-cozy. So pretty! How thoughtful you are to remember my birthday!

Things here are much the same as during your last visit. We had dinner over at your cousin Alice's again and your father ate too much blackberry pie, which as you know pains his stomach. I tried to warn him of this but of course he did not listen. Alice's pie is good but she oversugars it, I think. But of course that is just my opinion; some people probably like it so awfully sweet.

Alice is expecting again! Four children in five years! Her mother is of course so proud, and who wouldn't be with so many beautiful grandchildren?

Darling, a young man as wonderful as you shouldn't still be without a wife. Surely there must be some girls there in World's Edge. I am so hoping for some little grandbabies, and I'm not getting any younger, you know. I remember my grandmother always used to say that if you sleep with a jade egg under your pillow, you'll dream of the one you're going to marry. To find a jade egg, you just say this little riddle and it tells you where to look:

Oh, I am a man dressed all in red;
I eat as much as I am fed
And I'm always wanting more!
Yes, I'm always wanting more!

*My lovely daughter, she wears grey;
But sadness! She has gone away!
And won't come back e'er more.
No, she won't be back e'er more.*

*Go to the place where the dead men lie
And the wind blows low and the ravens cry
And don't go too much more
No, don't go too much more.*

*Climb to the top of the tiny hill
Soon my riddling words will still
And I won't say too much more!
No, I won't say too much more!*

*Find the place where I made my bed
Now that I am long since dead
And am not there no more,
No I'm not there no more.*

*And if you my fine words do heed
Then there you'll find just what you need,
All you could want and more!
It's all you want and more!*

Well, your father is wanting his dinner; so I shall draw to a close now. Do think about what I said, won't you, sweetheart? And if you'd like me to introduce you to someone, you know to just say the word. The McPherson girl is so nice, and a handy seamstress too. Thank you again for the cozy.

All my love, Mama

Goals: encouraging close observation of natural surroundings, practicing puzzle-solving

Item: jade egg

Location to which party is directed: Next to the graveyard ("where the dead men lie") is a little hill. At the top of it is a fire-circle. The jade egg is in the middle of the fire-circle under some burned wood.

Keeper's Sunday morning dream:

The darkness of the dream swirls around you and then lightens, lightens, to the hot glistening gold of midday. The sand burns beneath your feet and the sun glitters, tricksy. Nothing is as it seems.

Far in the distance you see it, and you race in that direction. Respite, in this dry and deceptive place. Lush green and saturated blue, this beautiful oasis. The birds wait around the water. Exotic and lovely, their eyes shine in the desert brightness. They crowd together - a flock, a flight, a family - and their emerald and sapphire feathers ruffle in the welcome shade. As one, they raise their faces to sing and then dip their beaks to drink.

But what is this? Not an oasis. Only a mirage. They are not truly birds, they are no true family, and there is but sand here to drink. Nothing is as it seems. They lift their heads again in the arid air, their song a shriek of confusion and betrayal, and they scatter.

She comes into the clearing so quiet you almost miss her. She is all things beautiful and bountiful. Her gown is as white as the shimmering sand, her hair and jewels are the lustrous gold of the sun, but her eyes are the cold sweet blue of the far-distant ocean. Those cool knowing eyes meet yours. She lifts a pitcher and her gaze never leaves you as she begins to pour. The water runs out upon the thirsty sand. Surely her pitcher cannot hold such a flood, and yet in truth, the waters begin to pool. The birds turn their heads, unsure. They want to be called back into the fold. Maybe the deceit and the truth are one and the same. Maybe she has enough to give, if only there is willingness to take. Maybe things are indeed what they seem, and as you ponder, the darkness rises once more and you see no more.

Explanation: This vision suggests there's something deceptive going on among the Peacocks - specifically, Milton's confession - and hopefully also raises the idea of Miscellania providing the replacement money.

Sunday morning penultimate step: getting the elderberry wine from Dimitri

Scheduled for: 9:30am Sunday

Location: Dimitri will meet the party in the tavern

Sunday morning final step: giving the Testimony wine to Ursula Smirch

Scheduled for: 9:45am Sunday

Location: in Smirch & Smirch