Intro

*OPEN IN A CEMETERY. White Mage (WM) is standing in front of a tombstone. Dialogue box appears to describe tombstone inscription.*

Yorel

Level 2 Henchman

Joined The Party: Lunes 7, 1409

Left The Party: Lunes 10, 1409

XP: 2714

Achievements Unlocked: Redshirt

*WM mourns.*

Oh, Yorel. You left the party so soon. You were gallant, brave…young. So many what-ifs remain from our adventure. What if Thief didn’t steal all those kills from you? Another level would have given you more HP…perhaps enough to survive that goblin ambush. What if Paladin would have used that Defense Up potion on you? He had ninety-nine of them! But noooo: 'Don't waste them here, we might need all of them for the boss battle.’ And guess what? We didn't! Such a waste…you were an expendable resource to the party, but a friend to me.

*Interruption dialogue box from left side of screen.*

You there: halt!

*WM turns to face left. Three guards approach, two in formation behind a leader. They stop near WM and draw weapons. WM is confused.*

Lana? Tamalia? Darthen? Whatever is the matter?

*Lana, one of the two in the back, steps forward one square.*

Miss White Mage…I’m so sorry, but—

*Darthen (leader) interrupts.*

You, White Mage, are under arrest, by order of the Magistrate!

*WM faces right then left, then right and left again.*

Me? Under arrest? Has Thief put you to this jest?

*Darthen steps forward one square*.

I, Darthen, Captain of the Guard, never jest. Put your staff on the ground…nice and easy, no sudden moves and no incantations.

*WM backs up one square, growing scared. Darthen moves forward one square in response.*

Resisting arrest, are you?

*WM shakes her head.*

But I’m not resisting—

*Darthen commands.*

Resistance is futile! Lana…Tamilia, detain the witch!

*WM backs up another square. Lana and Tamalia rush forward to either side of WM. WM pleads.*

Lana…we were in a Girlranger troop together.

*Lana lowers her head.*

Please, White Mage…don’t make this harder than it already is.

*WM beckons to Tamilia.*

Tamilia? We used to farm XP together!

*Tamalia lowers her head.*

Please, White Mage…don’t make this harder than it already is.

*WM*

By the Gods, I demand an explanation! I know my rights!

*Darthen laughs.*

You are under arrest, White Mage…for murder!

*WM faces right then left.*

Murder?

*Lana steps forward.*

They say…they say …

*SPLASH TITLE*

WHITE MAGE KILLED A GUY

*Screen scrolls down to WM in a jail cell, standing in the center of the cell. She faces left, then right. She runs to the cell door and screams.*

Oh no she didn’t!

*CUT TO TAVERN. The final parts of a song are playing from a Bard’s guitar, who stands in one corner near a fireplace. Several sprites dance in an open dance area near the performance. Beyond that patrons eat at tables and on the far end is a bar with some weary patrons drinking. Once the song ends, text box appears.*

For this adventure, you will be adopting the role of the talented bard in the corner. Your bard is a struggling cover artist, who is thirsty for adventure but so scrawny and weak and incapable of slaying dragons or saving princesses that he lives his heroic dreams vicariously through others’ music. Name him well, Player 1, for a bodacious (although allegedly homicidal) white mage’s future depends on your success.”

*Cut to Character Name Screen.*

*After name is input, cut back to tavern. Text box appears.*

(name selected), the Cover-Artist Bard, has created a party of one!

*A previously-dancing sprite approaches.*

So, like, do you have any original songs, or is it all just covers?

*Bard responds*

I have an original demo coming out soon! Sign up for the carrier-pigeon list and you’ll get it for free when it’s released. There may be some deluge of advertising spam involved, but it'll be worth the trouble!

*Dancer asks*

When is that going to be?

*Bard.*

As soon as I can find a drummer, a singer… and a label. How ‘bout a rousing cover? Anyone up for a soulful rendition of Stairway to Valhalla?

*Bartender shouts from across the room.*

Not in my bar! Read the sign above the mantle, song-spinner: No Stairway to Valhalla allowed on premises. Trespassers will be shot. Survivors will be shot again.

*Enter a band of 9 adventurers (1 wizard, 4 halflings, a dwarf, an elf, two humans). They sit at a large table near the bar.* *Player can now walk around the bar and talk to people.*

*NON-EVENT DIALOGUES*

*Male Dancer 1:* Thanks bro, that song you played is certain to get that red-head home with me tonight.

*Female Dancer 1: Ugg, that smelly oaf keeps fawning over me. I’m just here for Girl’s Night Out!*

*Male Dancer 2: Lovely performance, mate!*

*Female Dancer 2: Are you looking for a roadie? I’ve always wanted to travel with a band!*

*Female Dancer 3: I love to come here every night and just twerk it, twerk it, twerk it!*

*Bar patron 1: You know, with each ale, you sound better and better. Ain’t makin’ ya prettier though.*

*Bar patron 2: zzzzzzz….hm? I’m good! I’m not a lightweight! I’ll drink you under the table! zzzzzzz*

*Bar patron 3: I come here to drank away my sorrowses. Done lost ma wife, ma kids n’ ma home cause I can’t find no job that pays a decent GP. They say I need to work on ma edumacation. I don’t know what that is, but when I find it, imma get me a good job.*

*Bartender: Good crowd tonight! Winter is good for business!*

*Diner 1: They say them goblins tried to high-tail away from this town, but a band of heroes hunted them down. Thank goodness for heroes.*

*Diner 2: We can’t believe the news that Paladin, mightiest warrior around, died up in the mountains. Whoever killed him just killed our hope.*

*Diner 3: Hide yo wives! Hide yo kids! Hide yo cats! Goblins be plunderin' everything in these lands!*

*Talking to any of the 9 triggers an exchange.*

*Wizard.*

Waiter…ale for my friends here. Oolong tea for myself.

*Bard.*

I’m not a waiter, sir wizard. I’m \_\_\_\_, the bard. Are you adventurers?

*Wizard.*

No, simply migrants passing through.

*Dwarf.*

Oh yes, we are adventurers! We are on a grand, secret mission to save the world! We are going to shove our boots up the crack of Mt.—

*Wizard.*

Shut up, intolerable dwarf!

*Bard.*

Wonderful! I see you have nine in your company already. Can’t see you hardly noticing a tenth among you. I will add my boot to your mission! Oh, I’ve always wanted to go on an adventure. Imagine the heroic songs of our deeds that other bards will write for me to play!

*The company laughs. Wizard speaks.*

You spoony bard. We have no use for your ditty’s. With these worthless halflings, it’s already an escort mission without adding another completely unskilled NPC to the watch list. Now go— fetch ale and tea for real heroes.

*Hurt, bard slowly walks to a table that is empty by the fireplace and sulks. Enter an old priest, who approaches bard and asks to sit down. Bard nods. Man sits down and orders ale. Bard is surprised.*

I didn’t think priests were allowed to drink.

*Priest*.

Oh, but this is a dreadful day, an occasion that only ale can pass away. My prize student, a white mage of enormous kindness and grand beauty, has been accused of a murder she could not have committed. She’s not capable of it. But she will be executed if found guilty.

*Bard.*

What happened?

*Priest.*

She went up the mountains, with a paladin, a thief, and a sorcerer. To hunt goblins…

*Bard.*

Stop right there, old man. I know this girl! She was just in a few nights ago. She was the only patron to tip my jar. She thought my music was beautiful. Her heart was pure…surely you can hire a rules lawyer and defend this angel.

Old Man.

We priests take a Vow of Poverty. We do not have the money to hire a rules lawyer. She is doomed!

Bard.

You weep prematurely, good man. You have just retained one!

*Old Man.*

I have?

*Bard.*

I, \_\_\_, the bard, thinks the execution of such a wonderful woman is unforgivable!

*Old Man.*

Uh…I appreciate the thoughts, lad, but have you ever practiced law before?

Bard.

So such details matter at a time like this? Put down your ale! We have to prove white mage killed no guy!

*Both rush out of the bar.*

*CUT TO COURTROOM. White Mage is handcuffed in front of a three-judge panel: A Black Mage, a Monk, a Paladin.* *At a stand near her is the prosecuting attorney and Darthen. Dialogue box from Monk.*

You understand, White Mage, with full cognizance, the criminal charges the State has brought before you? That the State is charging you with premeditated player-killing in the first degree and reckless invocation in the first degree, related to the matter of Paladin’s death in your party’s assault on the goblin horde? And that Paladin’s insurance company has the right to bill the responsible party in the amount of 50,000GP to cover the cost of material spell components consumed to perform a resurrection?

Additionally, at the time of your arrest you were in violation of an ordinance enacted while you were in the mountains. Although you had no way of knowing this law existed, ignorance of the law is no defense. Accordingly, you are further charged with brandishing a staff in public without an open-carry permit. At the time of your arrest, you also had in your possession a schedule II restricted herb.

*White Mage bristles.*

An open-carry permit for healing staves? That’s lunacy! And I have a healing license for that herb!

*Paladin Judge.*

Another outburst like that and we will hold you in contempt of court!

*Monk continues.*

The counts against you, White Mage, are of grave consequence. For player-killing, if found guilty, you face penalties up to, but not to exceed, death. For reckless invocation, you face penalties up to, but not to exceed, two years imprisonment. For open carry violations, you face penalties up to, but not to exceed, 5,000GP. For possession of an illegal substance, you face a mandatory twenty-year prison sentence.

You have the right to move to trial, provided you can afford a Rules Lawyer. The prosecution has offered a plea-bargain. If you plead guilty, right now, to all forementioned charges, the tribunal will levy a generous sentence of five years imprisonment, five years house arrest, and a 25,000GP fine. Failure to pay the fine will result in further imprisonment and fines, likely resulting in a lifestyle of repeat bench warrants that ruins your life and permanently victimizes you with antiquated incarceration laws.

*Black Mage Judge:*

Having heard all of this, White Mage, how do you plead?

*White Mage is overwhelmed.*

I…I didn’t kill anybody…but I can’t afford a Rules Lawyer! Your plea bargain is a demon’s offer; you would destroy my life more slowly and painfully than a real noose would. I have no choice but to plead…to plead—

*Bard enters the courtroom.*

My client pleads only innocence!

*Judges, prosecutor, WM all turn in surprise. Bard runs next to WM. Bard talks.*

Milady, tales of false allegations against you have spread throughout the land. I, \_\_\_\_, will represent you against these horrible slanderers.

*WM:*

You will?

*Bard:*

Well…I’ll give it my best shot, at least!

*Prosecutor:*

Objection!He doesn’t have the perquisites to adopt the Rules Lawyer Prestige Class! Level 5 Thief, he is not! Level 3 Illusionist, he is not! Level 3 Blackguard, he is not! Lawful Evi—I mean, Lawful NEUTRAL, he is not! He’s just a wannabe bard from the tavern riffraff.

*Paladin Judge:*

Nothing in our laws require representation by a certified Rules Lawyer. Magistrates?

*Monk Judge:*

Objection overruled. The minstrel may stand in as a Rules Lawyer. It is the defendant’s right to choose her fate, no matter how reckless the choice.

*Black Mage Judge:*

It would be a mockery of our venerated judicial system. Objection sustained.

*Paladin Judge:*

One judge sustains; two judges overrule. The bard may represent the defendant.

*Bard:*

We will move this case to trial and prove this white mage’s innocence!

*Monk Judge:*

It is decided. State vs. White Mage moves to Trial. Trial to be scheduled one week from today.

*Black Mage Judge:*

So be it. However…given the severity of the charges against the defendant, I deem her a flight risk. I move to keep White Mage in jail. Set the bail to…1,000,000GP!

*Prosecutor:*

You don’t stand a chance against a certified Rules Lawyer! You will lose and she will die for her crimes!

*Bard:*

We shall dual, you and I, on the potted battlefields of rhetoric! When White Mage goes free, I will write my first non-cover song about your fallacious demise.

END OF INTRO.