

An Original Audio Drama and Fun Dinner Party Idea

HOST YOUR OWN

OLD TIME RADIO DRAMA

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FANTASY NOIR EPISODE #04

On the
FENCE

BY PHILIP CRAIG ROBOTHAM
ILLUSTRATIONS BY MIYUKIKO

WEIRDWORLDSTUDIOS.COM

**HOST YOUR OWN “OLD TIME RADIO DRAMA”
ON THE FENCE**

FANTASY NOIR — EPISODE #4

An original audio drama and fun dinner party idea

by Philip Craig Robotham

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<http://www.weirdworldstudios.com> or through select, online book retailers.

In this episode:

Claire Templeton, crime reporter, often wonders what she sees in her boyfriend, Tully Bing. Being bookish and timid, he just isn’t her type. But when the information Tully provides about the black market puts her in touch with a fence who is quickly murdered by means that can only be described as magical, she and Tully are drawn into a brand new faery plot to destroy the city, sever and isolate the mortal realm, and pave the way for a faery takeover. With her sometime ally, Tony Wells, effectively neutralized by a clever faery plot, Claire finds herself working for and with the High Queen of the Realm of Darkness. Unfortunately the Queen tops Claire’s list of suspects with regard to who’s behind all the mayhem. Can Claire solve the case and save the day before her home town becomes a giant crater? Tune in to “On the Fence” and listen as the mystery unfolds.

Episodes in the Host Your Own “Old Time Radio Drama” series are designed to provide a fun dinner party experience for 6–8 participants. Read along, taking on the role of one or more of the characters in the story, and listen as the exciting drama unfolds. This is the theater of the mind, where the special effects are only limited by your imagination, and your participation will build a memory that you’ll treasure for years to come.

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HOSTING A RADIO PLAY AND DINNER PARTY — THE ESSENTIALS

You hold in your hands almost everything you need for an entertaining evening of “Old Time Radio” Adventure. These instructions tell you all you’ll need to know in order to host the evening but, as such things can be a bit dry and dull, we recommend you jump forward and give the [script](#) a read first. Don’t worry, we’ll still be here when you get back and, once you have a feel for the goal of the evening, you’ll feel a bit more inspired to tackle the organizational stuff.

Okay, back with us? Can you imagine the fun you’ll have as you and your friends or family gather to read through the script? Great! But of course there’s some work to do first. You’ll need to invite your guests and prepare food etc. (or dial the pizza guy if you prefer). And you’ll also need to have a sufficient number of our original scripts on hand for all the participants. We have deliberately priced this product to make the purchase of the additional scripts easy and affordable (and our prices compare very favorably with other “dinner party” products on the market). Naturally, we’d prefer it if you purchased a script each for all the participants, but everything will still work out fine if you share one script between two. Be warned though, trying to pass a single script around the table tends to make for a frustrating evening all round.

A quick note on the story

Each of the original scripts in this series was designed to stand alone. While occasional reference may be made to events preceding the current story it is not necessary to know of these events in order to enjoy the current episode itself. For those who are interested a short summary of any story elements contained in previous episodes is included in the production notes.

Guests

The key to hosting a fun evening of dining and drama lies in choosing your mix of guests. You need to invite people who share a general sense of fun, a willingness to try something new, and enough of a sense of humor to laugh at themselves if they fluff a line or mess up a sound effect etc. Great acting skill is not required, but enthusiasm will add to the energy and enjoyment of the evening. The real key is the willingness of your guests to take part and enjoy themselves.

We recommend you include no more than eight participants (this being a manageable number to seat around most people’s dinner tables). There are a good many more characters than this in the script of course, but many of them only deliver a line or two during the course of the evening, and people tend to have more fun if they can read a number of parts each. In the days of live radio performance it was quite common for actors to read more than one part.

Before you send out the invitations it would probably be a good idea to read the script through once yourself. The script you hold in your hand is a 1930s-style radio play featuring a “magical” Fantasy Noir. If you are thinking of inviting someone who is bored with anything less than an intense family drama or who does not respond well to flights of fantasy and a studied disregard for gritty realism, you may want to think again.

While these scripts were written with a grown-up audience in mind, my own kids absolutely love them and they work quite well as part of a birthday party — though with kids you’ll want to include some high energy activities as well (probably between acts).

Below is a sample invitation that you can use as a template for your own.

You might want to allocate roles before the evening, or alternatively, you might want to divvy up the roles on the night. At the end of this script you will find casting sheets that give the participants a quick sense of each role. Send them out ahead of time with the invitations.

The two lead roles are large enough to be managed by a single participant each. The rest of the roles should be divided among the remaining guests. Be sure to pre-read the script to get a sense of which characters interact with one another in each scene. This will help you avoid situations where one guest is effectively talking to him or herself during the performance.

The preparation guide below assumes you will divide up the roles on the night while everyone enjoys some nibbles.

Food

It wouldn’t be a dinner party without food. We’ve provided a [genuine 1930s menu](#) (with recipes) that you can use to add a little authenticity to the evening, but (if you’re not comfortable with cooking) beer and pizza will do just as well (or juice and sausage rolls in the case of a kid’s party).

Preparation

With regard to the dinner itself we have supplied a suggested schedule of play as follows:

Arrival, appetizers, and assignment of roles (if not pre-assigned)

1st Act is read followed by Main Course

2nd Act is read followed by Dessert

3rd and final Act is read followed by Coffee etc.

Sample Invitation

The invitation below is a suggestion which can be copied onto more formal invitation paper, sent as a simple email, used as a model for an invitation of your own devising, or ignored altogether and replaced with something totally different.

Host Your Own Old Time Radio Drama

Dear [Guest's name(s)]

On [date goes here] at [time goes here] "Weirdworld Studios" brings you... "On the Fence" — a 1930s-style radio drama in three acts... starring (yourselves in all the major and minor speaking roles)* [optionally — with sound effects to add to the thrilling atmosphere].

Tune in as Tony Wells and Claire Templeton embark on their fourth published adventure, facing off against an insane faery who wishes to destroy the bridge between the realms and take over the mortal world. This is the fourth action-packed installment of Weirdworld Studios' blockbuster "Fantasy Noir" serial.

Thrill to cheesy dialog and moustache-twirling villains.

Shudder at implausible yet oddly satisfying plot twists.

And Groan when the villain is finally revealed to be none other than...

...but that would be telling!

Arriving promptly at [time is repeated here], you will receive the scripts, and the roles will be divided up and assigned over pre-dinner snacks and drinks.

The first Act will follow and conclude with the main course.

The second Act will follow the main course and conclude with dessert.

The final Act will follow dessert and conclude with coffee and tea.

This performance is guaranteed** to contain all the thrills and chills you have come to expect from Weirdworld Studios, so be sure to tune in for this "one night only" event...

We hope you can make it.

[Your name(s) here]

*The evening to which you are invited involves participation in a unique form of dinner theater (and yes, there will be food), recreating the ambiance of old time radio and performing/reading through an original radio script in "Old Time Radio" style. Being a play "for the ears" rather than the eyes, no costumes or props are required (though feel free to dress in 1930s style if it will help you get in the mood) [Optionally attach the [costume advice](#) in this book].

**Management takes all care to provide an entertaining evening and guarantees to fully recompense attendees to the value of \$500.00 per head if fun is not had. This warranty is valid for the entirety of 1932 and expires at Midnight on New Year's Eve of that year. No correspondence will be entered into thereafter and anyone dissatisfied with the script (having been fully apprised of its dubious merits) deserves what they get. Should you feel the need to place a specific complaint in writing we suggest you post it in the small round receptacle marked "bills" where it will be attended to on any day that does not end in a "y." Thank you — The Management.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Suggested Menu and Recipes

These themed recipes are for dishes cooked during the 1930s.

For the appetizer — Puckish Orange Goblin Biscuits (Serves 8)

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons shortening
- 5 teaspoons baking powder
- 16 small lumps sugar
- 1 orange, juice and grated rind
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk

Method: Sift dry ingredients together, cut in shortening with a knife, and add enough milk to make a soft dough. Roll out three-fourths inch (2 cm) thick, cut out with small round cutter, and place close together in greased pan. Grate the yellow rind from the orange over the biscuits. Squeeze the juice, dip a lump of sugar into the juice, and press into center of each biscuit. Bake in hot oven.

For the main course — Pork of the Darkened Realm (Serves 8)

- 3 pounds (1.5 kg) pork shoulder
- 2 onions
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ketchup
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon tabasco sauce
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon chili powder
- 1 cup water

Method: Use heavy pot with fitting lid. Put half the pork in the bottom and cover with a layer of thinly sliced onions. Combine ketchup, salt, tabasco sauce, chili powder, and water, and pour half this sauce over the meat and onions. Put in another layer of meat and onions, and the remainder of sauce. Cover pot and bake for two hours in a moderate oven (350°F/175°C).

As a side dish — Black Market Sweet Potatoes and Carrots (Serves 8)

- 8 carrots
- honey
- olive oil
- 300 g (11 oz) grated cheese
- salt to taste

Method: Choose the most tender, young sweet carrots, scrape, and boil until tender. Cut lengthwise in halves, dip in thick honey, and place in a baking dish with the bottom thinly covered with fine olive oil. Sprinkle thickly with grated cheese and salt, and place in a hot oven and brown for about 15 minutes.

- 8 sweet potatoes
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup walnuts or pecans
- $1\frac{1}{3}$ teaspoon sugar
- 16 marshmallows
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cream
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons butter
- grated nutmeg

Method: Peel and boil sweet potatoes until tender. Drain, place in a mixing bowl, and mash with butter, sugar, salt, nutmeg, and cream. Chop the nuts and add to the potato mixture. Spread mixture in a square cake tin; lay marshmallows, close together, and bake in a hot oven until brown.

For dessert — Enchanted Almond Rice Custard (Serves 8)

- 2 cups raw rice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 quart (950 ml) fresh milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 egg yolks
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup roasted ground almonds

Method: Wash rice, mix with milk, and allow to stand for three hours. Place in double boiler to cook until rice is well done. Then add well-beaten yolks, almonds, salt, sugar, and cinnamon. Stir and continue to cook for 15 minutes. Divide into dessert dishes; cool, and then place on ice. Sprinkle with chopped pistachio nuts.

Costumes

Costumes aren't necessary but can add a lot of fun to the evening. 1930s-period costumes are also pretty easy to put together.

In the 1930s women wore their hair short or up in a discreet bun, often with a headband and a feather, or a large brooch for adornment. Young women wore tight-fitting dresses which extended to the calves, often without sleeves and the shoulders bare except for straps. Dresses were often fringed. More curvaceous women wore layered dresses (also fringed). The accessories are what sell the outfit, however. Long gloves, a long-stemmed cigarette holder, and a feather boa are the things which really make a costume stand out as belonging to the era.

Men's clothing was also very distinctive. The pin-striped suit is one of the most clichéd and identifiable elements of 1930s menswear (if a little tricky to find these days), but white, black, or grey suits are an acceptable substitute. Suits tended to be worn with a waistcoat. Suspenders were often used instead of a belt. The things that really make a man look like he belongs in the thirties, however, are the accessories. A black or white hat with a contrasting hatband, a high-contrast tie or bow tie, a matching handkerchief just protruding from the breast pocket, and even a carnation in the lapel all sell the costume as being authentically 1930s.

Sound effects

Sound effects are a great deal of work but can also add a great deal of fun to proceedings. Feel free to simply read out the sound directions if that is all you want to do. Alternatively, you might search the internet for just the right sound files. We've also included instructions for a "build your own" sound effects kit in the Appendix at the end of this document (if you prefer a more hands-on approach). You could divide up the sound directions and let your guests have a go at inventing sounds to match them using the kit. Be aware that it may not be possible to achieve all the sounds necessary using such a simple kit and some of your guests may find this frustrating.

UNDERSTANDING THE SCRIPT

To make it easy to find and keep your place within the script all the lines are numbered. Numbers which are to be spoken aloud are spelled out (e.g., thirteen, three hundred and twelve). Sound effects are underlined and capitalized to reduce the chance that they will be mistaken for a line that needs to be read out. Speakers are indicated by the character's name appearing in capitals followed by a colon (e.g., TOM:). Occasionally directions regarding the delivery of a line will appear. These are capitalized and bracketed, e.g., (NERVOUSLY) — again to reduce the chance that the direction will accidentally be read aloud. Difficult-to-pronounce names are treated similarly in order to make pronunciation easier, e.g., Cartagena (KARTA-HAIN-YA).

Each scene is numbered and identified as being either an interior (INT.) or exterior (EXT.) scene. Usually some indication of the time of day is provided, e.g., NIGHT. The scene's title is always followed by a short list of the characters required for the scene in brackets — to give everyone some warning as to how soon they will be called upon to deliver a line.

Occasionally you will see the term [CUE] at the beginning of a line. This simply indicates that there is no sound effect or music to indicate when a line should be delivered and that the actor should look to the director (usually the host of the meal) to indicate when to begin speaking.

Sound effects are accompanied by a square bracketed number (e.g., [31]). These numbers correspond to the sound effects lists included in the Appendices following the end of the script.

Commonly encountered descriptive terms and directions found in the scripts in this series include:

(BEAT) — A momentary pause for the count of one or a single beat.

(BRIDGE) — Music played between scenes — the radio equivalent of raising and lowering the curtain on a scene.

(CALLS OUT/SCREAMS) — Achieved by raising the head and mouth to shout or scream to the ceiling.

CONTINUE UNTIL — Let the sound or music play until a particular line number is reached.

[CUE] — The actor should wait for the director to indicate it is time to begin delivering the line.

(DISTANT, OFF MIC) — In traditional radio broadcasting this was achieved by having the actor step away from the microphone before delivering the line. At the dinner table this can be achieved by stepping back from the table or simply lowering the volume of the voice.

(ENTERING/EXITING) — Approaching or moving away from the microphone.

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ESTABLISH — Let the sound or music play for a moment before any other sound or dialog is added.

FADE IN — Start the sound or music softly and then gradually increase its volume.

FADE OUT — Gradually lower the volume on the sound or music until it can no longer be heard.

FADE UNDER — Lower the volume of the sound effect or music until the actors' voices are clearly audible over it.

LET IT FINISH — Play the sound or music until it is complete without fading it.

(STAGE WHISPER) — A loud whisper uttered by the actor, intended to be heard by the audience but supposedly unheard by other characters in the play.

(STING) — Music used to emphasize the emotion of a moment. The “dum-de-dum-dum” that plays when a body is discovered or the “bada-bing” cymbal crash of a joke being delivered etc.

(TO ROBIN, TO ALL) — Dialog to be directed to one or a number of characters in the scene.

UNDER — Continue a sound effect or music at low volume under the dialog or action taking place.

(WALLA) — Background sound belonging to the environment (for example, the sounds of a busy street).

CAST LIST

TONY WELLS: Private Detective

CLAIRE TEMPLETON: Crime Reporter

FRED: The Magical Sword

MAB: High Queen of the Dark Realm

FINBARRA: The Covenant Guardian of Darkness

EBERON: The Covenant Guardian of Light

OBERON: High King of the Light Realm

TITANIA: High Queen of the Light Realm

SYLVAESTRON (STINK): A faery of the wee folk of darkness

PROFESSOR WARD: Tully's boss

TULLY BING: Cartographer and researcher (currently boyfriend to Claire)

FERGUS THE FENCE: Small-time purveyor of stolen goods

LEFTY LOUIE: Smuggler, black marketeer, and club owner

LACKEY: Lefty Louie's Hireling

PUCK: Lord of Mischief, currently exiled from the Realm of Light

MINIONS #1 AND #2: Faery minions of Puck

DOGS #1 AND #2: Faery minions of Puck in dog form

SFX: SFX operator (1 required)

ACT 1

SCENE 1: INT.— CROWDED CAFETERIA — MORNING (TULLY, CLAIRe)

1. MUSIC: [1] OPENING THEME — LET IT FINISH.
2. SOUND: [5] (WALLA) BREAKFAST NOISES IN A CROWDED CAFÉ
— ESTABLISH AND UNDER.
3. CLAIRE TEMPLETON: (NARRATING) As a crime reporter, accustomed to lots of night work, I tend not to be categorized, by those who know me, as a morning person. For that reason, meeting my "boyfriend" — and you gotta believe me when I say I hate that word — at the university cafeteria first thing in the morning was not something I was accustomed to doing. It helped that the morning edition had a nice "by Claire Templeton, Crime Reporter" byline underneath its main headline.
4. TULLY BING: Thanks for coming at such short notice, honey.
5. CLAIRE TEMPLETON: Honey?
6. TULLY: I was trying it on for size.
7. CLAIRE: Tully Bing, how long have we been seeing each other now?
8. TULLY: (NERVOUS) A couple of months.
9. CLAIRE: A couple of months. And in all that time, have I ever given you even the slightest reason to believe that Ma Templeton's eldest daughter, Claire, is the sort of girl to encourage the application of "cute" pet names to herself?
10. TULLY: Well, no. Not as such.
11. CLAIRE: Not as such, no. (BEAT) I'd suggest then, that if you don't want me to break each and every one of those soft academic fingers of yours, you don't ever try and do that again.
12. TULLY: But...
13. CLAIRE: No buts. What am I here for this morning?
14. TULLY: Dammit, Claire, why can't we have anything normal about our relationship?

15. CLAIRE: (ADMIRING) Tully Bing! That almost sounded assertive!
16. TULLY: Sorry, it's just that...
17. CLAIRE: And then you go spoiling it with an apology. Damn, but I don't know what I'm doing here with you.
18. TULLY: (BITTERLY) Me neither.
19. CLAIRE: (MORE GENTLY) Look, precious...
20. TULLY: And that's another thing, you use names for me all the time.
21. CLAIRE: Oh for crying out... You know, you've got a really unattractive tendency to whine, kid? (BEAT AS CLAIRE GIVES IN AND EXPLAINS) From me a pet name is cute. From you, it's possessive and proprietary... and you can guess how things'll turn out if you start getting possessive and proprietary, can't you?
22. TULLY: (SLIGHTLY SULKING) Yeah, heaven forbid I should want to have you to myself?
23. CLAIRE: (IMPATIENTLY CHANGING THE TOPIC) Just tell me why I'm here, already?
24. TULLY: Aside from me just wanting to see you?
25. CLAIRE: (WARNINGLY) Tully!
26. TULLY: Alright. You know how things have gotten a little strange since that business with the troll?
27. CLAIRE: You're getting pretty good at understatement there, sunshine... (BEAT) but is a point coming along any time soon?
28. TULLY: Well, I know you've been involved in a bunch of strange stuff since that business with the troll, but things have been getting weirder for me too.
29. CLAIRE: (PATRONIZING) Oh, Tully. Are you getting jealous? Is that what this is about? You know you don't have to make things up to feel like you're a part of my life.
30. TULLY: Claire, if you don't shut up and let me get on with this...

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31. CLAIRE: (SUDDENLY ALL BUSINESS) Alright, genius. Impress me.
32. TULLY: Ever since we came back from... well, from wherever that was, I've been able to find things.
33. CLAIRE: I'm sorry, what now?
34. TULLY: I can find things. Give me a map of the city and tell me you want something, and I can find it.
35. CLAIRE: Tully, honey, I don't quite...
36. TULLY: Things I couldn't possibly know the location of. I can find them if I have a map in front of me. Somehow I just know where they are.
37. CLAIRE: I'm still not sure I get...
38. TULLY: Look, you know how you told me your next story was going to be about the black market in stolen goods in the city?
39. CLAIRE: Yeah?
40. TULLY: Well, I know nothing about the black market, right? But look at this.
41. SOUND: [11] SOUND OF MAP BEING UNFOLDED ON THE TABLE — LET IT FINISH.
42. CLAIRE: Tully, are those what I think they are?
43. TULLY: Ahuh, that's the location of every black-market front operation in town. And look here. See these two, sitting like spiders at the center of a web. These two are the biggest operators in the city. Everything — and I mean everything — eventually makes its way through these two.
44. CLAIRE: (AMAZED) How did you?
45. TULLY: That's what I've been trying to tell you. I haven't the foggiest. I mean, I've always been interested in maps. That's why I do the research I do at the university — but this? I've got no explanation.
46. CLAIRE: But this is fantastic! This one here, the first big nexus. That's Lefty Louie's club. But this second one? I don't know this one.

47. TULLY: That's 'cause it's new. Only recently set up.
48. CLAIRE: But how do you know that?
49. TULLY: It's the patterns. I'm not sure how to explain it. This one over here, Lefty Louie's, it's well established, like a waterhole that the game have been using regularly for years. This one over here is like a new water source that's just appeared. It's beginning to disrupt the old movement patterns but isn't quite established and the patterns haven't settled down yet.
50. CLAIRE: That's brilliant! I've never seen anything like it.
51. TULLY: Doesn't it bother you, even a little bit, that this ability isn't natural?
52. CLAIRE: You're kidding right? This could net me the biggest story of the year.
53. SOUND: [12] SOUND OF CHAIR PULLING BACK AND FOOTSTEPS DEPARTING – LET IT FINISH.
54. TULLY: Hey, where're you going? You haven't even finished breakfast.
55. CLAIRE: (AT A DISTANCE) No time. I've got to go set up a meeting with Fergus the Fence. It's time to see what I can discover about the new player on the board.
56. TULLY: (BITTERLY) Just great!
57. MUSIC: [3] (BRIDGE) NEUTRAL SCENE ENDER – LET IT FINISH.

SCENE 2: EXT.—AN ALLEY IN ONE OF THE SEEDIER AREAS OF TOWN—LATER THAT MORNING (CLAIRES, FERGUS)

58. SOUND: [6] (WALLA) DISTANT TRAFFIC, A CAT BEING SCARED BY A FALLING TRASHCAN LID, ETC. — ESTABLISH AND UNDER.
59. CLAIRE: (NARRATING) There's something nerve-racking enough about waiting in an alley for a contact to arrive, and don't get me wrong, it comes with the territory, but, when your contact is also twenty minutes late, I think you can be forgiven for feeling a little skittish.
(BEAT) I'd used all my feminine charms on Fergus to get him to cooperate in the first place, and, when that didn't work, I'd threatened to tell the cops about the stolen goods in his warehouse. Fergus the Fence was a lot of things, but stupid wasn't one of them and he'd agreed to help me out. But if this was a double-cross I could be in some serious trouble.
60. FERGUS THE FENCE: (OUT OF BREATH) Claire. Claire. You gotta help me!
61. CLAIRE: Fergus! What's the matter?
62. FERGUS: That place you sent me. There's something not right about it. It's a front.
63. CLAIRE: Yeah, I know that, already. They fence stolen goods.
64. FERGUS: No. No. The fence is a front. They handle stolen goods alright, but that's just a way of finding special items.
65. CLAIRE: What do you mean?
66. FERGUS: Claire, there's no time. You gotta hide me!
67. CLAIRE: You're not making sense, Fergus. What's happened?
68. FERGUS: Look, I went there alright, like you said. It's a big apartment building. From the outside it looks abandoned. Inside it's... well it's opulent.
69. CLAIRE: Who's been teaching you words like that?

70. FERGUS: I'm serious. This place was swish. I met the boss, a little guy - calls himself Mr P. I made like I was there on business - I'd been thinking about visiting the joint since I'd heard they started operation anyways, so it wasn't exactly a lie.
71. CLAIRE: So?
72. FERGUS: So they take me in and show me around. I'm impressed. He's happy to take anything I bring him... but...
73. CLAIRE: But...?
74. FERGUS: Come on, Claire, can't we get outta here? I already told you they're after me... and sister, there's something not right about 'em.
75. CLAIRE: Fergus, you're fine. I need to know what you found out.
76. FERGUS: (STARTING TO SOUND MORE PANICKED) Aw, sheesh. Alright, but you gotta protect me, okay?
77. CLAIRE: Okay, calm down.
78. FERGUS: It was like this: they said they'd handle anything I brought 'em, but they was particularly interested in anything old or strange... artifacts Mr P called 'em. If I came across anythin' like that, he'd make it completely worth my while.
79. CLAIRE: And you thought that was a little strange?
80. FERGUS: Well, yeah, sort of. You know, I thought, maybe Mr P has a thing for antiques, and maybe there was a way I could use this to my advantage.
81. CLAIRE: And...
82. FERGUS: Well, anyways... I'm walking out the door and nobody seems to be paying me any mind so I duck behind a partition. I figure I'll see if I can pick up anything useful with a little eavesdropping...
(BEAT) Claire, these guys ain't natural and I'm getting' nervous. Can we please get outta here?
83. CLAIRE: (IMPATIENTLY) For crying out loud, Fergus, you'd be done by now if you'd just get to the point.

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84. FERGUS: Look, I ain't crazy, Claire! You gotta believe I'm telling you exactly what happened. I'd been hiding for just a few seconds when everything started turning pale and see-through like. Suddenly the partition is gone and I'm standing in this big gutted building. The employees are slowly turning into huge black dogs and Mr P... Mr P is turning green and shrinking into this goblin-like thing. I think they's aliens or something. Anyway, Mr P's talking to one o' the dogs about destroying the city when he looks up and sees me standin' there without nothin' to hide behind. I just ran. But he sent the dogs after me. They've been tracking me all over town.
C'mon, Claire, that's everything I know. You've gotta help me.

85. SOUND: [13] DISTANT HOWLING – GETTING CLOSER – LET IT FINISH.

86. FERGUS: (ALMOST CRYING) You gotta do something. You gotta get me outta ... urk (CHOKING NOISES).

87. CLAIRE: Fergus, are you okay?

88. FERGUS: (MORE CHOKING NOISES).

89. SOUND: [18] UNDER – FLAME, HISSING AND BUBBLING – UNTIL THE END OF THE NEXT DIALOG.

90. CLAIRE: (NARRATING) Fergus' skin began to change color before my eyes. First it went grey then black and began to flake away as if he was being burned from the inside out. He crumpled to the ground and began to dissolve completely until there was nothing left but a foul-smelling puddle on the ground.

91. SOUND: [19] LOW WOLF-LIKE GROWL – LET IT FINISH.

92. CLAIRE: (NARRATING) I looked up and saw a huge black shape at the entrance to the alley. It was black, shaggy, and wolf-like. It eyed me hungrily for a moment then turned and padded away. It was at this point that I decided I'd better enlist the aid of Tony Wells.

93. MUSIC: [4] (BRIDGE) OMINOUS SCENE ENDER – LET IT FINISH.

**SCENE 3: INT.—OFFICE OF TONY WELLS, PRIVATE EYE—
MORNING (TONY, MAB, CLAIRE, FRED)**

94. TONY WELLS: [CUE] (NARRATING) They say it's always darkest just before the dawn... and who am I to argue with the "it's-half-full" crowd. After all, things often do have a way of working themselves out. But I've been at this job a little too long to believe, even remotely, that life brings along many happy endings. The revolving door of hapless spouses, hoping against hope that the one they love isn't cheating on them; the roster of blackmail victims hoping to be rescued from potential scandal; even the occasional client wanting to discover the dirt on a business associate or their daughter's latest suitor — all teach you one thing: that life is in no way fair, and that, while things do occasionally work out, they just as often don't. Perhaps it's just that the people who present themselves at the shabby office door of Tony Wells, Private Detective — depressingly few though they be — just aren't being seen at their best. Maybe. To quote another of the "old wives" brigade, "you can't always judge a book by its cover." Anyway, the person who came knocking on my door next was about to test the truth of both those proverbs.

95. SOUND: [22] SHARP KNOCKING ON DOOR — LET IT FINISH.

96. TONY: Come in.

97. SOUND: [24] DOOR OPENS QUICKLY AND HIGH-HEELED SHOES ENTER —LET IT FINISH.

98. MAB: (IMPATIENTLY/IMPERIOUSLY) Mr Wells? I want to hire you!

99. TONY: (NARRATING) I looked her over and immediately smelled money. Whoever this dame was, she was from the better end of town. Everything, from the tasteful angle of her hat, through the line of her elegant suit, to the exquisite gold wedding band on her finger, and the tips of her expensive shoes, screamed money. But at the same time, it all felt wrong.

(TO MAB) And what brings you to my humble offices this fine morning, Miss...

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100. MAB: I already told you, Mr Wells, or are you as stupid as you look? And it is Mrs, or hadn't you noticed?
101. TONY: Yes, Ma'am, you've stated that you wish to hire me, but it is customary to get a little background before entering into a contract and you seem to be, if you'll pardon my saying so, a long way from your usual neighborhood.
102. MAB: I see. (BEAT) I'm being set up, Mr Wells. And, since the perpetrators of my distress are almost certainly grubby little individuals of low character, I thought I would find a grubby little individual of my own to even the odds, someone who is as happy to play as dirty as they are. Does that satisfy your need to know why I am at your particular door, Mr Wells?
103. TONY: Not remotely, but we'll let that pass for the moment. It's my job, so I am willing to help, but only in so far as that help can be given legally. I don't know what you've heard about me, but if you're looking for a leg-breaker you've come to the wrong place.
104. MAB: Is that so? Well, perhaps I have heard wrong. But you needn't worry about soiling what's left of your conscience. I won't be asking you to do anything contrary to your laws.
105. TONY: (NARRATING) "Your laws," she said. That should have tipped me off to just how far out of town her neighborhood was and, beautiful or not, I was more than half inclined to send her packing without even hearing her out. Sometimes I should listen to my hunches more closely.
(TO MAB) Alright, you'd best tell me why you are here and what you want.
106. MAB: Fair enough. My husband is a very powerful man and, like all powerful men, he has rivals, one in particular who is every bit his equal and opposite.
107. TONY: And I take it, this rival is the source of your distress?

108. MAB: You assume correctly. Some extremely valuable items were recently stolen from my husband's rival. He is planning to make formal accusation against me. I have no knowledge of where these items are, how they were obtained, or who has taken them. Despite this, I am assured he has strong evidence implicating me in the matter. This would seriously embarrass my husband and provide his rival with significant advantage. I need you to find the thieves, return the stolen goods, and so clear my name.
109. TONY: And that name would be, Ma'am?
110. MAB: Are you such a fool? That name would be Mab, High Queen of the Realm of Darkness.
111. MUSIC: [42] (STING) OMINOUS MUSICAL ACCENT — LET IT FINISH.
112. TONY: [CUE] (NARRATING) I looked the High Queen of the Realm of Darkness over with something approaching terror. If, Fred, my magical talking sword — and yes, I'm being literal here — was correct, then my small office currently was host to one of the most powerful beings in existence, and one, moreover, with a reputation for cruelty and cold calculation that would make the Borgias blush. If even half the stories were true, I was in big trouble.
113. MAB: Well, Mr Wells? Do we have a deal?
114. TONY: You want me to investigate the theft of artifacts from the fae realms. Do you have any idea where in the three realms they may have been taken?
115. MAB: Oh, I have a fair idea that the items are being sold here, in your own home city.
116. TONY: Sold. I see. So you want me to find the items and, hopefully, track down the culprits who stole them in order to prove your innocence?
117. MAB: (DECEPTIVELY MILD) That's right.
118. TONY: And this rival of your husband...
119. MAB: Is Oberon, High King of the Realm of Light.
120. TONY: Sweet Christmas!

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121. MAB: (MOCKING) You almost sound afraid, mortal.
122. TONY: That just shows I'm still sane.
123. MAB: Maybe you're not such a fool as I thought. Will you take the job?
124. TONY: I guess I will. So long as you know you are only contracting me to attempt the task. I can't guarantee I'll get to the bottom of this mess for you, but I will try my best.
125. MAB: I would expect no less.
126. TONY: My usual fee is twenty-five dollars a day plus expenses. It's traditional to pay a three-day retainer up front.
127. MAB: (AMUSED) That will not be a problem.
128. TONY: And I expect to be paid in coin of the realm, not Leprechaun gold or anything that can't be spent at the local drug store.
129. MAB: Yes, yes. I'm aware of the stipulations of your standard contract.
130. TONY: Alright then.
(NARRATING) I put my standard contract in front of her and we both signed it. When it was done she looked up at me with a disconcertingly predatory smile. Behind me my sword, which had been propped in the corner of the room, fell over with a loud thud.
131. MAB: Before I go, I'd like you to pass this on to Claire Templeton, your reporter friend.
132. TONY: What is it?
133. MAB: Just a pendant. She can use it to summon me — once only — by calling my name three times.
134. TONY: What's the catch?

135. MAB: (ICILY) Your impertinence is beginning to wear on me, mortal. I am not in the habit of explaining myself to such as you, but since it may prove helpful, I'll give you to understand this much... A number of things have been set in motion that will place Miss Templeton in need of my aid. As this will serve my own purposes admirably she will not find herself placed under any obligation to me for receiving and using this gift. Does that satisfy?
136. TONY: Well enough.
137. MAB: (IMPERIOUSLY) Then I bid you farewell. I believe Miss Templeton has just entered your hallway.
138. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME — LET IT FINISH.
139. CLAIRE: (NARRATING) I'd just come up the stairs to the level which held Wells' office. From the hallway I saw the light under Tony's door brighten to the point that I had to look away before it faded again into its usual pale daylight hues. I hurried forwards.
140. FRED: (ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR) Haven't you been listening to anything I've been telling you, boss? You can't try to make a deal with noble fae. They always get the better of it.
141. TONY: Well you were right here and I didn't hear you giving any warnings. Some magical adviser you are.
142. FRED: She had me under a spell, you moron. I couldn't warn you, if I wanted to. But I've warned you enough before.
143. TONY: Aw, dammit.
144. SOUND: [2] KNOCKING ON DOOR. DOOR OPENS — LET IT FINISH.
145. CLAIRE: Hi, boys. Didya miss me?
146. TONY: (DRILY) Our last guest told me you'd be coming.
147. CLAIRE: It's like that, is it? Well, I gotta say I miss the witty repartee. I'm feeling a little cheated here.

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148. TONY: I was getting my morning scolding from the magical sword in the corner when we had ourselves a supernatural visitor. It's taken the shine off things.
149. CLAIRE: Fair enough. I need to talk with you seriously anyway.
150. TONY: You know, Fred was telling me earlier that I can take an apprentice. Someone to take over the job if I get killed or incapacitated. Someone who can fetch me coffee and do my dry-cleaning etc. You wouldn't happen to be looking for an opening, would you?
151. CLAIRE: There's a quip I can't quite remember that seems to provide an appropriate answer. Something about Satan skating to work? Do you know the one?
152. TONY: Hey, you wanted the banter.
153. CLAIRE: That was then. Now I want to get down to business.
154. TONY: Okay, shoot!
155. CLAIRE: (NARRATING) Ignoring the temptation to take the invitation literally I got down to business. I told Tony about my morning meetings with Tully and Fergus the Fence. By way of exchange he told me about his own visitation. I was particularly interested when he informed me that Mab had mentioned my name and I watched apprehensively as Wells put the locket on the table between us.
(TO TONY) Do you think this is all connected?
156. TONY: The fae are as complicated in their political games as anything I've ever encountered. There's always wheels within wheels within plans with these guys so there's no way to be sure. But it does look like there's a connection and I figure Mab, at least, wants us to look into it.
157. CLAIRE: Isn't this the kind of thing you'd normally bring the other Covenant Protectors in on? I mean an overheard threat to the existence of the mortal world by a magical creature of some sort etc.

158. TONY: Yeah, I guess it is? Fred, can you call in the cavalry?
159. FRED: I'm not sure I can.
160. TONY: What? Why not?
161. FRED: Well, you've bound yourself to Mab via contract. This kind of violates your neutrality and...
162. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME – LET IT FINISH.
163. CLAIRE: (NARRATING) Suddenly I was the only one in the room. Wells and the sword were gone.
164. MUSIC: [4] (BRIDGE) OMINOUS SCENE ENDER – LET IT FINISH.

SCENE 4: INT. — THE COURT OF OBERON, HIGH KING OF THE FAE REALM OF LIGHT — IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING (TONY, FRED, OBERON, TITANIA, EBERON, FINBARRA, CHORUS)

165. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME — LET IT FINISH.

166. SOUND: [7] (WALLA) MURMURING OF FAE NOBILITY IN THE FAERY COURT — ESTABLISH AND UNDER.

167. TONY: Fred, what just happened?

168. FRED: Oh, that's right. You've never been summoned under the stipulations of the covenant before. In the past you've been the one doing the summoning so you haven't experienced it from this side. We're in the courtroom of the palace of Oberon and Titania, High King and Queen of the fae Realm of Light.

169. TONY: You mean this is how it works? I get zapped off somewhere without any say in it, the moment a summons comes in?

170. FRED: That's about the size of it, boss. If it's any consolation, Eberon and Finbarra are bound by the same deal. See they're here as well.

171. TONY: No wonder they were cheesed off last time. You could be doing anything...

172. OBERON: Welcome, honored guests, to the court of Oberon and Titania, High King and Queen of the fae Realm of Light. I have summoned you into our august presence to deal with a matter of some considerable import.

173. FRED: (STAGE WHISPER) Aw hell!

174. TONY: What?

175. FRED: Oberon's crown is missing!

176. OBERON: This matter is one which threatens the dignity of our entire realm. As you can see, the crown, which acts as sign and warrant of our right to rule in this realm, has been taken. A near impossible task and an unforgiveable insult. One which, if it is not rectified, can only result in war and a breaking of the covenant that has so long held the realms in balance.

177. CHORUS: (SHOCKED MURMURS FROM LISTENING NOBILITY)

178. TONY: These guys would go to war over a hat?
179. FRED: You betcha!
180. OBERON: I have summoned the Covenant Protectors here to enlist their aid in recovering the crown and punishing the perpetrators of this crime!
181. TITANIA: Oh, for goodness sake. It seems that the longer you live the more ridiculous this penchant of yours for speeches gets! We know who took the crown. Have them at it!
182. OBERON: (WEARILY) Titania, must you always interrupt. There are formalities and protocols that must be observed.
183. TITANIA: Nonsense! I'll bet the mortal wants you to get to the point. After all, mortal lives are too short for your speechifying.
184. OBERON: Titania...
185. TITANIA: At least tell them who did it!
186. OBERON: I apologize for Queen Titania, dear guests. The seriousness of this matter makes her more impatient by the hour. (BEAT) It is true that we have our suspicions...
187. TITANIA: (SNORTS DERISIVELY) Hmpf!
188. OBERON: ...but, as the evidence all points to someone of singular importance, this revelation must be handled with delicacy.
189. TITANIA: Oh, for goodness sake... it was Mab! Stop acting as though we need to tread lightly around that unpredictable cow. We've been treading softly for the last millennia and, if anything, she's more insane than ever.
190. OBERON: Whatever else can be said about your sister – and I'm the first to admit that her thought processes are murky at best –
191. TITANIA: (DERISIVE) Ha!
192. OBERON: she has never given the slightest indication of insanity. Extraordinary deviousness, yes. But insanity? No.

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193. FINBARRA: My Lord Oberon, Queen Mab is my mother. She has always been ambitious, and she enjoys mayhem, but I cannot believe she would risk breaking the covenant. After all, she it was who convinced my father, against his better judgment, to sign the covenant in the first place.
194. OBERON: We are aware of the history, Prince Finbarra, we were there after all. And, the hasty words of Titania notwithstanding, we do NOT make formal accusation against your mother at this time. We do ask that the Covenant Protectors investigate this matter.
195. TONY: Your Majesty, if I might...
196. FRED: Boss, no! This isn't the...
197. OBERON: Speak, mortal. Our court recognizes you.
198. TONY: Er, right! Um... Mab believes that she is being framed... er, set up to appear the villain... and...
199. OBERON: And how would you know this?
200. TONY: She came to my office this morning and...
201. TITANIA: Your office? In the mortal realm?
202. TONY: Er... that's right. And she hired me to look...
203. CHORUS: (SHARP INTAKES OF BREATH ALL ROUND).
204. TONY: ...into this for her.
205. FRED: Here it comes...
206. TITANIA: You imbecile. You allowed yourself to be bound to Mab's cause?
207. TONY: What? No, I merely agreed...
208. OBERON: Your neutrality is now suspect. Instead of being able to bring the power of the three swords to bear on this matter, we are now down to two.
209. TONY: Now hang on a minute...
210. TITANIA: This changes everything. She has successfully neutralized one of her opponents. Why would she do this if she were not guilty?

211. TONY: But...
212. OBERON: Silence!
213. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME. LET IT FINISH.
214. TONY: (MUFFLED) Mmpf. Mmm. Mmmpf.
215. OBERON: You have violated the pact of neutrality. Until this matter is resolved you will remain bound in this castle. (BEAT) Eberon?
216. EBERON: Yes, father?
217. OBERON: I expect you to pursue this matter with impartiality and thoroughness.
218. EBERON: Yes, father.
219. FINBARRA: (INTERRUPTING) The enmity between your house and my mother is well known, Your Majesty. How can I be sure this is not some scheme to discredit her for your own purposes.
220. OBERON: You forget your place, Finbarra. As a guest in my house you have no right to accuse...
221. FINBARRA: I do not accuse, Your Majesty. I merely investigate. Much as I hate to admit it, the mortal would have proved useful as an impartial third party in this matter. As it is, you have arrested him. It does not take a genius to see what advantage might accrue to your side if this is, as circumstances suggest, some form of scheme on the part of the Realm of Light?
222. EBERON: How dare you! If your mother had not sought to hire him, the mortal would still be in play.
223. OBERON: Enough. It is clear that the two of you cannot work together under these circumstances. Investigate separately then... but the mortal will remain here.
(TO TONY) By virtue of this breach of neutrality, mortal, you are hereby bound in silver chains until this matter is resolved. You are relieved of all warrants, benefits, and privileges that accrue to a duly appointed Protector of the Covenant.
Now, tell us. Where can we find Mab?
224. TONY: Mmff. mm. mmmffff.
225. OBERON: Oh, of course!

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226. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME — LET IT FINISH.

227. OBERON: There. Let's try again. Where's Mab?

228. TONY: Go to hell!

229. OBERON: Tsk. Tsk. You are making a mistake by defying me, mortal. Without your role to protect you, you are just another insignificant human in my realm. I can do with you as I wish... but Titania has always been the more persuasive of us. I think I'll leave it up to her to gain Mab's location from you.

230. TITANIA: Oh darling, a present? How delicious.

231. TONY: Why you. I never asked for this. Both of you can go and ...

232. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME — LET IT FINISH.

233. TITANIA: Enough of that! There'll be plenty of time for talk... when you stop screaming.

234. OBERON: And as for you, sword. I am sending you back to your secure place of refuge to await the outcome of these matters. Be gone!

235. FRED: But...

236. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME — LET IT FINISH.

237. MUSIC: [4] (BRIDGE) OMINOUS SCENE ENDER — LET IT FINISH.

**SCENE 5: INT.—TONY'S OFFICE—EARLY EVENING (TONY,
CLAIRe, FRED)**

238. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME — LET IT FINISH.
239. CLAIRE: Just in time. I was about to give up waiting for you and leave. (BEAT) Hey, where's Wells?
240. FRED: He's been arrested.
241. CLAIRE: He's what?
242. FRED: He's been arrested. You know, he's banged up, been sent up the river, locked in the hoosegow, dining on bread and water, doing stir...
243. CLAIRE: Yeah, yeah. I get it. But what for?
244. FRED: Well, you know how Mab just hired him to clear her name?
245. CLAIRE: Yeah?
246. FRED: Well, Tony and the other Covenant Protectors were summoned to Oberon's court. You do know who Oberon is, right, kid?
247. CLAIRE: Don't get fresh.
248. FRED: Anyway, Oberon wants Mab investigated for stealing his crown and your idiot friend, Wells, lets out that he's just been hired by Mab to clear her. Bang. He's locked up for violatin' his neutrality quicker 'n you can shout "cruel and unusual."
249. CLAIRE: (ALARMED) But we've got to get him back. The mortal realm is in danger.
250. FRED: You think I don't know that? They banished me back here before I could get a word in edgeways. It's just as well Tony keeps me propped in the corner most times or I wouldn't be here to even have this conversation.
251. CLAIRE: But you can still communicate with the other Covenant Protectors, right? I mean, you can let them know what's going on?
252. FRED: Uh, uh, sister. I can only be wielded by a protector and Tony's currently in another universe (or as good as).
253. CLAIRE: What am I going to do?

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254. FRED: Well, that's an interesting question. One I don't think you'll like the answer to.
255. CLAIRE: Go on.
256. FRED: Mab's incredibly devious, even by fae standards. She left specific instructions that you be given that pendant on the table... which I see you have yet to pick up.
257. CLAIRE: You don't think I've had enough experience of faeries to NEVER take what they offer, ever again?
258. FRED: Fair enough, but you'll remember that Tony was given assurances by Mab that accepting this gift would not place you under any obligation to her and that it would aid you in sorting this mess out.
259. CLAIRE: You think this is what she meant?
260. FRED: Ahuh. And I'll tell you this much for nothin', too. From what I saw going on between the fae realms, and with Tony out of the way, you're pretty much the only game in town. If you don't figure this out, then no one will.
261. CLAIRE: Just great! (BEAT) (TO HERSELF) Okay, here goes. I'm going to pick the pendant up. There's nothing too scary about a pendant, right? So I'm going to pick it up and nothing's going to happen. Yup, I'm going to pick it up... right...now!
262. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME – LET IT FINISH.
263. SYLVAESTRON: (IN A TINY PIPING VOICE) Behold, mortal, it is I, Sylvaestron. Kneel before me and cower!
264. CLAIRE: (LONG BEAT) What the hell are you?
265. SYLVAESTRON: (WRONG FOOTED) Let me try that again...
266. SOUND: [30] MAGICAL CHIME – LET IT FINISH.
267. SYLVAESTRON: (BEAT) Behold, mortal, it is I, Sylvaestron. Look on me and writhe in terror! (BEAT) Are you quivering, mortal?
268. CLAIRE: Afraid not. Slightly nauseated, perhaps, but hardly quivering.

269. SYLVAESTRON: Nauseated, huh? I guess I can work with that. You're feeling some fear deep in the pit of your stomach and it's turning you...
270. CLAIRE: No. I simply mean you smell... bad!
271. FRED: Stink? Stink Sylvaestron? Is that you?
272. SYLVAESTRON: Aw, damn. And it was going so well. (TO THE SWORD) Hi ya, Sword. I didn't expect to see you here. I heard you got a new owner. What are they calling you these days? Silverbright? Spirit Cleanser? Something like that?
273. FRED: That was my last owner. This time I'm called Fred.
274. SYLVAESTRON: Fred? You're kidding?
275. FRED: Mortals! What can I say? (TO CLAIRE) Uh, Claire, this is Stink, I mean Sylvaestron — she's a pollution faery.
276. CLAIRE: She's a what?
277. SYLVAESTRON: (WITH WOUNDED DIGNITY) A pollution faery. I used to be a nature sprite but a mining company got into my region of the mortal realm.
278. FRED: Some sections of the fae community are more connected to the mortal realm than others. Nature sprites tend to reflect the way that their associated area of mortal land is being treated. Stink went toxic a few years back.
279. CLAIRE: I'm sorry.
280. SYLVAESTRON: Don't be. I've been hoping that with time I'd stop looking so disgusting and start looking more... scary — you know, like those machines with their sharp digging teeth, etc. As it is I'm still more sludge than steel.
281. CLAIRE: Uhuh. (BEAT) Why exactly are you here?
282. SYLVAESTRON: Oh yeah. I owed Mab a favor. I have to give aid to whoever is carrying the pendant — up till now that's been Mab.
283. CLAIRE: Some favor. Were you locked in that pendant?
284. SYLVAESTRON: Do I look like something you'd find locked in a pendant?

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285. CLAIRE: Actually you look like something I'd find locked in an S-bend.
286. SYLVAESTRON: (INSULTED) Very funny. Ha Ha! Pick on the pollution faery, why don't you. Just 'cause you don't smell of raw sewage, and instead carry around the scent of disgusting flowers and stuff.
287. CLAIRE: (TO FRED) Is she quite the full deck?
288. FRED: Not remotely. She's been bound to the pendant since she tried to turn Mab's pet ice-wolves into stomach worms as a gift.
289. SYLVAESTRON: The palace just didn't seem to have enough slime, is all. I still don't see what all the fuss was about.
290. CLAIRE: And this is what Mab leaves to help me? Are you sure Mab's the full deck?
291. FRED: No comment!
292. CLAIRE: Alright, better get this show on the road. I'm going to pick up Tully and we're going to see what we can learn about this trade in magical do-dads. I have a feeling that all of this connects to the stolen crown somehow and the sooner I find the crown the better.
293. FRED: What about me? You're not going to just leave me here, are you?
294. CLAIRE: Yeah, I am. At least for now. If Tony manages to come back I think it would be best if you were here to greet him. Besides I thought you can only be wielded by the "one and only" Protector of the Covenant.
295. FRED: Yeah, but there is a way you could wield me.
296. CLAIRE: What's that?
297. FRED: Become an Apprentice Protector.
298. CLAIRE: This again?

299. FRED: He offered you the job with his own lips — even if he did think he was joking — and the terms are pretty straightforward. You agree to take up the sword if anything happens to the boss and you become an Apprentice Protector. He trains you and...
300. CLAIRE: Wait, Wells would become something like my boss?
301. FRED: Yup! He could order you around. Make you fetch coffee etc. And in exchange he'd train you to do his job for him.
302. CLAIRE: (BEAT)
303. FRED: What? It's not so bad. It's what all the others did.
304. CLAIRE: I'm taking a raincheck. Besides, doesn't Wells have to be here or something?
305. FRED: No one had to be there when he took up the sword, did they?
306. CLAIRE: I'm assuming that was a special circumstance. But while you're on the topic, why didn't the other guy have an apprentice?
307. FRED: Oh, he did. Three in fact.
308. CLAIRE: What happened to them?
309. FRED: All dead! Being an Apprentice Covenant Protector is pretty risky. There were none left when my old master finally bit the dust.
310. CLAIRE: (BEAT) Right, I'm out of here. (TO SYLVAESTRON) And as for you, Stink, jump back in the pendant for now. I'll call you if I need you.
311. SYLVAESTRON: Sure thing, boss.
312. MUSIC: [3] (BRIDGE) NEUTRAL SCENE ENDER — LET IT FINISH.

ACT 2

SCENE 6: INT. — THE UNIVERSITY — EARLY EVENING (TULLY, CLAIRE, PROFESSOR WARD)

313. SOUND: [25] DOOR HURRIEDLY OPENING AND CLOSING — LET IT FINISH.

314. CLAIRE: Tully? Tully? Where are you?

315. PROFESSOR WARD: Excuse me, miss, this is a place of research. You can't just come in here and...

316. TULLY: I'm sorry, Professor Ward. I know her. It'll be okay.

317. PROFESSOR: Bing, isn't it? If you say so, but believe me when I tell you we'll be discussing this interruption further when you appear before the grants board next week.

318. SOUND: [31] PROFESSOR WALKING AWAY — LET IT FINISH.

319. CLAIRE: What a grouch!

320. TULLY: What are you doing here? This is where I work. You could get me into all kinds of trouble yelling like that!

321. CLAIRE: What, with him? I've seen bigger blowhards, I guess.

322. TULLY: Yeah, well he has the power to deny or approve my research grant so I'm not in the mood to pick a fight with him.

323. CLAIRE: He's the chair of the grants committee?

324. TULLY: Yeah.

325. CLAIRE: And he's the one who's had you jumping through all those hoops over the last four weeks, doing overtime, etc., in the hopes you can earn yourself a grant?

326. TULLY: Yeah, why?

327. CLAIRE: I didn't realize it was the same guy. He gave an interview to the science editor of the Tribune last week.

328. TULLY: So?

329. CLAIRE: So he's on the record saying that, due to new stringency measures being imposed on the university, his department won't be approving any funding grants for the foreseeable future.
330. TULLY: Son of a ... why I oughta...
331. CLAIRE: That's not why I'm here. Tully, I need to know where Lefty Louie is right now.
332. TULLY: Right now? I know you're always desperate for a story, Claire, but...
333. CLAIRE: It's important, Tully. Much more than you know. The survival of the entire city could be at stake.
334. TULLY: What? Claire, you're not making any sense.
335. CLAIRE: Remember how we were talking about the weird stuff that's been happening lately? Well, this is related.
336. TULLY: You mean faery folk and mortal peril? Again?
337. CLAIRE: That's exactly what I mean. Will you help me?
338. TULLY: I guess there's nothing to keep me here.
339. CLAIRE: Are you going to tell the others about the interview?
340. TULLY: Nah, the only other one here besides me at the moment is Jefferson and he's a jackass. He and Ward deserve each other.
341. CLAIRE: Okay then. Grab your map. We're going to need it.
342. MUSIC: [3] (BRIDGE) NEUTRAL SCENE ENDER — LET IT FINISH.

FANTASY NOIR EPISODE 4: ON THE FENCE

Claire Templeton, crime reporter, often wonders what she sees in her boyfriend, Tully Bing. Being bookish and timid, he just isn't her type. But when the information Tully provides about the black market puts her in touch with a fence who is quickly murdered by means that can only be described as magical, she and Tully are drawn into a brand new faery plot to destroy the city, sever and isolate the mortal realm, and pave the way for a faery takeover. With her sometime ally, Tony Wells, effectively neutralized by a clever faery plot, Claire finds herself working for and with the High Queen of the Realm of Darkness. Unfortunately the Queen tops Claire's list of suspects with regard to who's behind all the mayhem. Can Claire solve the case and save the day before her home town becomes a giant crater? Tune in to "On the Fence" and listen as the mystery unfolds.

Episodes in the Host Your Own "Old Time Radio Drama" series are designed to provide a fun dinner party experience for 6-8 participants. Read along, taking on the role of one or more of the characters in the story, and listen as the exciting drama unfolds. This is the theater of the mind, where the special effects are only limited by your imagination, and your participation will build a memory that you'll treasure for years to come.

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The Alligator Menace * The Cult of the Teeth * The City of the Gold Spider
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An Ephemeral Deal * On the Fence