



Fortitude

The Legendary 139

Jenna Moran



Fortitude

the Legendary 139



Dedication

For Robin Michael Alexander Maginn, who wanted to visit me in China; for Lillian Elanor Tewson Heino, just in case you get into gaming someday; and for Killian James Sebastian Maginn, whom I haven't had the chance to meet yet.

Also for Cync Brantley, Cheryl & Joseph Couvillion, Chrysoula Tzavelas, Kevin Maginn, Raymond Wood, James Wallis, Dara & Anna Korra'ti, and Gayle Margolis

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This book uses fantastical and supernatural elements in its setting, for its characters, their abilities, and themes. All such elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only. This book contains mature content and reader discretion is advised.



The Legendary 139

Academics Skill: Variable

Sports Skill: Typically Good

Favorite Foods: Variable, with a tendency to favor baked goods and relatively dry food — crackers, sweets, granola, hard bread, and the like. Fish cake and eel's nests are also popular.

Typical Blood Type: Slight tendency towards B

Animal: Phoenix

Age: somewhere between 22 and the player age

Genres: Fairy Tale, Gothic, Immersive Fantasy

(Before playing one of the Legendary 139 in any other genre, please make sure you have a strong genre-appropriate concept.)

Step 1: The Legendary 139

You may not know why you were there that day, or how you came to be there. You might have only the fuzziest of notions. That's basically the norm.

But you *were* there.

You were on that great barque, that vast white ship, that was sailing into Town on the day the sun was killed.

The dead sun passed over you and among you. She

—

Jade Irinka, the angel of the houses of the sun —

Passed by you, close enough to touch; she may have whispered in your ear, or touched your arm, or met your eyes. The golden light of her may have shone through you, made you momentarily as clear as amber or as glass.

It changed you.

It *tuned* you to something — gave you a feeling, an awareness, of the presence of destiny. It gave you the knowledge that there was something in you that you should cherish and develop, something in the world that you were meant to do. It gave you a destiny. It made your soul like a harp string and rang it; in so doing, it taught you what the music inside you sounded like. It made your heart like a stained glass window and shone through it; in so doing, it showed you the colors of yourself.

It was a strange and dissociating miracle and since that day you've spent a lot of time, whether or not you really wanted to, trying to sort out what it meant.

So tell me, if you remember, why were you there that day?

- ☼ I don't remember.
- ☼ I ... I'd wandered. I'd wandered and found myself there.
- ☼ I'd blacked out. Bad things had happened, and I blacked out, and I woke up on that ship, not long before she came by.
- ☼ I'd taken passage on that ship. I wanted to come to Town
 - ... because you wanted to get away from your life for a while?
 - ... because you were looking for work?
 - ... because you knew that the world was in danger?
 - ... because you knew you had something to do there?
 - ... because you were visiting somebody?
 - ... because ... because ... of something?
 - ... for some other reason?

- ☼ I'd stowed away.
- ☼ I'd come to Town a long time before that, maybe even as a kid, and I was a part of that ship's crew ... a navigator, ship's hand, or something.
- ☼ Something else?

And tell me, what was your experience of the passage of the sun?

- ☼ ... she just went by.
- ☼ ... I saw her eyes. They were beautiful and sad.
- ☼ ... I saw her eyes. They were brilliant with joy.
- ☼ ... I touched her hand as she went by.
- ☼ ... she touched my shoulder as she went by.
- ☼ ... we spoke, but I do not remember what it was she said.
- ☼ ... she stopped and she whispered in my ear,
 - but I will not tell you what she said.
 - but I do not remember what she said.
 - but I will not tell you what she said until I know you better.
 - and I don't know if it means as much to others as it does to me, but she said ... (what?)

- ☼ ... or something else?

Step 2: The Roll of Names

Somewhere there is an island in the sky, and somewhere on that island there is a door. Behind that door there is a tree and in the roots of that tree, all tangled about and in them, there is a treasure chest, and the key to that treasure chest is, was, or somehow belongs to one of the legendary 139 ...

— so I am told.

I do not know why this is, or how anybody knows this thing, or which of the legendary 139 it is that you would need to claim that treasure. I don't even know that it's treasure enough to be worth the journey. For all I know it's like some boots or something. A rupee.

But a lot of people believe in it. A lot of people think it's worth it. Many of the legendary 139 have gone out looking for it, alone and in groups, and so far they've failed every time.

And are you one of those who might be able to find or claim that treasure, whatever it might be?

Then you might find your name listed, somewhere over to the right ...

BOYS

1. Adam Gardner
2. Adam Krump
3. A. E. Harbo
4. Alex Lavery
5. Alfie Richards — *a young boy*
6. Andy Ayres
7. Andy Lloyd
8. Arthur Stavrinaky — *a Russian émigré to Japan*
9. Ben Melhuish
10. Blake
11. Brahim Odoben
12. Caleb
13. Carlos Rivera
14. Christopher Humphrey
15. Clayton Higbee
16. Cooper Braun
17. D. Player
18. Dalibor
19. Daniel Cherry
20. Daniel Norton
21. David Walker
22. Dennis Diment
23. Dennis Riedinger — *a fresh-faced boy*
24. Dunsany — *the prince or the rat*
25. Eoin Burke
26. Haldane
27. Henry Armero
28. Hersho
29. Hollister Hock — *squid-boy*
30. Jacobo Polanshek — *with his memory palace*
31. Jade Tinnerman
32. James Lawlor
33. Jason Ramboz
34. Jesper — *a boy of middle age*
35. Jesse Lawrence Morgan
36. John Green
37. Jonathan Grimm
38. Jordan D.
39. Karl
40. Kim Calvin
41. Kristian Magnus
42. Lin Liren — *manga artist and martial artist*
43. Marc Baires — *with his glass right eye*
44. Mark Green
45. Martin
46. Matthew Dunne
47. Meschlum
48. Michael Brewer
49. Mike Burdo — *a firefighter*
50. Mikloshe Jasner-Hendrake — *Keeper of the Sign of Chaos*
51. Misomar
52. Nihar Nilekani
53. Pat
54. Paulo Saraiva de Toledo
55. Penagain Nightcandle
56. Peter Svensson
57. Rand Brittain
58. Randy Evans
59. Rick West
60. Rill Leeward
61. Robert Vance
62. Roger Moore — *boy scientist, who helped develop the hydrogen bomb*
63. Ross Marcel Eberhardt
64. Roy Mangum — *WWII vet*
65. Ryan Junk
66. Samuel Dail
67. Scaenicus — *a black-clad boy*
68. Sean Conneelly — *retired mythic hero and tavern keeper*
69. Scott Dockery
70. Steven Heinrich
71. Steven King
72. Ted Kelly
73. Teddy
74. Thomas Boucher
75. Thomas James Ellis Parfrey
76. Dr Tom Richards — *doctor and Methodist*
77. Torsten Bernhardt
78. Trip the Space Parasite
79. The Wyzard

GIRLS

1. Aerin
2. Amine Hsu Nekuchan
3. Bella Oblas
4. Dr. Bismuth Aquatic — *a fancy lady*
5. Cathy
6. Candace
7. Carolyn Sue Price — *who can hear the singing of the rocks*
8. Christina Maria Jessen
9. Dame Alexis Winter — *a sorceress*
10. Darcy Adams
11. Doris Magil
12. Eleanor Winter
13. Eleonore Rosenauer Mikschl — *a lady*
14. Erika — *the archivist*
15. Evelyn
16. Genia Kozlov
17. Helen Grimm — *a keeper of secrets and gardens*
18. Hope Mitchell
19. Irene Nord
20. Jean-Ann
21. Jean T. Henley
22. Kaylee, or "Cat"
23. Kimberly Lynn Price — *cantankerous; hero*
24. Lita Hoken
25. Maggie — *a short redheaded girl*
26. Mary "Nana" Clawson
27. Melody Haren Anderson
28. Mieko
29. Miranda Harrison
30. Nanette
31. Neha Mara
32. Nicoz
33. Peggy Higbee
34. Raye Fischl
35. Rebecca Squires — *a dark-haired Kentucky girl*
36. Roselise — *the Writer of Letters*
37. Seana McGuinness
38. Se'tara Jasner
39. Shirley Green
40. Sonja Jacobson
41. Uncontained
42. Zhang Peilan

GENDER NOT

RECORDED IN THE ANNALS OF THE DAY*

1. Benedict Carter
2. Hsile Amune
3. Irvin William Steele
4. Krysm Phoenix
5. Michael Bowman
6. Olna Jenn Drennan — *of notable presence*
7. O. Ulloa
8. Zoe and Jack

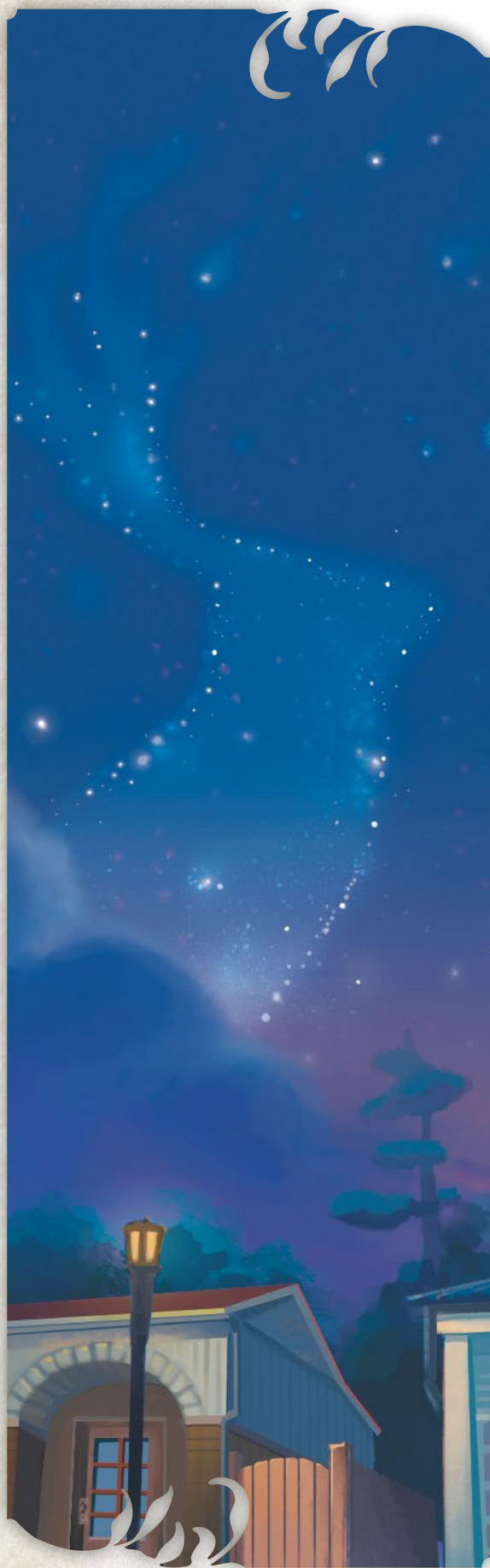
SPECIAL CASES

1. Greymalkin — *the cat*
2. Harry — *the Yorkie*
3. Kelly Lyonsbane — *the cat*
4. Looie "the Magnificent" — *the cat*
5. Thomas James Ellis Parfrey — *the cat, and master of disguise*

NOTA BENE

The headcount at the docks that came up with the legendary "139" includes up to four of the NPCs you'll meet in this lifepath and, if you choose a unique name, yourself. There's actually room for a few more, since you can always say that the animals didn't get added to the official rolls until it became clear that they qualified, some good time after that number was promulgated through the Docks.

* The docks were kind of busy when the ship came in, so not all biographical details were kept for everyone who arrived.



Step 3: Your Keep

It wasn't long after the ship docked in Town that you found your way to it — your Keep. Your sanctuary. Your place of power.

For some of you that's just a place that you fit to. A home that you were surprised to find here. A shrine, or park, or bookstore, or house, or garden, or alley, or something, that as soon as you reached you realized just *fit*. A place that you may have been surprised to discover you were actually allowed to be, not just metaphysically but socially: not just a shrine that you like, but one where you're welcomed. Not just a garden you like but one that's in need of a gardener. Not just a house that you like but one which has apparently been waiting for you, registered in your name, since before you came to Town.

That's one of the possibilities.

The other is that your Keep is mystical — magical, and your connection to it magical as well. That the Keep is or expresses the power and the magic that wakened in you when the angel of the sun brushed past.

Some of the legendary 139 found a Keep that wasn't in any specific place, but rather part of a magic that is in them always. If you're one of them, you found that you could tune yourself and the world around you to your Keep. Maybe when you first found it you thought that it was in a specific place, but later on you learned that it wasn't, that you could ... *bridge* yourself to it, that you could either infect the world around you with your Keep, superimpose it over other locations, or at least find a path to it from many different places.

You'd slip to it by magic.

Like, you could sit, even in the middle of nowhere, and soon you'd find a low wall growing, and roses blooming beside it, and the sun coming out, or something like the sun, to make it the sleepy afternoon that it always is in your private garden; and cats would gather and you'd pet them, and pretty soon your cottage would be standing there beside.

Or there'd be a drumming in the world as you were wandering and the world would waver around you and a path would open before you to your library, or your hill of graves, or your own separate magical and empty city where there are no other people but only creature comforts and a place to crash and the sounds of children laughing somewhere far away.

And where were you when you first found that Keep?

- ☼ I was in the lakeside community of Fortitude.
I was looking for something to do, somewhere to be, somewhere to go; a *home*, even if I didn't know it, and I found this.
- ☼ I was somewhere in the gothic sprawl that is Horizon. I was hiding from something that frightened me. I turned a corner, perhaps, or fled, and I found this.
- ☼ I was wandering and bedazzled in Arcadia, amidst the wonders and magic of the Shopping District, and there it was. It's like it called to me.
- ☼ I don't know. Wherever the game is set. I found it there.
- ☼ Somewhere else?

And you don't have to choose yet between the magic and the mundane options; you don't have to decide between "this is a place that was waiting for me" or "I can magically find my way there from a number of different places" yet.

You can look at the other options first and think about what they'll mean.

But for right now, I *do* want you to tell me a bit about what your Keep is *like*, whether or not it's somewhere you go to by magic or somewhere you just happened to find.

Is it ...

- ☼ a place of roses?
- ☼ a place of stone?
- ☼ a place of lilies?
- ☼ a place of cats?
- ☼ a place of climbing ivy?
- ☼ a place of rushing water?
- ☼ a place of cobbled streets?
- ☼ a place of birds?
- ☼ a place of magic?
- ☼ a place of books?
- ☼ a place of darkness?
- ☼ a place of dreams?
- ☼ a place of trees?

Is it

- ☼ peaceful?
- ☼ useful?
- ☼ otherworldly?
- ☼ archaic? Futuristic?
- ☼ reassuringly normal? Weird?
- ☼ populated? Isolated?
- ☼ overlooking the water?
- ☼ overlooking the world?
- ☼ overlooking Town?

Is it

- ☼ a place of secrets?
- ☼ a place of tricks?
- ☼ a place soft music is always playing?
- ☼ a hill of graves?
- ☼ shadows and tunnels?
- ☼ under the roots of a giant tree?
- ☼ a forest glade with animals?
- ☼ an empty urban area with something *else* instead of people:
 - voices in the distance?
 - balloons that float about in movement patterns like those of people in a town?
 - paintings of people on the walls, that sometimes move when you're not there?
 - or something else?
- ☼ a sturdy box that you can hide in to close away the world?
- ☼ a kind of Heaven?
- ☼ a clockworld world?

And if that wasn't enough to decide it, or if it was enough to decide it but not to describe it, tell me a little bit about what your Keep is like?

Step 4: Your “Talent”

And maybe, though not necessarily, you found a special talent as well. You were walking through Fortitude, or elsewhere, and suddenly there was a task that called to you. Something someone was doing, or something someone had left undone. Something that needed doing. Maybe it was something you’d done before and maybe it wasn’t. Maybe it’s something you’d thought about doing or wanted to be able to do before, and maybe it wasn’t. But —

This time, seeing the task before you —

It *called* to you.

You passed an instrument store and found yourself inside, almost without transition; taking down a flute or guitar or violin, almost without intending it, maybe *entirely* without intending it, and feeling the music rise. Or you tried out pottery, maybe it was just a goofy thing, like, a friend of yours suggested you take a class, and suddenly it was absorbing you. Or you passed a wall that was broken and found yourself fixing it; a neighbor making a boat and found yourself helping; a kitchen in turmoil, and found yourself saving it.

Maybe you were never a poet or writer, before, and then suddenly you were sitting on a hill with piles of discarded and perfected scraps of poetry beside you and *two days* had passed and you only had words and words and hunger and fitful memories of how, briefly, it had rained; how it had otherwise been bright.

It was the kind of thing —

Like being a kid again, sort of, back when your talents could surprise you; back when it wasn’t just the things you worked hard at being good at that made you awesome, but rather, when you could just suddenly *discover* that there was something about you worthy of others’ praise. And like being a kid again, also, in that *your joys* could come out of left field (though that still happens sometimes to adults.)

Suddenly you had this thing. This thing you were incredible at, this thing that fulfilled you, this thing where your skill was borderline magical, sometimes even *absolutely* magical, that you’d probably never expected at all.

It’s disorienting and it’s a source of goofy happiness, like puppy love or ... well, like puppies in general, really.

Magic visited itself suddenly upon you; and after that, you could of course still work to become better at

whatever, but the whole context of that was changed. You were suddenly a *prodigy* at this one thing.

It was *weird*. But also, totally awesome.

Now here’s your choice. Here’s the thing you get to choose:

- ✿ do you have a talent like that? Did you find a talent like that?
- ✿ or do you have a magical Keep, a place you can summon to you or find your way to from anywhere?
- ✿ or did it turn out that you didn’t get that — you *do have* a talent, we’ll talk about it in a moment, but it wasn’t one of those magical awesome things and it wasn’t a magical Keep, either. Your talent is something *wrong*.
- ✿ ... or do you have the potential for one of those things, obviously, because you’re one of the legendary 139, but for some weird reason or other you haven’t found it yet?

And if it’s a talent, is it ...

- ✿ for something extremely ordinary and pastoral, like baking, cleaning, or carpentry?
- ✿ for something vaguely dramatic, like sword-making, lockpicking, or unarmed combat?
- ✿ for something nautical, like sailing or navigation?
- ✿ for something extraordinary — specifically, this is an ordinary task but you don’t need the ordinary tools, e.g. you have a talent in:
 - healing by touch;
 - soothing by touch;
 - stone-shaping by touch;
 - writing without ink;
 - playing complex music on a grass flute;
- ✿ or something else?

Step 4a: Or is it Wrong?

Some of the 139 found themselves with talents for ... things they perhaps should not have been doing.

I don't know why.

I haven't interrogated the dead angel of the sun on this. I probably wouldn't if I could, although I can understand if *you* might want to.

Did you find yourself with a talent that *doesn't* overjoy you, a talent that leaves you feeling vaguely unhappy or obsessive or disturbed? A talent in ... well, the game usually calls it magic, because it's something that doesn't quite fit you, something that it really doesn't feel like you're *supposed* to be able to do? A power that can take you past the verge of where you want to be?

- ⚙️ A talent for "deviant science" — for a science that you know, on some level, brushes at its edges up against stuff that isn't science any more?
- ⚙️ A talent for "ghost magic" that risks pulling you into the affairs or even the world of the dead?
- ⚙️ A talent for one of the magical Skills of the Riders, the people of the void beyond the world?
 - The "Night-Craft" that lets you build minions from mud and spit?
 - Rider-style "Necromancy," which is a Skill for finding corpses and graves, luring people to you and confusing them, and binding various dead things to your service?
- ⚙️ A unique and disturbing magic?
- ⚙️ Or a magic that's actually kind of cool, unique or not, but which disturbs you anyway because it doesn't feel like you should be doing this?

I've left the shrine family magic and the fox-eared magic Skills off this list, but feel free to take one of those options, too, if you really think it fits.

Step 5: Your Skills

So let's talk about your Skills. You're going to have 8 points' worth.

I'm going to recommend the following three builds (see right):

- ⚙️ a build focused around a single awesome skill
- ⚙️ a build focused around a supernatural or magical skill, *or*
- ⚙️ a build focused around your Keep

Pick whichever suits you best!

Awesome Skill

The first build looks like this:

- ⚙️ **[Awesome Skill] 3** — You've become excellent at something.
- ⚙️ **[Skill from before] 2** — You're good at something from your former life.
- ⚙️ **Survival 2** — You're good at handling rough situations, somehow.
- ⚙️ **Road to my Keep 1** — You're familiar with getting to your Keep/places like it.

Supernatural Skill

The second build looks like this:

- ⚙️ **[Skill from before] 3** — You're still excellent at something.
- ⚙️ **[Superior/Magical Skill] 2** — ... and now you're magical, too!
- ⚙️ **Survival 2** — You're good at handling rough situations, somehow.
- ⚙️ **Road to my Keep 1** — You're familiar with getting to your Keep/places like it.

Keep-Focused Build

The third build looks like this:

- ⚙️ **[Skill from before] 3** — You're excellent at something from your old life.
- ⚙️ **[Keep]-Skill 3** — You're great in environments like your Keep.
- ⚙️ **Survival 2** — You're good at handling rough situations, somehow.



Step 5a: Choose your Awesome/Supernatural Skill

These are the Skills that I'd recommend if you discovered a new, awesome Skill once you arrived in Town — something that sprouted from a seed planted inside you by the passing of the angel of the sun:

- ✿ **Breaking and Entering 3**
- ✿ **Breaking/Destroying Stuff 3**
- ✿ **Card Shark 3**
- ✿ **Climbing to (and Balancing in) High Places 3**
- ✿ **Codes and Riddles 3**
- ✿ **Cooking 3**
- ✿ **Communication 3** — *that is, building a rapport with difficult targets*
- ✿ **Concealment 3**
- ✿ **Event or Expedition Coordination 3**
- ✿ **Gardening 3**
- ✿ **Infiltration 3**
- ✿ **Jam-Making 3**
- ✿ **Knitting and Sewing 3**
- ✿ **Knowing where Things Are 3**
- ✿ **Lulling Things to Sleep 3**
- ✿ **Martial Arts 3**
- ✿ **Makeovers 3**
- ✿ **Mediation 3**
- ✿ **Medicines and Poisons 3**
- ✿ **Messenger 3** — *that is, getting from person to person quickly with a message*
- ✿ **Musician 3**
- ✿ **Quartermaster 3**
- ✿ **Rules Lawyer 3**
- ✿ **Scholar 3**
- ✿ **Set Design 3**
- ✿ **Shipwright 3**
- ✿ **Sports, particularly Olympic Sports 3**
- ✿ **Storyteller 3**
- ✿ **Subdual Techniques 3**
- ✿ **Vehicles 3**
- ✿ **Veterinarian 3**
- ✿ **Woodworker 3**

Or does your new Skill work like something out of a fairy tale? Does it make your life, and you, and stuff involving it, a little bit *strange*? Like,

- ✿ **Superior Artist 2**
- ✿ **Superior Baking 2**
- ✿ **Superior Fishing 2**

- ✿ **Superior Grass Flute 2** — *including the ability to play symphonies on one*
- ✿ **Superior Handy around the House 2**
- ✿ **Superior Healer 2** — *including the ability to heal by touch*
- ✿ **Superior Litigator 2** — *though you need to know the relevant laws*
- ✿ **Superior Musician 2**
- ✿ **Superior Navigator 2**
- ✿ **Superior Poet 2**
- ✿ **Superior Potter 2**
- ✿ **Superior Punching Hand 2**
- ✿ **Superior Rapport 2** — *you can befriend random snakes, insect swarms, aliens, whatever*
- ✿ **Superior Ship's Hand 2**
- ✿ **Superior Stone-Shaper 2** — *including the ability to shape stone by touch*
- ✿ **Superior Tailor 2** — *what legends will they tell of your deeds?*
- ✿ **Superior Tinker 2**
- ✿ **Superior Vision 2**
- ✿ **Superior Warrior 2**
- ✿ **Superior Weapon-Crafter 2**

Or do you wind up with one of the actively “problematic” Skills I mentioned in step 4a?

- ✿ **Deviant Science 2**
- ✿ **Ghost Magic 2**
- ✿ **Night-Craft 2**
- ✿ **Rider Necromancy 2**
- ✿ **... or an original magical Skill 2?**

If you didn't want any of those, you'll probably instead wind up with a Keep-Skill — something that basically makes you awesome in environments like your Keep. For instance, if your Keep is a little shop, this is a “Little Shop Skill” and it lets you have a collection of shop-running, shop-understanding, and maybe even shop-finding abilities. If your Keep is a nightmarish maze of tunnels, then this is probably a Skill in navigating in the dark, handling the miscellaneous tasks that come up when one is living in a nightmarish maze of tunnels, and probably stuff like night-fighting and laying ambushes as well. If your Keep is a cottage and rose garden, your Cottage and Garden Skill is useful principally for home maintenance, but you'll be able to do it for anybody's cottage-like home or rose-like garden — not just your own!

Step 5b: Choose a Skill from your Former Life

Some of the Skills that might have lingered from your former life include:

- ✿ Acting
- ✿ Amazing Capacity to Learn
- ✿ Animal Empathy
- ✿ Archaeology (or Noir Archaeology)
- ✿ Art
- ✿ Arts of Memory
- ✿ At Home in New Places
- ✿ Bad Ideas
- ✿ Being Awesome
- ✿ Being Cantankerous
- ✿ Being Disorganized
- ✿ Being Outrageous
- ✿ Biotechnology
- ✿ Board Games
- ✿ Captures Emotions at Will
- ✿ Caretaker of the Sick, Needy, and Defenseless
- ✿ Computery/Geek Stuff
- ✿ Composer
- ✿ Conjuring of Worlds
- ✿ Contagious Laugh
- ✿ Cooking
- ✿ Cute Nemesisiology
- ✿ Diplomacy
- ✿ Eating Ice Cream
- ✿ Encouraging Cooperation
- ✿ Engineering
- ✿ Exaggerating
- ✿ Fantastical Tales
- ✿ Fencing
- ✿ Fierce Concentration
- ✿ Finding Trivia
- ✿ Firebrand
- ✿ Firefighting
- ✿ Fluctuating
- ✿ Gaming (or Game Mastering)
- ✿ Gardening
- ✿ Generosity
- ✿ Good Listener
- ✿ Grandfatherly or Grandmotherly Doings —
most of the legendary 139 arrived as teens or twenty-somethings, but they'd often been old in their past.
- ✿ “Helpful” Software
- ✿ Historian
- ✿ Imagination
- ✿ Inertia
- ✿ Informational Bricolage
- ✿ Inspiring the Best in Those I Love
- ✿ Jem Making
- ✿ Knowing What I Want and Getting It
- ✿ Landlord and Tenant Lore
- ✿ “Let’s Work Together!”
- ✿ Leadership
- ✿ Librarianship
- ✿ Logic & Rhetoric
- ✿ Loyalty
- ✿ Make Up a Character So Thoroughly That
They Exist in a Small but Real Way
- ✿ Making You Laugh Even if You Don’t Want To
- ✿ Manga Artist
- ✿ Martial Artist
- ✿ Mathematics
- ✿ Mediation
- ✿ Medicine
- ✿ Old War Stories
- ✿ Order Through Disorder
- ✿ Organizing
- ✿ Painting Miniature Reptiles
- ✿ Parenting
- ✿ Passion-Filled Warrior
- ✿ Philosophy
- ✿ Photography
- ✿ Physics
- ✿ Pontification
- ✿ Project Coordination
- ✿ Psychology and Mythology
- ✿ Putting Things Off Until the Last
Possible Moment
- ✿ Puzzle Solving
- ✿ Quality Assurance
- ✿ Reading
- ✿ Ridiculously Epic Fisticuffs
- ✿ Secrets
- ✿ Sewing
- ✿ Shedding a New Light on Your Problem
- ✿ Shouting
- ✿ Silver Linings — *the finding of, etc.*
- ✿ Sleight of Hand/Illusions
- ✿ Snark
- ✿ Sorcery
- ✿ Software Development
- ✿ Spoiled but Lovable

- ✿ Stargazing
- ✿ Stingdancing
- ✿ Storytelling
- ✿ Submarine Engineering
- ✿ Superior Dispute Resolution
- ✿ Superior Heartsmith
- ✿ Superior Infuriation
- ✿ Superior Moderator
- ✿ Superior Sailor
- ✿ Superior Silver Tongue
- ✿ Tea Drinking
- ✿ Teaching Foreign Languages
- ✿ Teaching Games
- ✿ Theoretical Aesthetics
- ✿ Toughness
- ✿ Trollishly Kind to Children
- ✿ Veteran Soldier
- ✿ Wearing a Cool Jacket
- ✿ Well-Intentioned Berating
- ✿ Willpower *and*
- ✿ Writing

Step 6: Your Affliction

Each of the legendary 139 has a mysterious power. We've talked about it some above, and it certainly comes into play with your Skills, but the fundamental form is an "Affliction." You can choose one of the following for your special Skill:

- ✿ **Affliction:** I am driven to do awesome things with [Awesome/Supernatural Skill].
- ✿ **Affliction:** I can't fail with [Awesome/Supernatural Skill].
- ✿ **Affliction:** I'm the best there is at [Awesome/Supernatural Skill].

Or one of these for your Keep:

- ✿ **Affliction:** I may summon the Keep to me, so that it superimposes itself on wherever I am;
- ✿ **Affliction:** I may transform a sufficiently similar place *into* my Keep; *or*
- ✿ **Affliction:** I can always find a short path to my Keep, no matter how far away it "ought" to be.



Step 7: Choose your Starting Arc

Some of you are on an **Otherworldly** Arc now — ever since the death of the sun, you’ve been called towards another place, pulled away from the mortal world. You’ve been loosely anchored to reality, it doesn’t have a grip on you, so that when the sun shines through you it’s like you might drift away.

Maybe soon you can find out what that means.

Others of you are on an **Aspect** Arc. You’ve been trying to become *better*. You’ve been trying to make the most of what you’ve been given, to find your destiny and your purpose and what your talent or your keep is *for*; maybe even tried to hunt for that sky-island treasure, but it didn’t work. You never really got any further than “I’ve become more than I was.” You never found a real path to where you were going. You got stuck. Maybe soon you can push past that.

The lucky ones are on a **Shepherd** Arc. You’ve connected to the world. You’ve found your place here. Your Keep, or your Talent, has given you a way to *belong*. You’ve found your place, and you’ve settled in.

If you are not so lucky the Arc for you is **Emptiness**. Your Keep is a place of retreat. Your Talent is a way of retreat. You are falling from the world as you have most likely *been* falling from the world, to some extent, since you first understood that the angel of the houses of the sun was departing, walking right past you, from the world. It doesn’t matter to you that the sun’s been replaced, or at least it doesn’t matter *enough*. Even with

that, the hurt of Jade Irinka’s death is still too great. The loss is still too great.

... or is there something else? A different problem? Is there something else that didn’t get fixed, something else that didn’t get replaced, something else in you or the world that was broken that didn’t get repaired when a new sun rose?

For a last few of you the Arc is **Mystic**. You get lost in it. You *fall* into it, into what it means to have witnessed the ending of the sun.

Step 8: Choose your Mirror

There was someone else on the ship who wound up with a talent a lot like yours. The story will call them **Your Mirror**, and their name is

✿ **Riordan Kottos**, a boy; or

✿ **Viktoria Lane**, a girl ...

... or was it one of the other names from the rolls above?

You didn’t like them. Or rather you liked them in some ways, they had so much potential, they were one of the few people who could really *understand* the stuff you cared about. You even traveled together, worked together, once or twice ...

But there was a fundamental philosophical difference. It ended up tearing the two of you apart.

They were like you, but they did it wrong. They were *wicked*, not as strangers and creeps can be wicked but as you could be wicked, if you let yourself. They stood at a choice-point that you’ve visited often yourself, and

Fortitude: the Glass-Maker’s Dragon

Some of the legendary 139 have found themselves restored to youth, or never left it. If that’s the case, or if you’re playing a game with a high average PC age, you can fit one of the legendary 139 into a Pastoral campaign.

If that campaign is **Fortitude: the Glass-Maker’s Dragon**, I recommend you start with a story like:

- ✿ **Chuubo and the Tiresome Temples**
- ✿ **Rinley Yatskaya Looks for Adventure**
- ✿ **Principal Entropy Builds a Fountain**
- ✿ **The Pleasure Ship, or**
- ✿ **The Drowned World**

Most of these are focused on how you interact with the NPCs around you — but if you know what you’re doing,

if your group is OK with hacking the campaign a little to adjust its protagonists — you can outright substitute yourself for **the Wishing Boy (or Girl)**, **the Prodigy**, or **the Troublemaker** in the structure of the campaign.

For instance, if you declare yourself **the Troublemaker**, you’re still one of the legendary 139 and you’re still not Rinley Yatskaya, but anyone who starts with a free Connection to the Troublemaker has that Connection to you; the Arcs of the Troublemaker are *about* you; and you’ll just generally fill Rinley’s role in the game.

In Fortitude: the Glass-Maker’s Dragon, members of the legendary 139 receive a Virtue and Shard Power as if they were immigrants from Earth. They start with 2 Divine Health Levels and 5 MP.

where you said: *no, I can't turn that way, I must take the windward path*, they chose the leeward way instead. Where you concluded that petty moral considerations cannot stand in the way of SCIENCE!, they chose otherwise; or, conversely, where you realized that you must hold back from going over that verge, where you stuck to smaller and less dangerous projects, they fared out boldly into new frontiers. Where you were technical, they were intuitive; or, where you were intuitive, they were technical. Whatever.

The point is: you know the temptation that they faced. You can see why someone would go the other way. But you believed that they shouldn't, that it was wrong, and the other way around, for you.

What is their Keep or Talent like?

Step 9: Choose your Troubles — Gothic/Fairy Tale

Your Mirror might not be the only member of the 139 that you've had a troubled relationship with. Your interactions with your Mirror have probably been the *worst*, but if you're in a **Gothic** or **Fairy Tale** game, you've also had both long-standing fights and long-standing friendship with at least three others:

- ✿ **The Pharmacist**, Narciso or Erin Castillion, a clean-cut young doctor with a Talent for medicines and poisons;
- ✿ **Red Hood**, as Kayin or Tendaji Zhao is called, whose Keep is a wild woods; *and*
- ✿ **Skyler**, a slippery troublemaker whose abilities I don't actually know. (Do you?)
 - ... no.
 - ... yes. Well, basically. They're like this:

And it's not like you hate these people. In fact in a lot of ways they are your peers and your friends. Maybe even your family. It's just ...

Eventually something happened, and after that you didn't get together much.

You don't have to go into everything. You don't even have to have issues with all of them — you could decide that you don't know Skyler and that Red Hood's just a friend. But you should pick one issue, one incident, one thing to start things out with, something that happened that you're going to need to get over or *they're* going to need to get over if you ever have to work together again.

What was it?



Step 9: Choose your Troubles — Immersive Fantasy

Sometime during the course of the first Arc, in an **Immersive** fantasy, you're going to meet a troublesome individual. Consider this encounter the floating of a trial balloon for a possible future dear friend who irritates you endlessly or future rival/enemy you'll have great chemistry with (although, of course, it's possible that they'll end up being neither.)

You can change your mind if something else becomes *perfect* during the course of play, and the HG has access to these NPCs to do other stuff with them, but normally you'll choose now whether your first Arc's troublesome individual will be:

☼ The **Sulky Lake Spirit, Senka or Lucas**, who may also be a member of the 139. The sulky lake spirit commands the octopi and seals, has hair that spreads a long way through the water, and lives somewhere in Big Lake. Whether this individual is Senka or Lucas, their personality is basically Eeyore's either way. If necessary to maximize *this* character's romantic suitability, though, that can be a temporary phase.

This option requires that you spend at least *some* of your time out on the water — at least, I won't help you fix any problems that arise with your early quests if you do not!

☼ **Skyler**, a slippery troublemaker from the 139 — though you, of course, are more likely to call them

- “that-idiot-Skyler”
- “that-bastard-Skyler” ...*or is it*
- “that... that... *headdesk headdesk headdesk whyyyy*”

...but I guess it's also true that

- Skyler *did* save your life that time;
- you *did* mess things up for Skyler badly that one time; *and/or*
- you *did* make a promise to a mutual friend to take care of this person.

N.B. I don't actually know what Skyler can do — do you?

- ... no.
- ... yes. Well, basically. (What is it?)

☼ The **Renegade Minister, Bledrith or Annabel Roegen**, a fallen minister of the sky kingdom looking to resurrect Jade Irinka — whatever the cost!

Renegade Minister Roegen is most likely a “bird-faced spirit,” meaning that their natural form is a human-sized ibis or egret (possibly wearing glasses and/or a spangled vest) that can “cast off its feathered cloak” and become a human with a bird-like face. If necessary to maximize romantic interest the bird face itself can be removed, becoming a flat mask held on a stick while the Minister assumes a human countenance.

☼ Or **Eclipse**, the god of the death of the sun — a terrifying divine spirit with level 3 Changeling magic and a level 3 🌿 **Otherworldly (Spiritual)** Arc giving him the power to evoke shadows, eclipses, flashbacks to, and other intimations of the death of the former sun. Normally I wouldn't think of this individual as a viable romantic interest, friend, or even enemy-with-sparks, but what the heck! If you want to have something going on with Eclipse in the first Arc, we might as well float that trial balloon!

You can also choose the “default” way they get involved with your life —

☼ Does **the Renegade Minister** fall from the sky and crash, quite literally, into your life and act all self-important and snooty and like you're beneath them?

- And is this:
 - ▶ Bledrith, an infuriating guy, or
 - ▶ Annabel, an infuriating woman?
- Will they:
 - ▶ land in the shape of a bird and break their wing but reveal their human form and stomp out after you've been taking care of them for a few days?
 - ▶ fall through your roof or something in human form?
 - ▶ crash into your home on a bike, car, or run-away chariot?
 - ▶ and is it on fire at the time?

- ⚙️ Or will you be in the water (if your Keep or recreation involves boats) when you run into the drifting hair of **the Sulky Lake Spirit**?
 - who is...
 - ▶ that annoying woman Senka, or
 - ▶ that annoying guy Lucas?
 - and afterwards you're going to need to scour the core campaign Region for parts or help or something; is that because
 - ▶ they messed up your boat/Keep and it's going to be tricky to fix it?
 - ▶ you accidentally hurt *them* but their nature makes it hard to treat them with normal techniques?
- ⚙️ Or are we going to go with **Eclipse**? Will a terrible shadow, the wicked edge of the power of Eclipse, sweep through your home as if searching for something — leaving you feeling insecure in your Keep and not sure what to do about it?
- ⚙️ Or is it going to be **Skyler**? Just like with the Sulky Lake Spirit, you're going to have to scour the core campaign Region afterwards for parts or help to replace or fix something; is that because...
 - Skyler's going to steal/borrow something important?
 - Break something important?
 - Crash into something important?
- ⚙️ Or do you have a concept of your own for something else?

Step 10: Choose your Bond

As one of the legendary 139, you have a **Bond** — an in-game power that strengthens you when you take certain actions.

For most of you it's something that relates to the quest for the treasure, like:

- ⚙️ **Bond:** I'm always thinking of the sky island's treasure.
- ⚙️ **Bond:** I dream of doors.
- ⚙️ **Bond:** I have a hard time turning people down when they try to drag me into things.
- ⚙️ **Bond:** I owe people debts because of earlier attempts.
- ⚙️ **Bond:** I was hurt on such a quest. *or*
- ⚙️ **Bond:** I'm wary of the other members of the 139.

Or it's something to do with the people you left behind, like:

- ⚙️ **Bond:** I'm driven to bring my friends and family here. *or*
- ⚙️ **Bond:** I can't remember what I left behind.

There is a tree somewhere on an island in the sky behind a door, with its roots around a treasure chest, and the treasure chest is locked, and inside that chest is a heart, perhaps.

I do not know.



YOUR NAME

CATCHPHRASE

EMOTION XP

BOND

AFFLICTION

SKILLS

PERKS

ARC TRAITS

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES AND POWERS

CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

NAME

GENRE

IN-GENRE ACTION NAMES

QUEST INFORMATION

THE LEGEND

YOUR KEEP

YOUR TALENT

YOUR MIRROR

YOUR TROUBLE

WHY YOU WERE ON THE LEGENARY SHIP

WHAT IT WAS LIKE WHEN THE SUN WENT BY IT

WOUNDS

HEALTH LEVELS

DIVINE

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

TOUGH

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

NORMAL

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐



The Baroque and Dream-Like Journeys

of the Legendary 139



These quests form a generic Arc for a Gothic dream-quest — for the story of a relatively wise and relatively established character, often a teacher or mentor, who delves into forgotten and forbidden places, fabulous heights and depths, in order to help their students, achieve their own ambitions, or deal with leftover baggage from their past. Like many quest lines, the passage is rough, but I'm expecting its endings to be sweet.

The default here is a Shepherd Arc, which would start with these quests:

- ✿ **A Mysterious Teacher.** You work with your students or apprentices.
- ✿ **A Baroque Invention.** You aspire to greatness. It's a lot of work.
- ✿ **A Troubled History.** Someone you have a troubled history with needs your help.

And might readily continue with:

- ✿ **A Forlorn State.** You are imprisoned or trapped by your own obsessions.
- ✿ **Strange Tales of the 139.** You travel peculiar, baroque landscapes.

However, this isn't *just* a Shepherd Arc. You can shuffle the quests a bit and have a fabulous Aspect, Emptiness, Mystic, or Otherworldly Arc.

ASPECT ARCS

If the focus of this Arc is not your students but your dream, you'll tackle the quests like so:

- ✿ **A Troubled History.** To reach your dream, you must reach out to someone who you don't really want to reach out to.
- ✿ **A Mysterious Teacher.** You work with your students or apprentices.
- ✿ **A Baroque Invention.** You aspire to greatness. It's a lot of work.

And again continue with:

- ✿ **A Forlorn State.** You are imprisoned or trapped by your own obsessions.
- ✿ **Strange Tales of the 139.** You travel peculiar, baroque landscapes.

EMPTINESS ARCS

If this Arc shows your withdrawal from the world, or if it focuses on the death of Jade Irinka, then it might start more like (*top right*):

- ✿ **A Troubled History.** Your relationship with your main human contacts has this.
- ✿ **A Baroque Invention.** Certain hopes or fears obsess you.
- ✿ **A Forlorn State.** You are imprisoned, or that obsession escalates overwhelmingly.

And potentially finish out with:

- ✿ **Strange Tales of the 139.** You travel peculiar, baroque landscapes.
- ✿ **A Mysterious Teacher.** You return and work with your students or apprentices.

MYSTIC ARCS

If the focus of this Arc is not on your own dreams but on the way that the touch of the passing sun has changed you, you'll tackle the quests like so:

- ✿ **Strange Tales of the 139.** You travel peculiar, baroque landscapes.
- ✿ **A Forlorn State.** You are imprisoned or trapped by your own obsessions.
- ✿ **A Troubled History.** You reach out for help to someone, even though you don't really want to.

And continue with:

- ✿ **A Mysterious Teacher.** You receive help from students, apprentices, and peers.
- ✿ **A Baroque Invention.** You have an idea that might fix everything.

OTHERWORLDLY ARCS

If the focus of this Arc is more on how visions or your Keep are pulling you away from the world, even though you kind of want to stay attached to it, you'll tackle the quests like so:

- ✿ **A Baroque Invention.** You have an idea or goal that drives you.
- ✿ **Strange Tales of the 139.** You travel peculiar, baroque landscapes.
- ✿ **A Forlorn State.** You are betrayed by your own dreams.

And continue with:

- ✿ **A Mysterious Teacher.** You work with your students and apprentices.
- ✿ **A Troubled History.** You try to fix a troubled relationship with a peer.

A Mysterious Teacher

20 OR 35 XP QUEST



This quest focuses on a relatively pastoral, relatively peaceful portion of your life. You've settled into a routine. You may be happy or you may be empty, you may be comfortable or in distress, but you've found a rhythm of sorts nevertheless.

In general this quest assumes that you're embedded in social networks — you have peers, you have a place to be and exercise your talents, and most importantly you have students: you don't have to be an official teacher or take up a position at Horizon's School, but there's someone that you're teaching *something* to. You're a tutor, mentor, or parent; you're a shop-owner with an apprentice; you're giving a small class in origami or emergency medicine now and then. *Something*.

This quest often ends with a moment or image that reminds you of who you are: something that holds up a mirror to your nature, and usually judges it pretty kindly. (Though that last depends, of course, upon the circumstances and the Arc.)



A Mysterious Teacher (Simplified)

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

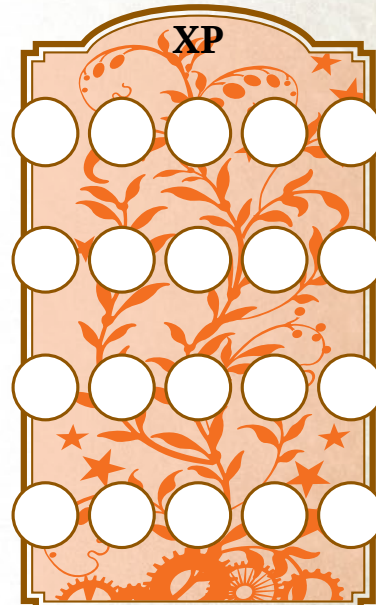
- you're impressed into labor or transformed into an animal, typically as punishment for a theft;
- one of the people who serves as an anchor to your daily routine and daily life betrays you.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 10 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

- you discover parallels between a fairy tale and your life
- you listen to an old friend's stories
- you have a vision while staring into the water
- time drifts away from you

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.





A Mysterious Teacher

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- ☼ the sun shines on you through a magic window;
- ☼ you're given a new suit of clothing or some token that others will recognize you by;
- ☼ you're being drowned, suffocated, or choked by something transparent or translucent (e.g., drowning under ice or choking on molten glass, possibly as part of a dream sequence.)

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 15 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when you:

- 🌀⚡ tell the story of someone who turned, or was turned, into an animal
- 🌀 repair a roof or deck
- 🌀🌀 (literally or figuratively) bump into a friend you haven't seen in a while
- 🌀👁️ celebrate renewal in some fashion (bake hot cross buns for Easter, do a self-purification ritual, replant a garden, watch over a flame over Longestnight, etc.)
- 👁️ admire a body of water
- 👁️ play with a puzzle box or a bit of glass
- 👁️⚡ listen to a student's story about something

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP

A Baroque Invention

25 OR 35 XP QUEST

1: 

2:  

3: 




5: 

You have a dream. A vision. An idea. There's something you want to do. Maybe even need to do. But the work involved! Even just *planning* it —













It exhausts you. It's at the limits of what is possible for a person like yourself.



The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

-  you get a bronchial infection;
 -  you coincidentally and unexpectedly receive news or information about whatever you're trying to do, create, build, or explore. (e.g., you're building a flying machine of some sort ... and you stumble on Leonardo daVinci's lost plans in an unrelated incident. Or, you're planning an assault on Heaven ... and you learn something about its defenses.)
 -  you're ambushed in a confined place by enemies in masks.
- You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 15 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

-   you're exhausted and reeling, at least partly because you've been working so hard organizing and planning
-   you agonize over whether what you're working on is even a good *idea*
-   you dream of a distant place and of treasure at the roots of a tree
-   you work or sleep in a space cluttered with piles and piles of papers and notes
-   you argue with someone at a committee meeting
-  you're packing supplies or prepping a vehicle for travel
-  you're eating beans — usually dried beans or jellybeans

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP



A Baroque Invention (Simplified)

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- ✿ a magical plant grows out of control, possibly in a dreamscape;
- ✿ you play through something that boils down to a planning/paperwork montage, or, the HG agrees that you've done enough planning but offers to skip the montage part.

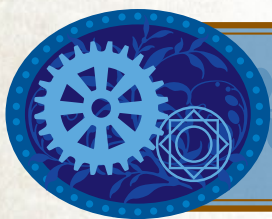
You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 10 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

- 🌿 you take on more work than you can realistically handle
- 🌿👤 you storm out of a meeting
- 🔪👤 something goes wrong with your preparations
- 👤 you hunt for information

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP



A Troubled History (Simplified)

As long as it's relevant to the emotional and social baggage you have with an old connection, the HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- ✿ a third party helps mediate between you and whomever you have the troubled relationship with;
- ✿ you ignore protocol and potentially humiliate yourself with a confession or an explanation of how you really feel about something.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 10 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

- 👤 you pace, ranting, in front of a fountain or a basin
- 🌀 you go somewhere you're afraid to go
- 🌀🌿 you trust someone you're afraid to trust
- 👤🌿 you attempt to "read" (do a divination using) the coffee grounds left over after a cup of Turkish coffee

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP

A Troubled History

20 OR 35 XP QUEST

- 1:  
- 3:  
- 5:  

There's someone you hurt, or maybe they hurt you.
There was a line drawn, and somebody crossed it. You
wound up with *baggage*.
... but there was still something there worth saving.

This can go down in many ways, but the *default* is:

- ✿ **For Shepherd Arcs:** the focus is usually on how they will need *your* help — it's your chance to either repay an old debt or forgive an old wrong.
- ✿ **For Aspect/Mystic Arcs:** usually, *you* need *their* help, and may have to eat crow if you did them wrong, deal with your baggage if they did you wrong, or possibly even both.
- ✿ **For Emptiness/Otherworldly Arcs:** nobody *needs* anybody's help, exactly. It's just that relationships are precious. People are precious. You want to fix or hang on to them if you can.

















A Troubled History

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- 🌸 you make yourself genuinely vulnerable to someone you have baggage with (emotionally or in terms of your physical circumstances and safety);
- 🌸 you discover that some place that used to be important to you isn't there any more;
- 🌸 after a silence, you and someone you're trying to reconcile with both start talking at once.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 15 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

-   you sit down, frustrated, on a bench by a fountain
-   you're walking on a cobbled street, all knotted up with tension
-   you're looking for somebody you used to know
-   you spend a while talking elliptically around the meat of this quest — avoiding the topic so thoroughly that much of the conversation might well be emotes or comments on food or drink
-   you deliver a package that you don't really want to pass on
-   you drink Turkish coffee with somebody
-   you confide your feelings or memories about this stuff with a third party

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP

A Forlorn State

25 OR 45 XP QUEST

2: 

3:  

4:  

You perceived the jewel of your ambition — the treasure that you longed for — and it betrayed you; the light of it cast a shadow, and that shadow imprisoned you, immured you in a forlorn state.

That is, at least, the *dramatization* of what has happened to you.



In this quest something about your ambition or obsession, possibly including “a real and physical enemy that you encountered along the way,” looms so largely in your life that it’s trapped you. You’re imprisoned or estranged from the world, you’re having trouble connecting to things and people around you, and you’re in a cycle of decay where the things you must do to survive and keep from falling apart completely are dragging you down further.

But all is not lost; this quest is also your struggle to break free.












A Forlorn State (Simplified)

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

-  your attempts to escape a feast or other revel are repeatedly interrupted;
-  part of yourself goes missing or is taken.


























You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 10 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

-   some sort of spiritual radiance is dissolving you from within
-  you lack necessary supplies and don’t know how to get them
-   you realize that you’ve fallen apart, become (arguably) degraded
-   your friends stage an intervention
-   you talk about meaningless nonessentials with a shade, ghost, or other shadowy image or doppelganger

















You can combine this with an XP Action, but you’re not required to.

XP



- ☼ you find a hidden room where water flows;
- ☼ you're trapped under the earth, in a place of wood and dirt or stone;
- ☼ you hear other people worrying about you when they don't know you're there (or think you're asleep);
- ☼ you kiss a dangerous faerie-like creature, usually of the appropriate gender to be a romantic interest or at least vice versa.

-  you evaluate your supplies and provender
-   you're blinded by the spiritual/imaginary vision of a flame
-   you encounter a shade, ghost, or other misty spirit
or doppelganger
-   the sound of your screaming, or arguing with yourself, rises
to a public place
-   you eat an animal raw
-   you praise the object of your obsession/devotion
-   you build something featuring wooden boards
-   you can't find half of your own thoughts, or you're missing
something else, like your shadow
-  you eat apple pie

XP



Strange Tales of the 139 (Simplified)

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- you find music playing somewhere unexpected and surprising;
- you row a boat across a dark and silent lake;
- (e.g. from a Transition) the world around you dissolves into light.

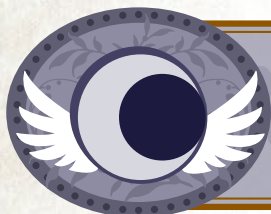
You can earn up to two of these bonuses, once each, for a total of up to 10 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

- time slips by while you suffer a vision of some kind
- you wander amidst clouds and haze
- you sight something interesting from a vehicle or mount
- you argue earnestly about trivia
- you dream of the firebird

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP



Strange Tales of the 139

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- you trick something far bigger and more dangerous than yourself;
- you ride a magical horse or wolf;
- you visit a witch or oracle's cottage.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 15 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

- you find your path
- you lose your way
- you perform strange rituals
- you talk about your connection to the sun
- you talk about what you're looking for on these journeys
- you dream of the firebird
- you're tempted by magical food, possibly in a dream

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP



Baroque Journeys

the Legendary 139 Arcs



These are some of the stories that you might play through as one of the legendary 139, particularly in a **Gothic** game —

✿ **Secret.** In which you unlock a new secret from your Talent or your Keep.

✿ **An Enemy's Child.** In which someone very much like you has left someone behind.

✿ **Moon Rabbit.** In which you take elixir to the moon.

✿ **Someone you Left Behind.** In which you find somebody that you left behind.

Secret

the first Baroque Arc

In this Arc you're going to find a secret — you're going to stumble on or develop a neat elaboration to the Keep or Talent that you've been given.

A MYSTERIOUS TEACHER

It's been 2-10 years since you came to Town — maybe a little more or less. Your life's settled into some kind of routine.

Lately you've been teaching some kids —

- ✿ as a tutor?
- ✿ Parent?
- ✿ Schoolteacher?
- ✿ Mysterious foreigner giving them tips on being heroes?
- ✿ Or did you pick up an apprentice or two?

— and hanging out with old friends and taking care of whatever your business might happen to be.

But the magic of the ship hasn't left you.

Lately there's been a secret teasing at your consciousness — a new technique for your Talent, an elaboration of what you can do with your Keep, or maybe a way to better live with the burden of an unpleasant or awkward gift.

This quest explores how you balance these things. It ends with a sudden insight or vision that helps you understand who you are.

A BAROQUE INVENTION

This quest is focused on your *idea*. You're working on it. You're trying to figure out this secret. You're trying to push past whatever's holding you back.

And you're getting close to a solution when this quest ends — probably.

You're close to an answer. But the ending of this quest, it turns out, isn't actually about that. This quest ends, instead, with the news of the death of an old enemy or rival — **Your Mirror**.

It's possible you hadn't even thought about them in a really long time.

It's possible you'd practically forgotten they were ever there.

They had pretty much the same Talent, or a pretty similar Keep, but their style was so very different! And they were working on something, it turns out, an awful lot like whatever you're working on now.

Oh.

And they're dead. You get home, whatever, you take off your shoes? I don't know. You look at your mail, or someone comes by, or someone who was already at your home tells you. They're dead.

A TROUBLED HISTORY

Back when you first came to Town, there was a lot of ... excitement about your powers, and the story of the treasure hidden on an island somewhere in the sky. It was common to get together with others of the 139 and

not just socialize but try to *do* stuff — to find a purpose for the gifts you’ve been given.

Back then everyone thought that not only had you been given a destiny, but an *immediate* one: like, half of you were expecting that you’d get swept up in cosmic events within a matter of days.

So you had adventures, and you had fights, and you organized and argued and went on expeditions to the hidden places in Town and the islands of the near Outside. More than a few of you actively tried to reach the sky.

And in particular you had this really strained friendship with —

- ❁ **The Pharmacist**, a clean-cut young doctor with a Talent for medicines and poisons;
- ❁ **Red Hood**, whose Keep is a wild woods; or
- ❁ **Skylar**, a slippery troublemaker ...

And it wasn’t like you hated them. It was just ... eventually something happened, and after that you didn’t get together much.

What was it?

... but anyway, the thing is, the stuff you’re working on now? It’s right up their alley. You should really talk to them. Maybe for your own sake, maybe for theirs, maybe just because you’ve been reminded. But ... talk.

A FORLORN STATE

In this quest you lose yourself, just a little, in the hunt for the secret. It becomes too important to you, it looms too largely in your mind, and you lose perspective. It’s a gift from the angel of the houses of the sun, so it probably doesn’t drive you to hurt anybody else, but you’re likely willing to hurt *yourself*, at least a little, pushing onwards towards the answers.

Often you are haunted by a memory of **Your Mirror**, as described above, or a shadow or projection of them created by your own mind.

STRANGE TALES OF THE 139

This quest focuses on a journey that you and **Your Mirror** took, some time ago.

You may also wind up taking a trip of some sort now, if there’s a reason for it, or at least having strange and otherworldly experiences as you work on a project. You may send yourself repeatedly into the near Outside or

Bluebell Park or the secret places under Horizon or something as part of your hunt for the secret.

But most importantly, this quest is *about* a journey you and **Your Mirror** took, to find the sky-island treasure or something else, which was in some way relevant to what you are doing now.

You can generally earn quest bonus XP in a flashback, including (if this is a helpful option) a tiny 2-3-second flashback that becomes relevant to a scene in the present. Alternately, you can use information and stories from your flashbacks as justification for and explanation of actions (and quest bonus XP-earning actions) in the present of the game.

At the end of this quest you will usually receive a vision — you’ll encounter Jade Irinka, the dead angel of the houses of the sun, and she’ll tell you something, affirm something, lighten your spirit, or whatever else might be appropriate to close out the quest and (when appropriate) the Arc.

Example

You have a talent for *Baking*. You’re on a miraculous **Otherworldly Arc**. Your Arc chooses both the order and the implications of the quests; for instance, the first Otherworldly quest is always focused on the fact that

“You’re having dreams or otherworldly experiences that connect you to something beyond and outside yourself.”

And, in addition to everything I’ve said above, completing the quest is going to tell you

“what you have to do about this — a path you are called to walk, or something you must do to keep these experiences under control. It is possible that you’ve found 2-3 options; if so, it is possible to choose wrongly.”


So putting that together with the explanations of the quests above, for *you* this Arc is going to look like this:

A Baroque Invention: You dream of making living pastries — marching gingerbread armies and puff-dragons. You occasionally actually try to do this, with limited success. And you’re getting close to a solution. You might even *be* at a solution ...

When you learn that **Your Mirror**, who also baked such bakings, who was thereby closer to you than

practically anyone in Town, but whose baking style you absolutely loathed, is dead.

You decide to go on anyway. Though.

Finishing this quest, you pick up  **Otherworldly (Child of the Ash) 0** — you’ve made contact with your Element, “the Gingerbread Kingdom;” learned to bake a Mood of “Home;” and maybe even developed a “Wicked Mode” in honor of **Your Mirror** where you put on your mask of a frowning gingerbread person and your Mood becomes “Get Out! Go Away!” instead.

Strange Tales of the 139: You remember a journey you took with **Your Mirror**, as you work with your living pastries more.

Remembering them is enough to give you pause, really, particularly when you find out that they too were in contact with the Gingerbread Kingdom before they died. But just when you think you might actually give up on this, that you might *be* giving up on this, you have this vision. You see Jade Irinka, slain angel of the houses of the sun.

And somehow, after that, you feel like your course is clearer. Like this really is your destiny.

It’s like the light of the dead sun baked gingery strength and sweetness right into the wibbly, mushy aorta of your heart!*

A Forlorn State: Your work obsesses you. It traps you. You may also find yourself haunted by further memories of **Your Mirror**, or kidnapped by a gingerbread minion with their face. (You may even wind up baking this horror into being, yourself, although admittedly your Arc won’t give you the power to do so until you reach **Child of the Ash 3** so you’d need a lenient HG or a suitable Perk.)

Finishing this quest frees you from that obsession or prison, typically, and gets you back in touch with the parts of yourself that are true to yourself, that are *not* like **Your Mirror**, and are untouched and undamaged by your culinary hubris.

This is the third quest in the Arc, and it’s a long one too, so there’s a good chance that when you finish this quest you’re *done* — that you’ve completed your first Arc, finished your journey, and even if you change Arcs and go another route you will always and forever have the hidden potential to turn into some sort of bakery *kaiju*.

Or, of course, you could continue for another one or two quests ...

A Mysterious Teacher: if you get this far on an Otherworldly Arc, it means that not *enough* of you was “untouched and undamaged.” You’ve found something in yourself that remains, that hasn’t been hurt, but more of you has been lost!

I think that means that you pull away from this stuff. For a while you focus on the ordinary stuff instead. You trudge through your life feeling a little bit like a ghost or gingerbread shadow of yourself. But in the end you realize that you were/are, well, *you* all along.

A Troubled History: I think that realization drives you to to to an old friend to talk about stuff. You get back into contact with **the Pharmacist, or Skyler, or Red Hood**.

The truth is, I think they need this more than you do, but that’s not why you do it. You don’t do it for them. Or even for yourself, really. It’s just, people need people. You know? And all this stuff has reminded you of that.

That said, there’s still the standard Otherworldly 5 quest outcome. This is almost certainly the “Live Together, Die Alone” version of Otherworldly 5 — so at or before the end of the quest, you’ll discover that they’re in turmoil, or lost, or something, and you can help them find peace, acceptance, or their way back.



* Or some other metaphor, such as somebody would actually say.

An Enemy's Child

the second Baroque Arc

This is the story of how you're asked, or you ask yourself, to take on responsibility for someone that **Your Mirror**, or some other old rival or enemy, left behind.

They may not have been old enough to have a child to take care of. If so, then we're talking about a younger sibling, an SO, a kid that reminds you of them, or just a kid that they were teaching or taking care of, instead.

If you don't already know a name for this kid, I'd suggest they go by **Daniel** or **Kelly**.

A MYSTERIOUS TEACHER

This quest mostly gives context to your life in general. It's mostly about how you live, with or without that added responsibility.

But it's also what builds to the point of formally saying: "yeah. I'm going to take this kid on."

Maybe it's sudden, particularly on a Shepherd Arc. On a Shepherd Arc, it's often at the very last *second* of the quest that you realize that they need you, or find out that they exist, or understand that you want to step forward here. Often despite all the slow buildup before that point you've never actually even had the *prospect* of actually doing this cross your mind.

Or maybe you knew, but you didn't realize until the end *the full weight*; like, the *level* of the responsibility catches you by surprise. It's like you've volunteered to carry somebody else's bags for them and then suddenly discovered that those bags are full of weights.

I guess it's not always like that.

Sometimes it'll be more obvious to you what's coming. You're not surprised by it. A little reluctant or concerned, maybe, but not surprised. You could see where this was going from the start.

A BAROQUE INVENTION

You work on one of the surprisingly difficult elements of this decision. Like, let's say that the kid is going to School in Horizon. You work on their schedule. Or on meetings with their teachers and a counselor to bring you up to speed. Or on demonstrating your own academic qualifications to be of help to them.

This shouldn't be difficult. It shouldn't be a grueling challenge. But it is.

If you're on an Aspect Arc there'll be more bad news once the quest ends, but I don't know what it is. The kid is probably fine so ... maybe something completely unrelated happens, and it's bad? Or maybe they're *not* fine, but they're not dead or anything: it's just a broken leg or the kind of trouble that you can save them from in a later quest or Arc?

A TROUBLED HISTORY

This quest is going to focus on your reconciliation with your memories of **Your Mirror**.

I don't think this has to be flashback-heavy. I mean, it can be, but I don't think it should. I think that it's more about how you deal with their funeral and their legacy and stuff, and how your friends and the kid deal with how you're dealing with it. It's about your own personal attempts to come to terms with your long-standing grievances. And maybe, if the PCs have the right powers for it, it's about time travel to talk to them about what they want done for their kid. Or something. Not about flashbacks.

But ... still.

You try to reconcile with what they've left behind.

A FORLORN STATE / STRANGE TALES OF THE 139

Typically these quests both focus on the depths of Horizon's School.

Education is sometimes spoken of as a river, and like any other river, may have *rusalka*: water-spirits, water-ghosts, creatures who will make you drown. There is a story that somewhere in Horizon, or perhaps even in some other Region, a ghost-girl mesmerizes would-be scholars, leads them to a hidden classroom, and there corrupts them. It is slower to drown in education than in water, of course, but the teachings draw the ghost-girl's victims away from world and sound: eventually their minds are twisted into new configurations and their body loses its breath and they fall into ... the ghost-world, perhaps, or possibly the Outside.

Thus, in **A Forlorn State**, often as part of trying to watch out for **Your Mirror's** child, you wind up trapped by the *rusalka* — your own thoughts corrupted. Or you may become obsessed with the search for an

elusive *rusalka*, particularly if she has already taken **Your Mirror's** child away from the world.

In **Strange Tales of the 139**, you wander the less-used portions of that School, or some other scenic environment in Horizon, or some other mysterious environment in another Region, hunting for the *rusalka* or a stolen child. This differs from the second version of **A Forlorn State** principally in mood: you're searching, not out of obsession, but from a place of decision instead.

Example

You're on an Aspect Arc. Your Talent is music, and naturally you feel an obligation to the apprentice of your old rival.

A Troubled History: You wrestle with your leftover feelings about **Your Mirror's** death. Maybe they're even getting in the way of moving on with your own self-development and your own work. But you push past that and find clarity.

A Mysterious Teacher: One element of that is taking in and helping their old apprentice. In the end, as much as you're trying to help them, and you probably *are* helping them, they wind up helping you — you have an insight that you might not have had without them. (A musical insight, I suppose.)

A Baroque Invention: as much as I like the idea of piling up mountains of paperwork to deal with someone's Horizon class schedule, I'm not really telling you anything new if I just re-use that. So, let's say that you're figuring out how to blend your musical style with theirs so that you can teach this kid. It's rough! But it's probably the thing that gave you that insight above, and inspired a new ... symphony?

... a fugue?

A Forlorn State: the general musical theme here probably affects the story — I like the idea of the *rusalka* of education but you probably wind up *here* with a standard life-devouring musical faerie type who lures you and your new apprentice away with compelling melodies and drains the strength from your bodies even as she inspires new art. You may very well meet in sea-caves or somewhere along the Twisting River rather than in Horizon's School.

Strange Tales of the 139: You've broken the enchantment on you, but you still need to rescue your student, or hunt down the *rusalka*, or find the key to completing your symphony, or something of that sort. Until the music comes together in your head you are, in some respects, lost, and accordingly you'll occasionally find yourself wandering into the near Outside and sometimes Bluebell Park even from the most solid portions of Town.



Moon Rabbit

the third Baroque Arc

The moon has fallen into the Outside. It's no longer really a part of a proper sky. It's gone all distant, and lost, and weird.

This is the story of how you and **the Pharmacist** decided to fix that.

A MYSTERIOUS TEACHER

The *motif* for this quest is the rabbit of the moon.

Now as any child knows there was a prince on Earth who loved the fairy of the moon; though whether that fairy was a princess of the moon or the reflected glow of Jade Irinka we do not know. And the name of that prince was Prince Bunny.

He loved the fairy of the moon, and importuned her, and in the end she finally allowed him to visit her; but no sooner did he reach the moon than she transformed him, making him over into the shape of a rabbit and setting him to the task of cleaning and polishing the moon's surface. After years of this labor he felt he had earned her regard, or at least to be transformed back again, but this did not occur:

Instead, when she became sick —

Or possibly, when she died, for how could the moon's light survive the passing of the sun?

— he was set to pounding cassia leaves to make the elixir of life.

But that task! It's too great! It would take a little rabbit like Prince Bunny at least a thousand years.

That's one of the stories that's come to your attention lately. That one; and the story that the moon is lost in the Outside; and a different story, from a different canon, that claims that Prince Bunny *made* that elixir, that he served it to her, that he *saved* the fairy of the moon, but before she married him she sent him down to Earth to say to its people: "Even as I am renewed, so too are you; your life shall return unending —"

And this message he failed to deliver, explaining why the truth of human immortality is not common knowledge everywhere on Earth.

Usually **the Pharmacist** will be a stand-in for Prince Bunny here, although it's also possible that you'll meet an actual Prince Bunny, or be a stand-in yourself, and the symbolism may be a little strained if the Pharmacist is aromatic, a gay guy, or a straight girl.

A BAROQUE INVENTION

In this quest you, most likely in concert with **the Pharmacist**, work on the elixir of life.

Here's why.

One of you — most likely the Pharmacist, but it can totally be you if you think of it first — has decided that a trip to the moon would be awesome, and that one of the following two scenarios applies:

- ✿ By taking elixir of immortality to the moon, you can save poor Prince Bunny an awful lot of work; or
- ✿ If you travel to the moon, you'll be able to find the last few key bits of information that you'd need to make an elixir of that sort *yourselves*.

Regardless of how you want to frame this challenge, the thing is, you first have to figure out a lot of stuff about the elixir, and that's the focus of this quest.

A TROUBLED HISTORY

The details of what's going on here are going to vary depending on the Arc. If you aren't getting along with **the Pharmacist**, then it might be good to mend fences. Or if there's anybody else you've been fighting with, you might want to fix that and bring them in on the voyage here. That failing —

This quest can take the form of a conflict between **the Pharmacist** and someone who is either symbolically or literally **the Fairy of the Moon**. You can start out by trying to reconcile them and end up getting into trouble yourself with whichever one of them you think is in the wrong. Given that you're *trying* to smooth things over you don't want to do this!

It's also possible that you actually knew that metaphorical/literal **Fairy of the Moon** yourself, and have history there. Is this going to be your *second* lunar voyage?

On the Unexpected Requisition of Fairy Princesses

If you wind up unexpectedly needing a name for a **Fairy of the Moon**, Chang-O, Eastre*, and Luna are all traditional; if those are too blatant, perhaps Eileen or

* Not a typo, though you may choose to think of it as one

Yuchun Chang? For a take more suitable to the Outside and the Bleak Academy, you might also consider “Nanna Meloria” or “Arianna Valens.”

A FORLORN STATE

This quest is built around the isolation and difficulties you face on the trip to the moon, or possibly (depending on quest order and whether the moon is a barren airless waste or a fairy-tale region) your imprisonment and immurement thereupon.

If nobody else in the group wants to travel to the moon —

I mean, in *general* going to the moon is pretty cool, but maybe they’re busy fighting death-gods or getting married or whatever —

The **Chuubo’s Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine** RPG offers three standard approaches:

- ✿ only part of you, a dream-self or spirit-self, travels on the ship;
- ✿ you play out the lunar journey in flashbacks or flash-forwards;
- ✿ you’ll temporarily play someone else (perhaps **Your Mirror’s** kid?) for your scenes in Town, and the other players can optionally play NPCs for scenes in space.

If everyone else *wants* to come along, of course, or if the Moon has always secretly been a nightclub in Arcadia, then you can just play things out the normal way.

STRANGE TALES OF THE 139

Much like **A Forlorn State**, this quest covers the journey to the moon or your wandering across the lunar landscape.

Traveling to the Moon

The mares of the moon are reachable from Big Lake. This mostly has the IC status of “rumor,” because a typical sailor who goes to the Moon will die, and the ones that don’t die and come back and tell people about how they were briefly on the moon will get dismissed as purveyors of tall tales instead.

... but if you’re doing this Arc, it’s all for real. Those mares are reachable.


What happens when you actually get there is harder to determine. There are at least five possible natures for the moon, and your group can choose to go with any of them — though the HG, who has to actually describe it, has the final call:

- ✿ the moon is just an airless lump of rock;
- ✿ the moon is a magical land of fairy princesses and cassia trees and rabbits and such;
- ✿ the moon *used* to be an airless lump, but it fell into the near Outside so now there’s some surreal stuff going on there *too*;
- ✿ the moon has fallen so deep into the Outside that it doesn’t *matter* whether it was an airless lump or a magical land before; it’s now just ... deep Outside, *or even*
- ✿ the moon plays secret host to the Bleak Academy.

I don’t typically expect you to play full-on astronaut without supernatural powers, so if you don’t have the kind of powers it would take to get by on the Moon with minimal protective gear, I recommend that it at least have enough magic that you can breathe most of the time there by default.

Conversely, I *do* expect the journey there to be kind of rough and to give a feeling of the utter emptiness of space even if you’re sailing there by way of first Big Lake and then through the Outside. Even if the moon itself is only in the near Outside, you’ll have to pass through some of the deeper, nastier portions of the Outside to get there!

Example

You're on your third  **Mystic (Primordial)** Arc; you started with a magic Keep, a forested glade, and these days you're a kind of primeval primordial incarnation of the deep woods and of *life*.

Strange Tales of the 139: You have recurring dreams throughout this quest of traveling to the moon, which manifest in reality at the end of the quest with the flowering of a cassia tree Accessory on the Moon. This Accessory allows you to travel there.

A Forlorn State: You spend time arguing with the Bleak Princess of the Moon, who is like you a divinity of nature but who is rooted not in forests but in the airless waste. She manages to capture part of your soul, leaving you voiceless and damaged part of the time. This only grows worse when the quest ends and something cosmic turns on you: the cassia becomes a lifeless moon-cassia, forests start filling with gray dust, or something of that sort.

A Troubled History: you haven't gotten along well with **the Pharmacist** recently, but now you definitely need their help. You *have* to bring life to the moon or you'll lose it yourself, and, well, they know medicines better than do you. However, this being a Mystic 3 quest, your own plans here kind of fall apart and you get carried along by whatever the Pharmacist and the Bleak Princess of the Moon wind up doing on their own. Maybe they fall in love?

A Mysterious Teacher: your family and friends help you through this. You probably don't manage to bring life to the moon here, but you *do* stabilize yourself, at least, and maybe (if you sell the Prince Bunny *motif* hard enough) you can change the Bleak Princess' heart.

A Baroque Invention: you make another try for a victory, or for a greater victory if you've already won. You have a new plan and a new dream. (Why? Because it's a Mystic 5 quest.) You work on making the elixir of immortality (because that's what **A Baroque Invention** does here.) And in the end ...

Who knows what will happen? You could win!

Someone You Left Behind

the final Baroque Arc

There's someone you left behind you. There's someone who wasn't with you on that ship. And you miss them.

Maybe you're worried for them. Maybe you know they're OK. Maybe you can't understand why you didn't realize that you needed to go and save them sooner. But anyway, returning to where you came from to bring a few more people back with you to Town — that's what this Arc is all about.

A MYSTERIOUS TEACHER

This quest is marked by your thinking about the encounter on the ship and the people you left behind.

It ends with a strong realization of how connected you still are to the ones you've left behind — maybe shockingly so, if you thought you were doing fine; or maybe you've known all along that you were connected, that you missed them, it's not really *surprising*, it's just that some part of what happened to you on the ship gave distance to your heart, separated you for a while from those emotions and those connections, made them feel less important to you or at least come to

mind less often, and now they've suddenly washed in on and over you like the rising tide.

A BAROQUE INVENTION

You plan the journey to rescue the people you left behind.

... Wait, Does That Mean I Didn't Try to Rescue My Important People Until Arc Four?

Well, if you're playing yourself, it probably doesn't mean that.

That said, maybe you kind of forgot where you came from as part of that moment on the ship, until now, or maybe you weren't able to find a path back home — maybe all the roads to where you came from were lost in the Outside when you started looking, and you can only spend so much of your life on such a hunt. (Though, it might be one of the things that got you involved in exploratory expeditions and such back when.)

Or maybe you brought almost everyone, you rescued or invited them and brought them here to Town, but

there was *someone* that you lost track of that you suddenly miss quite a lot.

Or maybe you're from one of the other places that survived, like, you were from Baltimore and Baltimore's mostly still existing, so there's no real *guilt* in abandoning your friends and family there ... just a sudden surge of loneliness.

A TROUBLED HISTORY

This quest is about your reconciliation with or reconnection to someone you left behind. If you're playing in one of the Arcs where this happens *before* you get the chance to rescue anybody or bring them (in a non-rescuing but more "inviting" fashion) to Town, then what happens here is that one of your old friends or family or something shows up on one of the ships that occasionally bring refugees or immigrants in.

And maybe that person was a jerk to you before but they're a connection now. Or maybe they weren't a jerk, maybe they were an important person, and you don't know how to face the fact now that you left them where they were.

A FORLORN STATE

You get obsessed, wrapped up in, and messed up by:

- ⚙️ grief,
- ⚙️ loneliness,
- ⚙️ a sudden appreciation of how much you and the world have changed,
- ⚙️ a sudden weirdness to your Keep or Talent, or
- ⚙️ a predator that follows you back after a trip into the Outside.

STRANGE TALES OF THE 139

You travel through the Outside to find someone you lost, or possibly have flashbacks to how you went after them before and lost them to the tides and predators of the Outside.

Example

You're on a mundane Emptiness Arc. You have trouble staying connected to the world already, and keep drifting off to your empty carnival-world Keep.

For you this plays out as:

A Troubled History: Someone who was once really important to you makes it to Town, inspiring you to change.

A Baroque Invention: You start obsessing over someone else you lost. It becomes harder for you to just retreat to your empty carnival-world. You hurt.

A Forlorn State: Your Keep turns on you. At the end of the quest you remember that your Keep has always been an expression of your self and heart. (Perhaps this was previously established in play and you'd just forgotten it for a while, or perhaps you're just deciding on it/declaring it to be true right now.)

Strange Tales of the 139: You travel the Outside. You successfully find the person you were looking for! Lost in the deep Outside, they've experienced what seemed to be all of a few hours of confusion and disorientation in the time since you arrived in Town back when.

A Mysterious Teacher: You settle down to live your life, no longer quite as isolated as you'd been.







The Hidden World

of the Legendary 139



These quests form a generic Arc for an Immersive hidden-world fantasy — a story where *you* are a mysterious and magical and larger-than-life character lurking in a magical Keep just outside the boundaries of a “normal” but still quite marvelous world.

The default here is an Emptiness Arc, which is all about *why* you stay there, which is about the thing the outside world has lost that makes your Keep cool. It’d start with these quests:

- ⚙️ **An Interesting Life.** A study of your routine, as it gets entangled with the outer world.
- ⚙️ **A New Approach.** You’ve got a new activity or worry.
- ⚙️ **A Legendary Collaboration.** You have a complicated time of it working with someone who doesn’t like or trust you or something on something grand.

And might readily continue with:

- ⚙️ **The Rekindling of the Sun.** You struggle to bring new light to the outer world.
- ⚙️ **A Rival’s Troubles.** You figure out what’s actually going on with a rival or enemy, and either beat them or help them out.

However, this isn’t *just* an Emptiness Arc. You can shuffle the quests around a bit and have a fabulous Aspect, Mystic, Shepherd, or Otherworldly Arc.

ASPECT ARCS

If the Arc focuses more on your Talent or Keep-Skill than on your Keep, if it’s more about how you are an awesome and super-magical entity and you are striving to become even more so, starting with the technique you think you’ll need to get past your current level, you’ll tackle the quests like so:

- ⚙️ **A New Approach.** You work to figure out or master something new.
- ⚙️ **An Interesting Life.** Your daily life tangles with something/someone interesting.
- ⚙️ **A Legendary Collaboration.** A rival or enemy recruits you to a joint venture to find or do something great. Which would be great, if they’d trust you, but they don’t! The whole thing gets really weird really fast.

And again continue with:

- ⚙️ **A Rival’s Troubles.** You fight some big threat or battle.
- ⚙️ **The Rekindling of the Sun.** Lost in the dark, you try to bring new light to the whole of the world.

MYSTIC ARCS

If the focus of the Arc is more on your encounter with Jade Irinka, your vision of what the world should be, or on your evolution into something grander than you are, then you’ll tackle the quests like so:

- ⚙️ **The Rekindling of the Sun.** You become part of a miracle.
- ⚙️ **A Rival’s Troubles.** You struggle against or beside your Mirror or some other rival.
- ⚙️ **A Legendary Collaboration.** You attempt a grand plan, but your rival interferes or tries to help or something and things get weird and out of control. Your relationship with them is *complicated*.

And potentially finish out with:

- ⚙️ **An Interesting Life.** Your life sorta blew up; your friends help you put it back together.
- ⚙️ **A New Approach.** ... with one small change, that is. There’s something new you’re going to try to evolve yourself or to save the world!

OTHERWORLDLY ARCS

If the focus of this Arc is the wonder of your Keep outside the normal world, or potentially if it focuses on the way *you* find the normal world wondrous in turn, you might play through this Arc like so:

- ⚙️ **The Rekindling of the Sun.** You’re called to make answer to some heartache.
- ⚙️ **A New Approach.** You get involved in something in the outside world for a while, but eventually pull back towards your Keep, retreat, wonderland, or routine.
- ⚙️ **An Interesting Life.** ...but the world outside your Keep won’t leave you alone!

And continue with:

- ⚙️ **A Legendary Collaboration.** A rival or enemy needs your help to accomplish some big and awesome thing, and you go along with it, at great cost to your sense of self.

An Interesting Life

20 OR 45 XP QUEST

1: 

2:  

3: 

4: 

You're living a unique and colorful life outside the normal patterns of society —



But then you meet someone new, or encounter something cool, or start to realize that there is something missing from your life. You try to hang on to who you are and who you've decided to be even as you're drawn out of your routine!










An Interesting Life (Simplified)



The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

-  you decide and declare how you want to relate to somebody from here on out. (Declaring love, friendship, "That kid will be my student, mark my words," "If it must be complicated it will be complicated," or whatever else.)
-  a conversation or social interaction goes so swimmingly, unexpectedly well that you start doubting that it actually happened. You can earn each of these bonuses once, for a total of up to 10 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

-   you get yourself lost — possibly to the point you wind up in the Outside
-  you do something dumb/foolhardy enough to risk or cause yourself an injury
-   you take care of a child, pet, or hurt/sick friend
-   you share a meal or drink with a minotaur, *tsukumogami*, or other entity not participating in human society

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP

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A New Approach



20 OR 35 XP QUEST

You're mostly just living your normal everyday life, but you've augmented it with a new prop — there's something new you're playing around with, or thinking about, or trying to achieve. There's a cool new toy or trick or compelling problem that's come into your life.









A New Approach (Simplified)

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when you:

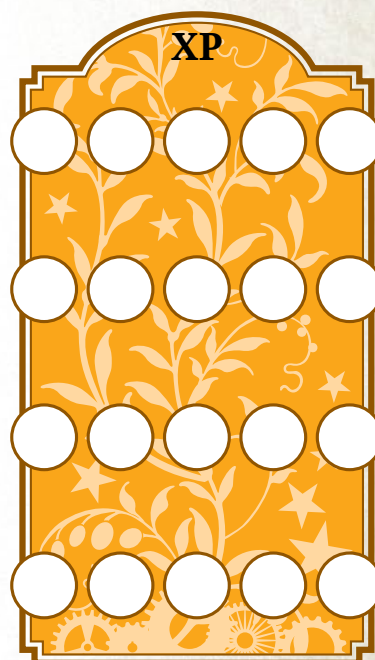
-  resolve to keep something a secret, and it complicates your life;
-  show off a new outfit, complete with slow-motion turn and coat, skirt, or hair swirl.

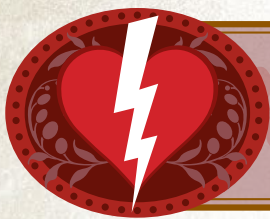
You can earn each of these bonuses once, for a total of up to 10 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest through:

-  standing mysteriously at a height, coat or other accessory fluttering around you
-  waking up, startled, with an idea
-   experimenting with your new toy or creation
-   excessive or impressive efforts to wake up or become coherent or presentable (e.g. absurd hangover cures, ridiculously fast clothes changes, and espresso chugs)

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.





A New Approach

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when —

- ☼ you fall into a vat or spill of small round objects (candy, bouncy balls, or whatnot);
- ☼ you show off a new outfit, complete with slow-motion turn and coat, skirt, or hair swirl;
- ☼ you're the only one they can turn to! ...for some amusing or interesting value of "they."

You can earn each of these bonuses once, for a total of up to 15 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

- 👁️⚡ you drag someone off to show them something cool, adorable, or secret
- 👁️🍷 you're eating azuki or drinking a red-bean flavored slushy/drink
- 👁️🌀 you engage in unnecessary acts of climbing
- 👁️📄 you work or sleep in a space cluttered with piles and piles of papers and notes
- 🐉🐉 you converse with ravens
- ⚡🌀 you experiment with your new toy or creation
- ⚡🌀 you're in no condition to handle this scene you're in: falling-down drunk or exhausted, having a nervous breakdown, convinced everyone around you is going to kill you while they think they're celebrating your birthday, trying to conceal the pit viper in your pocket at a social function, *etc.*

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP

A Legendary Collaboration

20 OR 35 XP QUEST

3:   

4:  

You and an enemy or rival work together to find some treasure or secret. Often they at least appear to have the upper hand, while you at least appear to have a wicked scheme in store — although it's possible that neither of these things is actually *true*.

This quest usually features/requires a journey.

In an **Immersive** game, you'll usually be able to drag the other PCs along on stuff like this, particularly if you don't spend the *whole* quest traveling — if you spend

a lot of time preparing or making false starts before you go — and particularly if you can mix it up with the things that are happening to them. That said, if that's not an option, if they're too busy or too uninterested or whatever to drag with you on a random journey, the standard solutions are these:

- ✿ Instead of a physical journey, you take a spiritual journey. You travel in dreams or visions.
- ✿ Play skips forward a day or two to your return; you play out the quest itself as flashbacks. Or, conversely, you spend a while foreshadowing what's going to happen (with visions, prophecies, plans, preparation, or flash-forwards) and *then* play skips forward while the HG narrates the actual events.









A Legendary Collaboration (Simplified)

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- ✿ you're chained, imprisoned, or have onerous restrictions put on you, generally as a condition for somebody's help;
 - ✿ you commit an unexpected act of kindness and heroism.
- You can earn up each bonus once, for a total of 10 XP.





















1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

-   you have a flashback to a similar situation on an earlier adventure
-   you're amazed at how new everything around you is
-  there's a montage of cool things that you encounter along the way
-  you're tempted to change sides or betray your current allies.

Note that you don't have to give in to the temptation. In some genres, or with the group's permission, it's reasonable to treat this temptation as a Wicked Action, and in that case you'd only get the Wicked Action's XP if you succumb — but that's neither here nor there! You'll get the quest XP either way!

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP










A Legendary Collaboration

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- the HG, or someone else's use of power, mysteriously provides you with a new wardrobe;
- you wait for a friend, frenemy, or temporary ally to reach you before receiving or unlocking or opening or taking some power or reward;
- you're washed away or overboard or something by a wave of water, clutter spilling out from an opened closet, or something else, possibly in a dream sequence.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 15 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

-  you tell a rival or enemy stories of the things you're looking for
-  you discuss with someone what you expect to find (on this journey/adventure)
-  you come up with a name for a new species or phenomenon
-  you deal with restrictions (e.g. handcuffs or confinement) placed on you by others, either by casually ignoring them or by onerously finding a way to endure
-  you watch over the railing of a ship/skyship or the closest Arc-relevant equivalent
-  you encounter new wonders
-  something literally or figuratively renders you speechless

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP

The Rekindling of the Sun

25 OR 35 XP QUEST



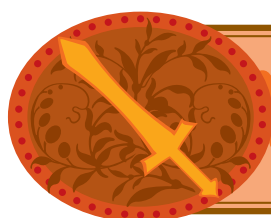
This world has gone wrong. Jade Irinka, who was the sun, is dead, and that's probably not all. This is your chance to bring about a sort of healing of the way of things, and you'll probably travel to strange places, bargain with strange horrors, and console something grieving along the way.

This quest has some pretty weird per-chapter options, so I want to make it clear that you are allowed to make up some of its scenery on the fly: for instance, you're allowed to say, "OK, I'm entering the lair of a dragon now," and if the HG doesn't have any ideas for dragons, you can come up with: "it's a blind and magma-blooded

creature named Seras created by and then driven away from the Bleak Academy; it crawled out into the dark of the Outside and lurks there stewing in its malice."




Or "by which I mean 'the dragon,' the awesome bodyguard lady who operates out of a shop three doors down from mine. Help me figure out her name!"

The HG doesn't *have* to let you create setting elements — for instance, if you're taking the quest option "You make a pinky promise with a ghost, angelic being, or in a flashback" they don't have to let you come up with a ghost or angelic being, and they can even insist that you pick a flashback so they don't have to come up with one themselves — but you should both keep in mind that this quest works better if everyone assumes that you're a knowledgeable character steeped in the relevant lore or rumors and thus have access to dragons, angelic beings, and mysteries that haven't previously come up in the game!









The Rekindling of the Sun (Simplified)

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

-  there's a ceremony in your honor;
-  danger drives you into your Keep and besieges you there;
-  birds or spirits gather ominously around you.

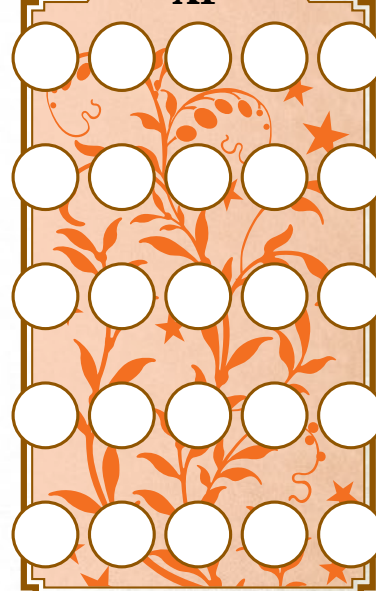
You can earn up to two of these bonuses, once each, for a total of up to 10 XP.

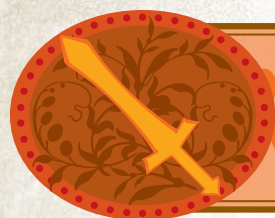
1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

-   you care for something given to you by an enemy/rival
-   you're hurt by an enemy/rival
-  you listen to someone's story
-  you reflect on your accomplishments or changes

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP





The Rekindling of the Sun

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- ☼ something rips the wickedness from you or otherwise aggressively purifies you; or, you bleed for an enemy's sake;
- ☼ you descend below the surface of the world and share in or comfort the grief of something that lives there;
- ☼ you sacrifice a thing or object that could reasonably be referred to as your heart to somebody. At the end of the quest, you have the player-level option to receive it back.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 15 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

- 🌀👁️ you receive something, often in the form of a seed or box, from a rival/enemy
- 🔪 you travel to/enter the Keep of a deadly enemy or rival or the lair of some sort of literal or metaphorical dragon. There is a sensation of danger...
- 🌑 you are torn apart by spirits or birds, or turn into birds (generally in a break from reality)
- 🌀🔮 you make a pinky promise with a ghost, angelic being, or in a flashback
- 🌀🔮 you do something amazing and transformative with your Talent or Keep-Skill
- 🌀 you get a tattoo or other long-term or permanent marking.
- 🌿👁️ you retreat to a garden or your Keep with a child, pet, or wounded friend

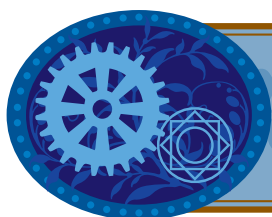
You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP

A Rival's Troubles



20 OR 35 XP QUEST

An enemy, rival, or antagonist is troubling you — but possibly this time you're actually going to need to help them, not defeat them, or even to get their help?









A Rival's Troubles (Simplified)

As long as it's relevant to the emotional and social baggage you have with an old connection, the HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

-  you discover that you and an enemy or rival have a common dear friend or similar emotionally compromising attachment, or, if you already knew that, something dramatic happens to emphasize it;
-  you give yourself into an enemy or rival's hands, either surrendering or begging them for assistance.





















You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 10 XP.

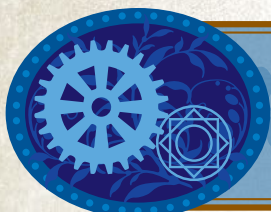
1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

-  your day gets progressively worse, often in a slightly comic fashion
-  you lose track of your enemies or rivals
-   you implement an awesome and terrifying plan, or at least an attempt at one
-   you attempt to divine the future in the coffee grounds left over after a cup of Turkish coffee, only to realize you have absolutely no idea what they're saying. Again.

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP



A Rival's Troubles

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- you discover that an old enemy, rival, or trouble has resurfaced to bother you once again;
- you're captured by or otherwise made terrifyingly vulnerable to a rival or enemy;
- you have an awkward, elliptical conversation with an enemy or rival, often while sharing snacks — leading up to one of you surreptitiously agreeing to help the other.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 15 XP.

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

- slumping down in defeat, your hair a total mess
- hunting or chasing an elusive enemy or rival
- investigating something that's been causing trouble for an enemy or rival
- coming up with an awesome plan as lightning flashes
- helping an enemy or rival recuperate from something
- drinking Turkish coffee and analyzing how your enemy or rival works
- explaining your feelings about all this stuff to a third party

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP



Hidden World Legends

the Legendary 139 Arcs



These are some of the stories that you might play through as one of the legendary 139, particularly in an **Immersive** game —

⚙️ **A Sunlit Fountain.** In which you track down a fountain whose water still holds the light of the former sun.

⚙️ **A Topless Tower.** In which you outfox the Satsura Corporation.

⚙️ **The Golden Apples.** In which you steal from the Riders' garden.

⚙️ **A Lost Spirit of the Stars.** In which you're tasked to save a fallen star.

Prologue

the Hidden Arcs

So the way I figure it, your story goes like this.

You're a person who's sorted out a routine for yourself. It's probably a pretty cool, magical thing, but it's a *routine*.

It's a liminal thing, too. It's at or even outside the edges of society. You're not antisocial, not *completely* isolated or anything, since this is mostly a *happy* kind of story ... but you're set apart. You're separate from the business of the world. Only, lately —

You've been feeling restless. There's something in you that wants to get involved with the broader world again. You're looking for ...

- ⚙️ A new client? Are you ...
- a mysterious bodyguard?
 - a detective?
 - life-enricher?
 - nanny?
 - wedding planner?

- “problem-solver?”
- *or* guide?
- ⚙️ Some new friends?
 - People to hang out with?
 - to have fun teasing?
 - to talk through your leftover baggage with?
 - to keep tabs on ‘cause you like worrying about and watching over people?
 - to do cosplay or card games or something with?
- Possible love interests?
- Rivals?
- Students?
- Assistants?
- Apprentices?
- ⚙️ ... or something else?

That's not necessarily on the top of your mind or anything but it'll help give you a reason to latch on to the other PCs.

A Sunlit Fountain

the first Hidden Arc

In this Arc you're going to find a fountain blessed with the light of the former sun. That light lives in the water, it shines and shimmers in it, it endures with the light of the former sun in the dark of night or the day of the dead sun's heir.

Here's how it works.

AN INTERESTING LIFE

You love your routine. Your happy, safe routine! But it's getting a little harder to maintain.

This quest is about how you find yourself unwillingly drawn to the other PCs, the outside world, and the Arc troublemaker — how you can't help finding them and their lives kind of interesting, even if you wanted to stick to your routine. How you find yourself feeling the need to *justify* it now when you withdraw from the world; and worse, how you're also feeling the need to justify it (even without anyone in particular to justify it to) when you do *not*.

As for what *happens* in this quest —

Remember that troublemaker you chose in step 9 of chargen? This quest is *either* about

- how that troublemaker shows up — how the Renegade Minister crashes through your roof, or whatever, and how you deal with that —

or, if that's already happened and already been dealt with, it's more about

- how you hang out with your new friends and acquaintances met over the course of earlier quests and how you show off your life to them while also finding it hard to resist getting drawn into theirs.

A NEW APPROACH

This quest is a lot like **An Interesting Life**, but it's more energetic and more activity-focused. There's this *thing* that you've gotten into. This *thing* that's pulling you to the outside world. Not all that vague emotional stuff about having trouble staying out of people's lives, or that contrived stuff about people crashing through your roof:

The thing here is more like, you've really gotten into DDR. Or Pachinko. Or something.

Something that the other PCs are into: that's probably best. I mean, there's no point in going from someone who has a private routine playing bridge to a new exciting routine playing billiards if nobody else cares about either. So it's more about how the PCs are into DDR, and now suddenly you're "the DDR Kid." Or how they may like comics, but you are now the *otaku supreme*.

Or maybe it's not quite something they're into, as something you can *make* them be into, or lure them into participating in. You've decided to experiment on them, or maybe they're your new audience, or having

them as your official friends or students or something is really exciting for you. Or they could even be guinea pigs of the non-experimental sort, like, you bake, you're a magical baker, and they're the guinea pigs for *your new baked goods*, which is not really so mean or experimental as making them the guinea pigs for your deviant science.

It's something like that. It's something vibrant. It's something where you show up and that immediately pushes the scene towards your new goals.

Now you may very well already have all you need here — you may already be a vibrant figure with strong connections to the PCs and things you do with them. If that's the case then it's possible that your new approach doesn't have to take that further. You could focus it on a sky-ship that you're building or that you've found and are playing with, or on some new technique for your Keep or Talent ...

But even then I think stuff like DDR or Pachinko or fishing or arguing about anime or whatever else they're always doing — *finding* something like that that they were always doing that you previously weren't — is best.

If you haven't met the troublemaker (from step 9 of chargen) yet, there's a good chance that they'll show up at the end of this quest. This is *standard* for a Shepherd Arc and plausible on an Otherworldly or an Aspect Arc.

A LEGENDARY COLLABORATION

Around the time this quest starts you feel or notice or recognize a ... shadow ... on your heart. But it's not just you.

Your Mirror (or possibly the troublemaker you met earlier) has fallen completely under the sway of Eclipse ([see pg. 16](#)), and Eclipse plans to bring an end to the modern sun; or to strike the memories of Jade Irinka from the 139; or maybe just blot out the sun for a few days during an upcoming holiday in Town.

This quest really *ought* to be your struggle to fix or stop that. I mean, those things are kind of wicked, right? This needs to stop! But for some reason, you're actually working *with* Eclipse and your Mirror on something first.

Are you sympathetic to them? Have they gotten their hooks in you with that "shadow?" Is it the only way to save someone? Are you *pretending* to work with them but actually planning to betray them? Do they have an intermediate goal that you approve of? Or is it that you

have to work with them for a while or you won't have enough power to stop them *with*?

Figure out the broad details of why you're going to be working with them with the HG when you take this quest, though obviously your motivation can still evolve in surprising or unsurprising ways later on!

THE REKINDLING OF THE SUN

This is the story of your work in your sweet and mystic garden — or, well, wherever you work, wherever you retreat to.

There is a heartache in one or more of the PCs; or, if not, in someone they're close to. That person is drawn to you, or you to them. It reminds you of a heartache of your own, some legacy of your past, so you try to use sunlight, and your Talent or Keep, to fix that heartache.

It's possible that the work started in this quest will require the water of the "sunlit fountain" to complete; if so, unless you've previously encountered that water, the *final* resolution of that heartache may have to wait until you find the fountain later on.

Often you'll spend a lot of time during this quest feeding crumbs to birds. That's my suggestion, anyway. It's a good excuse to use if you want to be somewhere random, in a place where something is happening but you don't have a good reason to be:

You're feeding the birds.

Plus, it's a good way to get rid of leftover crumbs!

A RIVAL'S TROUBLES

Earlier I mentioned a fountain — it's somewhere out there, still shining with the light of Jade Irinka, who was the sun.

In this quest you're recruited by **the Renegade Minister, Eclipse**, or another 139 member like **Skyler** or **the Sulky Lake Spirit** to help them find that fountain. Normally, it's either hidden somewhere underground in the campaign Region or it's on an island in the near straits of the Big Lake.

Example

You have a talent for *Baking*. Your Keep is a little bakery at the edge of Fortitude. You're on a miraculous **Otherworldly Arc**. Your Arc chooses both the order and the implications of the quests; for instance, the first Otherworldly quest is always focused on the fact that

"You're having dreams or otherworldly experiences that connect you to something beyond and outside yourself."

And, in addition to everything I've said above, completing the quest is always going to tell you


"what you have to do about this — a path you are called to walk, or something you must do to keep these experiences under control. It is possible that you've found 2-3 options; if so, it is possible to choose wrongly."

So putting that together with the explanations of the quests above, for *you* this Arc is going to look like this:

The Rekindling of the Sun: You've been dreaming of the lost sun, or maybe of being torn apart by birds.

Maybe the PCs will wind up visiting your bakery. Maybe it's an NPC with a connection to one of them. Maybe you wind up delivering to someone who lives near one of them. But you meet someone important who has a subtle heartache, and you start working on baking something with the sunlight in it to try to fix that portion of the heart.

Or maybe to restore the sun itself through the sun-cakes that you make?

At the end of the quest, you pick up  **Otherworldly (Child of the Ash) 0** — you've made contact with your Element, which I've decided is probably the Sky Kingdom Celestia; learned to bake a Mood of "Comfort;" and picked up a bird-like *kaiju* form, which I'm guessing is a vast roc-inspired bird-faced spirit but is possibly some sort of thousand-winged angel.

Most importantly you know now what you're meant to do:

You need to find the light of the *old* sun so that you can make a cake to bring back what was lost. It wasn't *you* those dream-birds were trying to tear apart: it was your cake!

A New Approach: the second Otherworldly quest is focused on your shrinking from that a bit. Rebellious. You get into DDR for a bit, or start really exploiting the potential of red bean paste in your baking, rather than immediately facing up to your destiny.

Destiny's hard!

This quest has a bit more energy to it than the last one: you've moved away from your retreat, moved



away from things like “heartache,” and now you’re engaged in being a dramatic, awesome, miraculous baker and, well, savoring the world.

At the end of the quest, though, you’ve found your center. DDR or red bean paste: whatever. Your future is in baking, with the light of the former sun. You’ve accepted this. You go back to your bakery to *focus* —

An Interesting Life: ...and then trouble comes to you. Geez.

Let’s say that it’s **the Renegade Minister**. You’ve gotten used to birds by now, so it’s not surprising that when a random ibis crashes through your roof and breaks its wing, you help it recover. Then it turns into a really jerky person:

Bledrith Roegen!

(I’m assuming you’re either interested in guys or don’t need a romantic interest right now.)

So, Bledrith. The funny thing is that, as much of a jerk as he is, you actually have a kind of a good relationship with him. He even has a dream that’s a lot like yours: restore the sun. So you find yourself falling into his rhythm even though you don’t want to!

This Arc often ends with a kind of assertion of independence: yes, you’re becoming something kind of avian yourself, yes, you have a similar goal, yes, you fall into his rhythm, yes, baking is important, but you’re also going to hang out with your friends and do DDR or laugh at his presumptions or something. You’re still *you*, even as involved in this as you are, and that’s really all that matters.

However, the Arc may go on past that, as well.

A Legendary Collaboration: the Arc continues, so while you’ve found something that stayed the same in yourself, you also found something that’s been lost. There’s a shadow on your heart.

And it’s not just on yours, either.

The spirit of the death of the sun has infiltrated your baking, and not just your baking — you have a wicked rival, a baker whose baking spirit is closer to night than sunlight, to Loss than to Comfort, and now you’re starting to understand *why*.

Figuring out what to do here is going to be rough. The shadow of death is long. And you’re going to have to work *with* the two of them rather than doing straightforward opposition if you want to make things work out.

But ... at the end, you'll realize that you weren't really changed by this. It's just a shadow, it just hides part of your light, it doesn't destroy it. In some fashion both the sun and the light in your heart endure.

A Rival's Troubles: the **Renegade Minister** hires you to help him track down the fountain that most literally

embodies that concept ("the sunlight endures") in the world.

Depending on which of the Otherworldly 5 quests you're on ("Live Together, Die Alone" or "Blurring the Boundaries,") you probably wind up using the fountain's waters either to bind yourself in some fashion to Jade Irinka and have her live again through you ... or to help heal either Bledrith or Eclipse's heart.

A Topless Tower

the second Hidden Arc

In this Arc the forces of an alternate-Earth military-corporate group, "the Satsura Corporation," set up a sub-division in Town. It's operating out of "the Topless Tower," aka "the Satsura Beanstalk," even though the building *does*, I think, have a top.*

They're not good people, but maybe you can work things out?

AN IMMERSIVE ADVENTURE

This Arc is going to feature some epic struggles, paramilitary kidnappings, savage dinosauroid creatures, and other stuff like that, but since it's an Immersive Arc and not an Adventure Arc, the conflict and danger is more of a dramatic backdrop than a key point.

Accordingly, when things get bleak — you've been taken prisoner, you've discovered horrible secrets, or whatever — I don't expect you to resolve this through two-fisted action. Instead, what I'm expecting is that any time that happens, you'll discover a few more of the company's ominous secrets, pick up a point of the **Secrets of the Tower** Issue (below) ... and then a rival faction of Satsura will interfere, or your Mirror or some other rival will "rescue" you, or the other PCs will help you, or someone will make a security mistake that lets

you use whatever powers you have to trivially escape, or your kidnappers will give you a day or two to "think over their offer," or something like that!

Something similar will usually happen when you dig into the secrets of what's going on, too. If you're investigating the place, I don't expect you to do a full-on shadowrun where you sneak in, then fight everybody, then finally grab some intel, then fight more of everybody, then try to sneak but fail because somebody's carrying two sick baby elephants** and then you fight some more, then put the last pieces together — or even the more professional variation where you get in, have some nailbiting narrow scrapes where you're almost spotted, and then get out with everything you need.

Instead, I expect you'll manage to find something cool, and pick up a point of **Secrets of the Tower**; and then Satsura forces, or your Mirror or some other rival, or the accidental interference of the other PCs, or an unusually smart security trick, or something, will spook you or drive you away or interfere with what you are doing... meaning you can't get any more intel right then.

* "The topless tower" is a Fortitude rat term for a specific tower down by Imported Cold — apparently, you can only get to it from the roofs the rats travel, and its top is obscured by the Outside, which is why the people of Fortitude haven't noticed that there's an incredibly tall tower there. They memevirused me with the name and that's where I'm getting both the name and the idea here. It could be the same tower — but I'm actually thinking that it's a four or five-story building in Arcadia that got nicknamed this because it has locked elevator buttons for at least another 20-30 stories, instead! (Plus, because rats throw that term around, and if the name hooked me, I bet it'll hook others.)

That said, if you have rats in your game and it's not the tower by Imported Cold, I recommend calling it "the Beanstalk" or "Arcadia's Topless Tower" instead.

** The Internet may have given me a distorted picture of a typical shadowrun.

The Venus Independent Collective

3 As best as anyone in Town can reconstruct, the Satsura Corporation is an alternate-Earth (or Earth-like pocket dimension) scientific and military corporation currently operating out of the deep Outside. Most of its operations have gone dark owing to the conditions of the deep Outside but some time ago Satsura launched a splinter body, subsidiary, or rebel sect towards Venus, which occupied and subdued the enclave of bird-faced spirits that had formerly resided there and now, under the flag of “the Venus Independent Collective,” asserts its sovereignty over the entirety of that world.

Most of Venus is covered in the mists of the Outside, but a large chunk of it has acquired a Town-like level of reality and the Collective has covered that portion of its surface with kelp-like swaying beds of bio-organic structures (scaled for dozens of humans to live within each bulb) and glass-walled domes.

Thus far the Collective has been successful in containing the aggressive carnivorous plants and dinosauroid animals native to the planet’s surface. The atmosphere has given them more trouble: the air of Venus is *technically* breathable but is variably a contact hallucinogen, a destiny-altering romantic ancillary, or an incitement to immediate passion. Worse, it has a tendency to seep into all but the most scrupulously maintained of homes, much like Outside dust in Fortitude. Thus, the traditional costume of the Collective on their home planet is breathing apparatus and a concealing black life-support suit.

The Collective have awesome science, principally biotech, and live on a planet of pulp adventure, but they’re also superior, aggravating, paranoid, and impersonal. They spent way too long in the deep Outside and lost their original homes and families — who may still be *out there*, somewhere — and it’s scarred them on a personal and cultural level. They may live on Venus but they don’t believe in things like love.

I’m assuming that they’re preparing for an invasion of, or at least a corporate takeover of, or at *least* a dumping of experiments or something on, Town. I could be wrong; they could just be opening trade or something. But I’m assuming that there’s more.

I’m also assuming, and this is the *real* reason *I* called it “the topless tower,” that the elevator doesn’t *just* go a mysterious 20-30 extra floors up: once you get to the upper portion of the tower, there are staircases and other

transport devices that take you all the way to floor 891, which is to say, *Venus*, with the tower getting weirder and weirder and ever more Venusian all along the way. I’d guess 700-800 of those “floors” are actually just markers along a space beanstalk elevator with no actual *floors* to get off on and another 30-80 are so lost in the Outside that not even Satsura really knows what’s being done there; the point isn’t that the building is *big*, although it is quite tall, but that it tears right past and through the sky.


Venus and Celestia

Speaking of the sky:

If Celestia is active in your game, then there are limited diplomatic relations between the Sky Kingdom and the Collective. By default the status quo boils down to this: the Collective has agreed to allow a small Celestian presence on their world in exchange for assistance with terraforming, the right to grant asylum to Celestian spirits that would prefer Collective rule — historically something of a non-issue — and formal acknowledgment of the Collective’s sovereignty.

Conversely, if the Sky Kingdom is currently unreachable from Town, then it is also unreachable from Venus as of the death of Jade Irinka, and diplomatic ties between the two have withered.




Exploring Venus is usually  **Trouble**

Oh no! It’s a dinosauroid!

Or, a gigantic PC-eating plant!



Wrestling with the aftereffects of Collective biotech is usually  **Adversity**

They have awesome biotech. They can vaccinate you against the common cold. They can help you regrow an arm. But they’re not quite normal humans, or maybe it’s you and the people of Town who aren’t quite normal humans; or maybe it’s just you. So it may not work very well on you. There may be *after effects*. Anyway, whether it’s the cost or the side effects, there’s going to be Adversity.

Venus

- ⚙ Clouds must hang over you.
- ⚙ Plots must be ornate.
- ⚙ Poisons must be baroque.
- ⚙ The body must hold secrets.
- ⚙ The world must be a savage garden.
- ⚙ Love must be in the air.*

* *"But Satsura makes filters"*

Typical Genre: Adventure Fantasy



Investigating the Collective or its science is usually

🔬 Science, Faith, and Sorcery

You'll put together the pieces that you have. You'll propose a theory: something more about what's going on. You put yourself at risk to test it. Then something happens.



Interacting with the Venus Independent Collective is sometimes 🧠 **Obsessive Action**

They're frustrating and paranoid and their projects and motivations are worrisome. You (or they) get worked up over it. You (or they) do something over the top. Someone notices and reacts. That's an Obsessive Action!



Interacting with the Venus Independent Collective is often 🚫 **Never Say Die!**

You're trying to convince them of your good intentions; or that they need to leave you alone; or, you're asking them to lend their expertise to help stop a flu epidemic in Town; or whatever. But they're bastards!

You argue ever more eloquently, your every action and move in this diplomatic dance growing ever more awesome and doomed alike. In the end, if you *do* get through to them, if you satisfy the HG's sadistic tastes in full, then you stagger away to somewhere you can sit down and *thud*.

Or something of that sort! Never Say Die!

Factbook Entry

Habitable Area: 45 square miles

Population: ~27,000

(20000 human / 4150 modified human / 2500

Erisian bat-folk / 0-350 bird-faced spirits)



Secrets of the Tower



SECRETS OF THE TOWER

You'll pick up the **Secrets of the Tower** Issue as the secrets of the Satsura Corporation come out in play. It'll usually go to characters who feel drawn to the place — characters who feel entangled with or interested in what's going on there.

Here's a simplified form of the Issue and its progression:

► Satsura? Is that Japanese or something? ... wait, no, wouldn't that be Sanmen?

1► Revelations on the order of: they exist, they have weird tech, they're kinda cool.

2► Revelations on the order of:

- they're really well-armed.
- they're kinda alien.
- they *all* seem to have some level of military/espionage training.
- their building has more floors than it should.

3► Revelations on the order of:

- they have trained (or feral?) dinosauroid creatures... and some of them are *deadly*.
- they have heavily augmented mutants.
- they have giant carnivorous or building-covering plants.
- they have a small army.

4► Revelations on the order of:

- their building elevator goes to Venus.
- their resources are immense. Something's wrong. You need help. You need to reach out to somebody.

5► Revelations on the order of: there is something wrong with them. Metaphysically. They are survivors from an alternate Earth, not the Earth you know, which would be fine, but the world they come from was *missing* something...

Secrets of the Tower 1-2

You feel like something's left undone...

You're drawn to the place, even though it worries you.

The Satsura Corporation. "A research corporation," the official story goes, "that was lost when the Outside drowned the Earth. It's moving most of its operations to Town."

They act a little *off*.

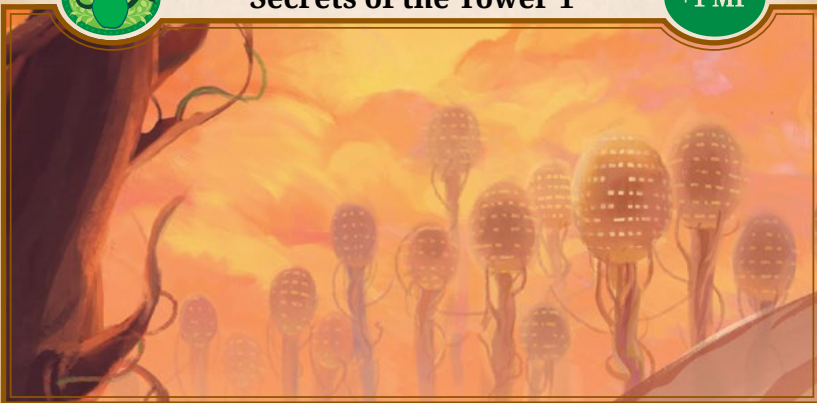
They're doing stuff that you don't think people back on Earth were doing.

But... you know what? This stuff is *neat*. Like, fast-growing fruit trees. Cognitive and nerve and muscle enhancement. New treatments for diseases. Maybe even vat-grown miniature dinosaurs with vibrantly colorful skin. Their building's kind of cool, too, it has this *vibe*, you know, even though it's hardly "topless" like some people say.

They're not trustworthy. They're a little scary. But they're also... just plain *cool*.

Secrets of the Tower 1

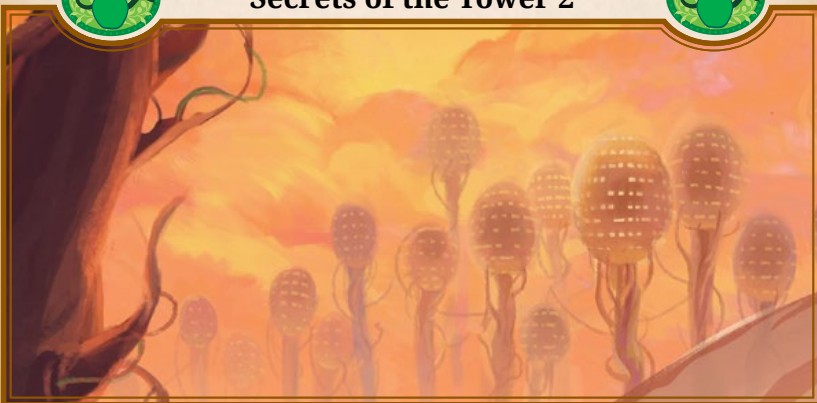
+1 MP



You still kind of want to trust them. Satsura, I mean. You kind of want them to be OK. For there to be a good explanation for this. But this isn't human tech and this isn't human resources.

It's still kind of nice to imagine that everything can work out and everything will make sense and there's really nothing scary going on...

Secrets of the Tower 2



Secrets of the Tower 3

This is impossible. This is ridiculous. They have *dinosaurs*. (Or whatever.) But —

There's still something that makes you think you can handle this. That you can "win." Name it. Identify it.

Is it

- ⚙ the help you're getting from your allies?
- ⚙ something compromising the will or knowledge of your opponents?
- ⚙ or something that divides them?
- ⚙ or have they just underestimated you to the point where you can beat them?

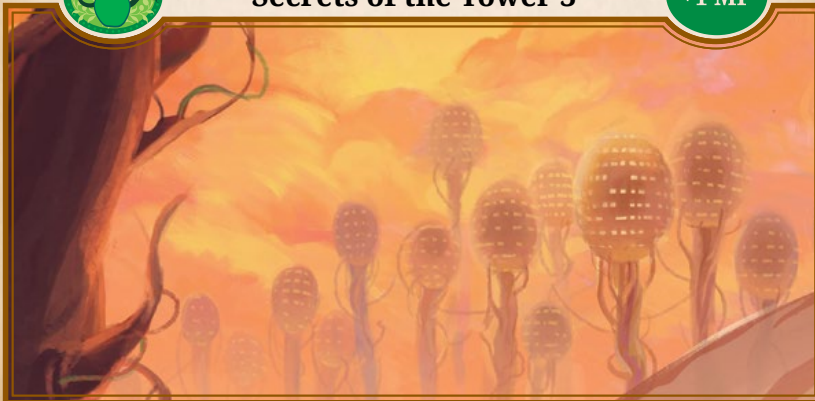
This company, this Satsura, has terrifying resources, but there's still something that protects you.

There is vivid and savage stuff going on here. Dinosaurs, their footfalls pounding, their colors bright, their terrifying screams. Plants sprawling to cover whole floors of buildings with their roots, their maws opening and snapping at you, their vines bleeding with strange poisons. Mutants lumbering out of hidden corners. Steel and chrome weapons gleam.

It's OK. You know what you're doing. You're pretty sure you can handle this. You can win.

Secrets of the Tower 3

+1 MP



Secrets of the Tower 4

Just hit level 4? *You're almost done.*

Tell the HG that.

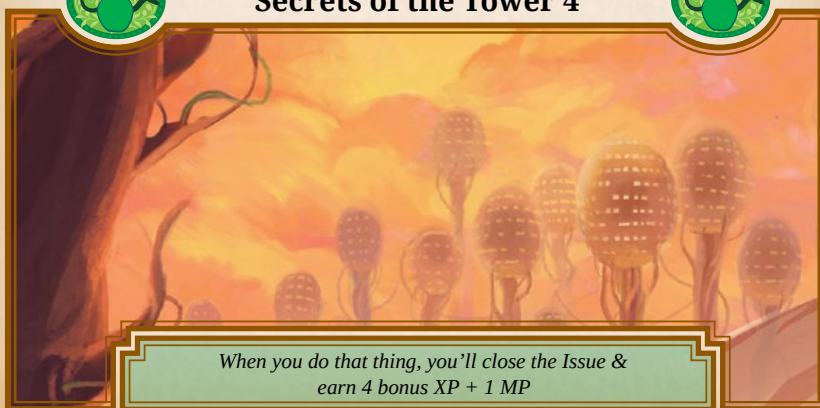
There's something coming up that's going to free you from the influence of Satsura. There's something you can do and it'll be *done*. The HG can set some criteria in advance, but once you've gotten there, you've reached some genuine resolution: you'll have dealt with the Satsura situation, at least until your own quests or stories or another PC's meddling drags you back into their story or the other way around.

There is a tower that climbs to Venus. The planet. Apparently. And a wicked civilization, dinosaurs, and carnivorous plants there. And it's invading—basically, invading—Town. But it's OK.

You've almost escaped. You've almost solved this.

You just have to do this one last thing and then the problem's taken care of, at least for now. Do this one last thing, and you and Satsura won't be part of one another's stories, not for a while anyway. Not as long as you afterwards stay away from *them*.

Secrets of the Tower 4



When you do that thing, you'll close the Issue & earn 4 bonus XP + 1 MP

Secrets of the Tower 5

Just hit level 5? They *need* you.

They think they're from Earth. Or at least they said they were from Earth. But they're not. They're from somewhere else. Somewhere *like* Earth, somewhere parallel to it, but somewhere where something was terribly *wrong*.

They are from a hollow and empty world untouched by the miracle that restored the sun.

They've been a trouble to you. I'm pretty sure they've been a trouble to you. I think they are not good people. But that doesn't matter. You've understood the problem and the thing that is wrong with them and that makes their hearts something that it's your duty to fix. Tell the HG that.

Tell them — “look, you gave me **Secrets of the Tower 5**, so I'm going to be able to help them. I'm going to be able to do something, whether it's using a power or magic or just a highly symbolic mundane action, but it's going to be something, and it's going to work. It's going to help them. And here is how it's going to go down.”

Or however you want to say it.

And then tell them. Tell them how you are going to save the Satsura Corporation, how you are going to change them. If you don't know yet, if you haven't even thought that was practically possible, make it up while you're talking. The HG can set some boundaries, but in the end, they're obligated to let you help them, just this once, fix something that's broken, just this once, and throw a scene at you that lets this work.

It's just a tower connected to an alien planet populated by heavily armed, scientifically advanced, and quasi-sociopathic people from a morally twisted alternate reality.

You've *got* this. This is totally under control.

Secrets of the Tower 5

+1 MP

When you've fixed things, or at least made a big step in that direction, close the Issue & earn 4 bonus XP + 1 MP

Quests

AN INTERESTING LIFE

You love your routine. Your happy, safe routine!

But — yeah. That’s... not going to happen. A simple, settled life — no. And certainly not in *this* quest.

This quest is about how you find yourself drawn into the affairs of the Satsura Corporation.

Maybe you just think they’re cool. Part of you wants to stay away, maybe? But even if you sort of want to avoid them, you can’t make yourself. This stuff is *alluring*. You want to play around with their tech, their toys, their opportunities.

Or maybe you can’t help tying them into something you’ve noticed is going wrong in Town or in your Keep.

You can’t help being *suspicious* of them. Wanting to investigate.

Or maybe there’s an actual crisis — something that crashes into your life, only probably more metaphorically this time than in the last Arc, and *drags* you into their affairs. There’s something they want you for, maybe? Some reason that they’re looking to kidnap or forcibly recruit you?*

Sometimes your Mirror gets involved in this: they’re concerned about the corporation, they’re an enemy of the place, they’re undermining it, and that’s why Satsura wants you. Or, someone important to your Mirror has been kidnapped or imprisoned or is even being treated for a serious sickness by Satsura and so your Mirror has sold you out to them.

As noted above, the likely resolution if you *do* get dragged off by Satsura paramilitary forces or sneak into their tower or something is that you’ll pick up a point of **Secrets of the Tower** and then something will happen to momentarily disentangle you. So don’t worry too much about avoiding that fate!

A NEW APPROACH

Your new toy/technique for this quest is probably a giant plant, dinosauroid — if you’re still at **Secrets of the Tower 0-1**, it’s probably just a mini/baby vat-grown dinosauroid, but *still* — or biotech enhancement/treatment from Satsura. Something relevant enough to your Keep and Talent to draw you in.

If that doesn’t work, maybe you’re just investigating Satsura to see if they can help with something, or because they’re producing a new kind of *azuki* drink, or because they’re interesting!

A LEGENDARY COLLABORATION

You’re recruited by Satsura — possibly under duress, possibly because you get along with them, or possibly as an attempt at a truce — to help them rescue a Satsura team that’s been lost in the low or the deep Outside.

Typically the story here is that there is an island somewhere out there in the Outside where a technological secret is sealed — either a Satsura project that went terribly wrong, or a rival and now defunct company’s weird science development, or possibly something completely different like Atlantean tech or the corpse of an angel. A Satsura team — including a vat-grown Outside-swimming kraken *kaiju* and the brother or sister of one **Mickey Yomohiro**, who helps to recruit you for this — went after that treasure, but communication was recently severed; or, possibly they *were* going after it when the Outside drowned things and now (potentially as much as a decade later, depending on how long it’s been since the sun died) the Satsura beanstalk has picked up their signal.

Satsura’s not expecting to rescue *everybody*, but here they know where someone *is*, and, as nasty as Satsura can be, just *leaving* people in the deep Outside is not an option on their radar. Your ability to help with this may even be the real reason why you came to Satsura’s attention in the first place, so there’s probably some reason why your Talent or Keep-Skill is directly relevant. Alternately, if a “rival faction” (see pg. 55) of Satsura helped you earlier, the chance you can help with this may be the real/previously hidden reason why.

The *heart* of this quest is a journey, but feel free to spend a lot of the actual *time* on the prep and the fallout if you can’t take the other PCs along — that is, if you have to do this on your own, or with only half the group, don’t stress over that or have a “spiritual journey” or anything: just use some sort of high-speed travel or orbital insertion, compress the really exciting part into 1-2 chapters and make them really breathtaking, and then stagger back afterwards to Town.

* If there’s no obvious reason for them to care about you, they’re probably either remembering or thinking ahead to the events in **A Legendary Collaboration**. ^_^

THE REKINDLING OF THE SUN

Dreams of Jade Irinka or Venus help you realize that something is *wrong* on Venus — that something has broken the residents' ability to love properly, that this is a tower not just towards an alien planet but also towards a crime against the world.

This quest leads you towards the point where you can either help them, or help one specific individual associated with them, or can cut them off from Town. However, even if you cut them off from Town, if the Arc isn't over yet, your solution won't hold — something important has been left behind, or they'll reconnect to Town, somehow, and soon. Even if you end the Arc with the end of this quest, there's a chance that they'll return later: other players might like the visuals or plot tokens associated with them, or you yourself may later rekindle the connection, or they may resurface in **A Rival's Troubles** in a later Arc.

A RIVAL'S TROUBLES

Your Mirror is working with Satsura for some reason. In some Arcs, this won't be surprising. In others, it'll be a shock!

In this Arc you'll figure out what's drawn them to Satsura — what hold Satsura has over them, or what they're trying to accomplish by working with Satsura. Then you either stop them, or you help them, depending on what's going on!

If that doesn't fit, if that doesn't work for you, try another rival besides your Mirror? Or maybe, as with **A Legendary Collaboration**, Satsura recruits you to help them with some sort of plan?

Example

You're on an Aspect Arc. Your Talent is music, and you're hoping to take your violin practice to the next level —

Though when your playing's already sweet enough to lure the birds down from the sky and make the rivers rise to hear it, it's hard to say how much further you can go!

A New Approach: playing, while riding a dinosaur? ... no, that's probably too silly. Honestly being able to lure a little pterodactyl to you with your music, even if it always flies away when you stop playing, might be cool... but I suspect that what *actually* happens is that Satsura's approached you about "treatments" that

can make you even better and push you past your current plateau of Skill, and you're actually taking them up on it.

(If you were an annoyingly traditionalist musician who wouldn't *dream* of biotech upgrades then possibly you'd just hear a bit of traditional Venusian music and start trying to master that technique or something.)

An Interesting Life: this is where it turns out that the treatments were *too good* — you're not just getting better at music, you're getting *better*, and Satsura wants to experiment on you to find out why. At least, that's your guess; it may turn out there's a different reason why they're so interested in you, later on. They don't really tell you all that much about what's going on inside their heads.

And why is your Mirror, an annoyingly traditionalist musician who wouldn't dream of biotech upgrades, helping them out?

A Legendary Collaboration: You make a temporary peace with Satsura and your Mirror in order to help them rescue a lost expedition. Why does an expedition to save a lost team and find a technological secret need a musician? I'm not sure. Maybe there's a musical key to whatever laboratory they were trying to access, or maybe the kraken has gone out of control because the musician/handler that kept it in line had some sort of seizure and is in intensive care? Something, anyway. They *do* need you. Or at least want you.

So you do it. I mean, there are pretty good reasons to do this. You do it. You rescue them. And you get back home. And that's when you learn something shattering. This probably takes the form of "your Mirror was being blackmailed," or "Satsura has done something awful," or "you've just put the nail in the coffin of Town's ability to defend against whatever Satsura has planned."

A Rival's Troubles: Your Mirror reveals that Satsura has a hostage; you rescue the hostage and stop Satsura's plans.

The Rekindling of the Sun: And you've won. You really have. But you're starting to realize, afterwards, that you might have done something wrong here. You don't feel happy. You feel lost in the dark, instead.

And the way to make it home to the sun again is to find a way to heal things, to save Satsura from itself.

Probably, since you're a musician, through music!

Golden Apples

the third Hidden Arc

In this Arc, there is something precious to the world that has been sealed away — locked in the magic apples of the Riders' garden somewhere on an island in Big Lake.

It is a crime.

It is a wrong thing. It is something taken from the world that should not have been taken. It is something lost to the world that should not have been lost. Perhaps it was always apples. Perhaps once it was something else, and it only takes the form of apples now that it's been sealed away.

Regardless.

It shouldn't have been taken. That was wrong.

And one night there is a raven that has eaten of that fruit, and the feather-tips of one wing turned white or gold from it, and it has flown to Town and whispered in your ear that the apples have been taken, stolen from the world, and you are called upon to save them.

AN INTERESTING LIFE

There is something missing from the world. You think. There is something broken. You're puzzled by it, and that very puzzlement draws you into the affairs of the world. You're *looking* for something and not finding it. Your routine is disrupted, and your exploration of the world outside your normal routine is disrupted too, because there's something you need or want or something and it's *not there*. You don't even know what it is.

Until you do. Until, probably, and probably with the help of the raven's whispers, you *do* figure it out. You *do* understand what it is.

There is something that's been taken from the world. Golden apples. Magic. Power. Life. Hope. Something.

Stolen, somehow, taken to the Riders' garden, far away.

You want it back.

A NEW APPROACH

You're trying to recreate something that was stolen from the world. You're working with your Keep or your Talent to ... bring back something in the spirit of the world that feels like it's been lost.

And you can't. You're trying, but you can't.

You've lost access to or used up or never found the apples; and either you need that access to do what

you're trying to do, or you're trying to recreate them, but you can't, not with what you're trying to do.

Not until the end of the quest, at least, and probably not even then.

A LEGENDARY COLLABORATION

This quest is your journey to the garden where the apples are, or will be, kept.

This may be a literal road trip or sailing trip beyond the world; or a set of memories of the same; or a set of flash-forward visions of the same; or a spiritual journey taken in your dreams; or, if it's a very close island, then maybe you can travel there and back, several times, over the course of this quest.

Typically you're traveling with your Mirror, Eclipse, or some other rival — they have something you need in order to make the journey, so you're at least in part at their mercy. It's also possible that the Riders themselves have commissioned your travels. Typically this is either because they plan to trap you there or because the garden is under threat, as discussed below.

THE REKINDLING OF THE SUN

This quest focuses on your efforts to use magical golden apples of some sort to fix, improve, or heal the world.

If you haven't encountered the garden yet, then either you find an apple that's remaining to the world, or you get an apple from the Riders, or this quest is taking place *before* the magic in them has been extracted from the world.


A RIVAL'S TROUBLES

The Riders come to you and ask for your help defending that garden — or the apples, possibly, if you previously took them all and left their garden utterly in ruins, but probably there's still a garden even if you've already been there, so probably it's the garden — from something *else*.

There is something that has set its sights on that garden: terrible, cold white serpents, salamanders, and centipedes, creatures predating even Jade Irinka's world. They are the minions of **Iustina Thrasaric**, who is all fires' end.

If you haven't been to the garden yet, you don't necessarily go there in this quest — it's possible that they're bargaining for an apple from you, or you're helping to plan the defense, or Iustina's creatures have come to stop you before the Riders can recruit you.

Example

You're on your third  **Mystic (Primordial)** Arc; you started with a magic Keep, a forested glade, and these days you're a kind of primeval primordial incarnation of the deep woods and of *life*.

The Rekindling of the Sun: You use the golden apples that have begun growing in your woods to help save/improve the world.

A Rival's Troubles: You're recruited by a minion of death and gardens to defend the Riders' garden from Iustina Thrasaric. It's not a bad thing to do, really. All they need is one of your apples. That's all!

It's just that... afterwards, you realize the remaining apples are withering!

A Legendary Collaboration: You travel to the Riders' garden. You're planning to fix something or do something cool, but between difficulty figuring out what you need to be doing, an awkward encounter with Iustina Thrasaric, and the cast of troublesome acquaintances and rivals and enemies that you've picked up along the way, I suspect that in the end you're just kind of carried along by events.

An Interesting Life: The apples and their miracle have been stolen, and you betrayed; the world was left, in some sense, hollow. But you're no slouch, you know? You're a primeval primordial incarnation of the deep woods and of *life*. You manage to fix the situation, with the help of whatever friends have come along.

Then you go home.


A New Approach: You grow new, silvered apples in your woods, with which to save the world.




Iustina Thrasaric

Iustina Thrasaric is an anti-salamander, a fire continually unburning, a heart continually in the throes of unpassion, a thing that by her nature can embrace flame or desire and with her touch extinguish or corrupt them. She dwells in a cold and barren Garden in the shape of a monstrous white lizard and her dreams reach out to distort the world.

She is a dangerous creature, with Traits like:

 **A Keeper of Gardens 2+**

 **Child of the Ash 0+**

And most likely some  **Creature of Fable** as well.

She is a creature of dust and history, stillness and mechanism; she feels a loathing for the noise and bustle of the world, the light and fire of the world, even the twisted light that is found in the Headmaster's Bleak Academy. She wishes it to be over, done, and still; for the world to be left an empty, dry, and dusty ruins, or, if not that, then a lifeless play, a world where the hearts have gone still and quiet in themselves, where people act and live but with no real interest in it, where passion succumbs to artifice and wishes turn to dim, nostalgic memories.

She is apostate and abomination to the Bleak Academy because, while she shares many of their reasons for loathing the world, she loves not neither the True Thing. She would, if she could manage it, extinguish even the far and sunless land.

Lost Spirit of the Stars

the final Hidden Arc

A star falls from the sky and finds itself in Town, or perhaps in the Bleak Academy. It is a strong and healthy star, able to turn into a spark of light, a tiny comet of flame, or even puff out into a human form —

But if it spends too long away from the sky it may wither and become a firefly, stone, or wish spirit; and if it is too attached to the human world, spends too long in its human shape as the child or adult **Isabel** or **Kevin Chantry** playing DDR and drinking bubble tea or whatever, it may burn through the natural aeons of its life in mere human days or weeks!

This is the story of how you help it.

Did it come down deliberately, seeking something in the world below? Was it stolen from the sky? Did it fall? And is its proper destination the sky again, or a few days of life, or should it go to a Far and a Sunless Land?

Here's two default scenarios — pick the one that suits you and your starting quest best:

- ✿ the star has fallen and been captured by the Bleak Academy.
- ✿ the star has fallen deliberately, lured by the lights of Town and by an activity or meal that it saw people doing, below, that you yourself regularly engage in. In fact, it probably saw *you* doing it, and started to think of you as awesome.

But it's starting to weaken — because it is spending too much time as a human, it is beginning to grow up, or even beginning to dwindle into the shape of a firefly or stone or *die* — and this makes it unhappy. Maybe it even tried to get back into the sky, but it was too weak!

AN INTERESTING LIFE

In this quest you are drawn into the story of the star.

It comes to you for help; or someone who thinks you can help it comes and asks you to. Maybe it sends you a message from the Bleak Academy, far away, talking of how it saw you doing (whatever you do) long ago.

Who asks you to help, and why can't you refuse them?

Either you agree to help immediately, and this quest is about figuring out how to do so; or, you hesitate, you're not certain, and this quest is about the *decision* to help, which you make at the very end.

If there's absolutely no way you can *help* it, it's possible that it just wants you to give it a place to stay.

A NEW APPROACH

This quest is you trying to figure out cosmology. You're poking at star charts, or thinking about what's up with the stars and the sky kingdom, or —

Most likely of all —

You're thinking about the Bleak Academy and the Far and Sunless Land. Some say the Bleak Academy is death's dominion, others that it's a school; it's strange enough, and host to many odd phenomena. It's a place that falling stars are cosmically drawn to — it even has a Property, "Here [you will find] the falling stars." — and it had something to do with the death of the sun.

But weirder yet is the land beyond it, to which you can get a visa at Arcadia's Methodology Tower. "The Far and Sunless Land," where the stars *are* falling and the wind snuffs out the flame, where one seeks nothing and gains all; rejects nothing and transcends all; holds to no conceptions, and rules all, there, in a far and a sunless land.

You're puzzling at that. That's the default "toy"/"new approach" for the quest: you're actively thinking about what all that stuff's about. Basically, you may or may not have visited the Bleak Academy at this point but you probably haven't wrestled too much with the ambiguity about what it actually is and you almost certainly haven't done an in-depth study of the Far and Sunless Land. Here's your chance to think through some of it and fill up the pot of the group's and HG's subconscious picture before you potentially go there later on.

The other good option for the "toy" for this quest is: a star!

If you don't know that it needs help yet, or if you've fixed everything and it's fine; if it's safe with you now, and hanging around you, or even if it's not but more or less *could* be... then that's a viable option. Your toy for the quest could be a cool floating puff of argent fire that sometimes shapeshifts into a kid or whatever and plays arcade games at your side!

A LEGENDARY COLLABORATION

This quest is typically an awkward journey to the Bleak Academy or to the Far and Sunless Land.

It's generally not a comfortable or easy journey: you're a captive of the Riders, or chasing them and their captive star, or you're traveling with people you dislike, or something. But at the same time, it's generally a wondrous journey. You see amazing things.

If you're the only PC able to take this journey, then I'd recommend playing it out in dreams and visions and spiritual experiences — it's just a *part* of you, your soul or dream-self, that goes out to the Far and Sunless Land.

THE REKINDLING OF THE SUN

The star is fading. It's withering, turning into a firefly, a dead star, or a stone. It's possible that the only thing to be done here is to put it back into the sky. Or maybe you can fix it some other way?

A RIVAL'S TROUBLES

This quest isn't directly on point. It's not about the star. The star isn't reachable right now. It's gone, or lost to you, or not yet met, or back up in the sky — or maybe it's hanging out with you as a fun little ally and doesn't *need* a quest about it to happen right now!

So this quest isn't *about* the star. Instead, you become involved in the planning for your Mirror's new expedition, or a Rider-run expedition, to find the sky-island treasure that's a part of the stories of the 139.

Example

You're on a mundane Emptiness Arc. You have trouble staying connected to the world already, and keep drifting off to your empty carnival-world Keep.

For you this plays out as:

An Interesting Life: Someone you care about asks you to help the star. It draws you out of your carnival-world, a little. At the end of the quest, you agree to go. The star, after all, has been taken to the Bleak Academy, and that kind of thing just shouldn't happen!

A New Approach: You find yourself thinking about the Bleak Academy a lot and how to even *get* there to help the star.

A Legendary Collaboration: You've figured out how to get there, and you separate off a part of your soul or dream-self to find it. It's a troublesome but a wondrous journey.

The Rekindling of the Sun: beyond the Bleak Academy, in the far and sunless land, you return the stolen star to the wounded sky.

A Rival's Troubles: You involve yourself in your Mirror's plans to hunt for the sky-island treasure.

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