

L I M I N A L

SHADOW TO THE LIGHT

A Case Note for Liminal



Paul Mitchener

3/18

SHADOW TO THE LIGHT

A Case Note for Liminal



Concept: Paul Mitchener

Writing: Paul Mitchener

Art: Jason Behnke

Editing: Tim Gray

(C) 2019 Paul Mitchener and Jason Behnke

Introduction

In this case, the crew follow what seems to be a simple call to track down a magical thief. The mission soon becomes rescuing the thief, before an opportunity presents itself to claim a powerful magical artifact.

Ghosts, vampires, the fae, and Britain's mythic history are all involved.

Background

Galatine was the sister sword to Excalibur, said to be “shadow to Excalibur's light”. It belonged to Gawain, one of King Arthur's most notable knights. Gawain had conflicted family loyalties — he was one of the Orkney knights, brothers of Morgan Le Fay — but this did not stop him following Arthur faithfully. He died alongside Arthur battling Mordred.

Finding Galatine would be a prize as potent as the sword Excalibur itself. And nobody knows what happened to it when Gawain died — there are no accounts of Galatine being reclaimed by the Lady of the Lake as there were with Excalibur. Some in the Hidden World suspect it of being out there still.

One of these people is T'Kelah Leary, a young woman of mixed Jamaican and Irish background, and a self-trained wizard. She is loosely affiliated with the Mercury Collegium. The Council of Merlin would term her a gutter mage. She has the ire of the Council as she joined them for a while, pretending interest, and was starting her training at Dee College, Oxford, when she fled, taking several books from the library with her. Nobody knows how she broke the geas that should have prevented such a thing.

Among the books, T'Kelah found what she needed. In an account of Arthur's last battle it was mentioned that Gawain did not have the sword Galatine; he had returned it to where he found it so that it did not fall into the hands of the enemy or Dark Fae. Another account mentioned him finding it at the Roman Fort of Ravenglass.

Of course, all accounts of matters Arthurian liberally mix history, myth, and pure fiction. But the accounts owned by the Council of Merlin are likely to be more reliable than most. T'Kelah's course became clear. Ravenglass Roman Fort is sometimes haunted by the ghosts of Roman soldiers who had won the sword from the Celts. The Romans were slain by a ghostly spirit, and the sword is no longer there, but T'Kelah was able to learn of its true location — the Fae realm of Avalon, domain of Gwynn ap Nudd, with an entrance at the peak of Glastonbury Tor.

Unfortunately, before T'Kelah could act on this information, she was taken by vampires. Shortly afterwards, the player characters enter the scene. Maybe they can rescue her and retrieve Galatine.

Other matters are afoot in Britain that make finding the sword vital, though neither T'Kelah nor the player characters know this at the start of these cases.

Hooks

There are several ways to get the crew involved with T'Kelah's rescue and the subsequent quest for the sword.

From the Council of Merlin

Hannah Morgan, T'Kelah's mentor who sponsored her provisional entry into the Council of Merlin, wants her found. And found discreetly, rather than brought in by a Council of Merlin retrieval squad, hence the crew. Hannah's divinations have revealed her student to be at Ravenglass. She wants to check that T'Kelah both does not need help, and is not plotting against the Council of Merlin. If she is not in trouble, and not plotting against the Council, T'Kelah can be left alone. No need for any embarrassment.

T'Kelah was only a student at Dee College for a few weeks, and stole some valuable books. The books are not magical, but rather to do with Arthurian stories unknown outside the Council, particularly those to do with the knight Gawain.

From the Mercury Collegium

T'Kelah Leary is part of the Mercury Collegium, and activated a one-use magical device the Collegium employ to send a distress call, so they know she is in trouble and where she is within a mile or so. The Mercury Collegium has few resources in Cumbria. So the magician who received the distress call gets in touch with the crew.

Forebodings

You can use this hook with one of the others. A diviner in an allied faction, or a player character diviner, has a warning that something is emerging, something that can only be dealt with using a special weapon, known in ancient times, a sword linked to the stories of King Arthur.

A diviner might see symbols such as a body on a boat vanishing into the mist, and a woman's hand rising above the surface of a lake bearing a sword.

Characters

The Bride

The Bride became a vampire in the 1950s, but she affects noble mannerisms, and pretends to be a noble lady from Victorian times. She also wears a wedding dress, saying she became what she was on her wedding day. This is a lie — it is merely that the Bride was taken with the character Miss Havisham from Charles Dickens' novel, *Great Expectations*.

Despite her dubious grip on reality, the Bride leads a small group of vampire minions. The vampires strike at hikers and tourists rather than locals, and so far have gone undetected. The Bride does not seek prey herself, rather sending her minions to do so. They bring back live victims for her to play with and feed upon in the comfort of their lair, sometimes for days on end.

Drive:	I feed and I play
Physical Skills:	Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Melee 4, Shoot 3
Mental Skills:	Education 2, Lore 2
Social Skills:	Charm 2, Conviction 3, Taunt 4
Traits:	Brawny, Frightening, Night Sight, Quick Reflexes, Rapid Healing (Weakness: Silver), Monstrous Toughness, Water Running
Limitation:	Weakened by Sunlight
Endurance:	20
Will:	11
Damage:	d6+3 (pistol or natural weapons)



New Trait: Water Running

A being with this Trait can run across water, and will not sink as long as they keep running.

Gwynn ap Nudd

Gwynn ap Nudd, Lord of the Dead and King of Summer, is the ruler of Avalon, the Fae Realm accessed within Glastonbury Tor. He is almost as powerful as the likes of the Winter King and the Queen of Hyde Park, but has no ambition to extend his realm or dominate the Fae of Britain as they do. His interests are almost all within his realm rather than the mortal world.

The King is genial, generous, and forgiving — until a “guest” wants to leave Avalon. Then he resorts to bribery, deception, threats, pleas and, if necessary, subtle violence, depending on the importance and power of the guest, and the degree to which the guest impresses the King of Summer. He does this to keep people in his realm. The King likes people.

Drive:	My hospitality is legendary, and cannot be refused
Physical Skills:	Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Melee 5
Mental Skills:	Art 5, Business 4, Lore 5
Social Skills:	Charm 5, Conviction 5, High Society 3, Taunt 4
Traits:	Brawny, Graceful, Presence, The Sight, Glamour (Persistent Illusion, Unholy Terror), Necromancy, Rapid Healing (within Avalon), Spirit Dominance, Supernatural Bargain, Monstrous Toughness (×2)
Endurance:	27
Will:	13

T’Kelah Leary

T’Kelah Leary is a gutter magician who dreams big. She’s not a big player in the Hidden World, being a largely self-taught magician and a solo operator as well, but she has contacts with lots of different groups, including House Annwn and the Jaeger Family. She even became an affiliate of the Council of Merlin for a few weeks, but that was only to get access to their books.

It’s debatable whether T’Kelah is a member of the Mercury Collegium, but she’s on friendly terms with them, and they’re the group she deals with most frequently.

The gutter mage’s current dream is bigger than most, and she may have bitten off more than she can chew. She wants to get hold of Galatine, and believes she knows how. But unfortunately her plans fell almost at the first hurdle — after talking to the ghosts of Ravenglass Fort, she was captured by the vampires.

Maybe the crew can rescue her.

Drive: To find Galatine
 Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Melee 2, Stealth 3
 Mental Skills: Business 1, Education 1,
 Lore 3 (Specialisation: Arthurian Myth), Technology 1
 Social Skills: Charm 3, Conviction 2, Streetwise 3, Taunt 2
 Traits: Blessings and Curses, Silver Tongue, Weathermonger
 Endurance: 10
 Will: 10
 Damage: d6 (unarmed)

The Viscount Morpeth

The Viscount Morpeth is a vampire lord. He goes only by his aristocratic title, refusing to recognise his name in life, Charles Howard. Morpeth became a vampire in 1739, at the age of 20, when he visited Venice during the course of a Grand Tour of Europe. The Grand Tour was the fashion for aristocratic youths in the 18th century.

When he returned from continental Europe he became a Member of Parliament, but he was known to be ill from consumption. An Agent of the Ravenstower realised what he was and confronted him. Although the Viscount was able to slay the man, he then allowed himself to apparently die, fearing to remain in the public eye.

The Viscount is bolder now, and regrets that decision. He still looks like a young man of 20, dark of hair and pale of skin, but despite his youthful appearance he is one of the twenty-one senior Vampire Lords of the Sodality of the Crown, who form its Parliament. And getting hold of Galatine would vastly advance the Sodality's cause — it's linked to Excalibur, the sword of true royalty in Britain.

Morpeth is secure in his power, almost reckless in his assumption that no mortal could possibly threaten him. If opposed, he doesn't just want to defeat the opposition, he wants to humiliate them. His arrogance could be his undoing; he comes into events with little support, when he could command dozens.

Drive: Assert Arrogant Superiority
 Physical Skills: Athletics 5, Awareness 4,
 Melee Combat 5 (Specialisation: Swords), Shoot 3
 Mental Skills: Business 2, Education 3, Lore 3
 Social Skills: Charm 3, Conviction 5,
 High Society 5 (Specialisation: Politics), Taunt 5
 Traits: Supernatural Strength, Night Sight, Quick Reflexes,
 Monstrous Toughness ($\times 2$), Rapid Healing (Weakness: Wood),
 Rich, Presence, Frightening, Demand
 Limitations: Weakened by Sunlight,
 Vulnerability (Calling out the Viscount's name from when he was alive)
 Endurance: 29
 Will: 13
 Damage: d6+5 (natural weapons), d6+7 (sword), d6+3 (pistol)

**New Trait: Demand**

A being capable of daunting others can bind someone to obey a command by making a Taunt roll, opposed by the victim's Conviction. Attempting such a demand costs 3 Will. The command is clear and spoken aloud.

A demand might refer to future events. Denying a command costs the victim 2d6 Will. A demand does not have to be reasonable.

PART ONE: THE MISSING MAGICIAN

Initial Situation

The search for T'Kelah Leary begins at her last known destination, the ruins of Ravenglass Roman Fort, in north-west England, at the northern edge of the Lake District. These picturesque ruins overlooking the Cumbrian coast understandably attract tourists, but people seldom come here at night, especially within a few days of a lunar eclipse when ghosts emerge and a subtle sense of dread radiates from the ruins.

There is not a ghost realm here, but rather some very ancient ghosts — late period Roman soldiers who are playing dice and chatting away in Latin. The dice game seems to be to see who wins a fine-looking sword with a golden hilt that lies on the table between them.

These ghosts are not a threat, and indeed are barely visible. Unlike most ancient ghosts, being intermittent, they never gained a material form. It will take effort on the part of the characters to attract their attention, requiring a skill roll at challenge level 8.

Speaking to the Ghosts

They do not speak English, but rather Latin and Brythonic. A character who is an academic wizard, or otherwise trained by the Council of Merlin, will speak Latin. A player character who speaks Welsh can just about get by in Brythonic. Be generous with solutions to the potential language issue — it's intended as an excuse to roleplay rather than a barrier.

Further skill rolls, again at challenge level 8, are needed to actually persuade the ghosts to answer questions. Each player character may make one roll. They will reveal the following; give one piece of information for a successful roll, or two with a critical success. The ghosts will say the first thing first, and grow noticeably agitated when it is revealed; they dread the spirit coming again, and “reliving” their deaths.

- The spirit is coming soon, and it killed us.
- The woman came to talk to us. She used magic. She wanted to ask us about the sword.
- The vampires took her to a boat past the lines of metal.
- The sword was taken by the fair folk to Glastonbury after we were gone. They took it from its hiding place.
- We cannot rest while the spirit comes to take us each moon.

Even aside from the language issue, the ghosts are not completely coherent. They can't even remember their own names.

Should the player characters linger when they have all asked questions, they witness one of the soldiers stashing the sword in a hiding place beneath the floor, before something invisible attacks them. Even a necromancer or character with faerie sight cannot see the attacker, but what happens to the Roman soldiers is traumatic and gruesome. Any player character still in the area must make a Conviction roll at Challenge Level 8 or lose d6 Will.

After the attack, the ghosts cannot be contacted until the next night. The sword is not in the hiding place, but there are a few gold coins struck in the name of Magnus Maximus, who was declared emperor in Britain. This rare find is worth £6,000 if the coins are sold to a museum or collector.

As for that which attacked the soldiers, it no longer exists, even as a ghost. A Lore roll at challenge level 10 can potentially work out that all that is attacking the soldiers is their own memories. A Rhetoric roll at challenge level 10 can then convince them they can rest in peace.

First Location

From Ravensglass Roman Fort, the vampires took T'Kelah past the railway line and over the River Esk. Being the progeny of the Bride, they can all run on water, making the river no barrier.

On a sandy piece of scrubland between the River Esk and the sea stands an abandoned wooden bungalow, its windows boarded up and the white paint peeling away. Tracks lead a short way up the beach where the ground is soft, in the direction of the bungalow, but can't be so easily spotted over harder ground.

This bungalow is the current residence of the vampire called the Bride and her minions. Currently T'Kelah is held here, tied up, hurt (reduced to Endurance 2), and scared, but still alive. There is one minion per player, as well as the Bride. T'Kelah can potentially help with Blessings and Curses.

Vampire Minions

Drive:	Thirst for blood
Physical Skills:	Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Melee Combat 3
Mental Skills:	Business 1, Education 2
Social Skills:	Taunt 3
Traits:	Brawny, Night Sight, Quick Reflexes, Rapid Healing (Weakness: Silver)
Limitation:	Weakened by Sunlight, Vulnerability (Garlic, Mirrors), Obligated (Serve the Bride)
Endurance:	11
Will:	8
Damage:	d6+3 (natural weapons)



Leads

After talking to the ghosts, T'Kelah knows what she needs to pursue Galatine. Or the ghosts may have given the player characters the relevant clue. Galatine is in Avalon. An Education test at difficulty 8 reveals that a possible ancient British name for Glastonbury Tor was Ynys yr Afalon. A Lore test at difficulty 8 reveals that a Fae realm lies within Glastonbury Tor. T'Kelah knows both these things.

There is another issue. T'Kelah told her quest to the vampires that held her. She had no choice. The Bride alerted her lord, who she called "the Viscount". And if the Viscount is who T'Kelah thinks he is, he's one of the leading vampire lords in Britain. He must not find the sword!

The time issue means the Liminals won't be able to do full research or to mobilise other factions. It is vital to reach Glastonbury Tor ahead of the Viscount. So they are reduced to what they might recall with a Lore test. Allow each player character to make a roll for a piece of information.

- The way to Avalon is at the top of Glastonbury Tor. The characters can simply dig down from the base of the ruins of the church tower at the summit. Alternatively, if they go to sleep at the base of the tower, they will awaken in Avalon.
- The lord Gwynn ap Nudd is friendly as long as his name is not spoken, and will give gifts to visitors who impress him. He should be referred to as King of Summer or Lord of the Dead.
- Thomas the Rhymer, a 13th century magician, dwells in Avalon, ageless and married to one of the King of Summer's daughters.
- One cannot leave Avalon without permission from the King of Summer. The more one impresses Gwynn ap Nudd, the more gifts and knowledge he grants, the more reluctant he is to let someone leave.

T'Kelah also knows one of those pieces of information. She wants Galatine for herself, but is certainly willing to work with her rescuers as long as they don't cut her out of it; it's now beyond her reach, and the young woman is a realist. T'Kelah is not really well enough to go on adventures thanks to her injured state.

Complications

The main complication to consider is the vampire lord. He is the Viscount Morpeth, mentioned above, and he is one of the most powerful vampires in the country. He travels with two human servants, Juliette Cooper and Ethan Luis; he has promised to make both of them immortal.

Juliette Cooper and Ethan Luis

Drive:	Seeking vampiric immortality
Physical Skills:	Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Melee 3, Shoot 2, Vehicles 2
Mental Skills:	Business 2, Lore 1, Technology 2
Social Skills:	Taunt 2
Traits:	Brawny, Night Sight
Limitation:	Obligated (to serve Viscount Morpeth)
Endurance:	10
Will:	8
Damage:	d6+3 shovel or pistol

Morpeth is cunning, and suspects the crew are on the way to retrieve Galatine. He intends to use them, and is waiting at the base of Glastonbury Tor. The vampire approaches the crew openly, claiming not to be hostile, and that they can help each-other.

As part of the conversation, he demands that the crew retrieves Galatine and then hands the sword over to him, using his Demand power. If the crew are taken in by his power — or in the case of clever player characters, appear to be taken in — he reveals that he can be found in a rented cottage about five minutes' walk from the Tor, and demands that the crew bring him back Galatine.

Perhaps the crew will be able to make plans to slay a vampire lord. The world will be a better place if they succeed in such.

Final Location

Glastonbury Tor is a conical hill rising from the surrounding landscape. On top of the hill stands a tower, all that remains of St. Michael's Church. Getting to Avalon is a matter of digging down here to a depth of about 2 to 3 metres. This will open a gateway to the Faerie Realm, though one cannot come back to the mortal world by that route.

This is not without issues.

- Digging such a big hole will attract attention, perhaps from the police who will tell the one digging to stop.
- The hole leads to a portal which remains open until the earth around it collapses. Others on the Tor could potential stumble into the Faerie realm.

P Division have left instructions that they be alerted should someone start digging a big hole on top of Glastonbury Tor. They will be aware of what a hole there does. At the very least, a senior member of P Division will come to see the crew, and will need some persuasion to let them proceed. They take 2 hours to arrive.

The crew are likely to find themselves talking to DI Tariq Bosan, a youngish man with a world-weary manner. At the start of the conversation, he has the crew mentally labelled as idiots, and needs to be convinced otherwise. Bosan shows genuine anger should the crew be involved in activities putting ordinary people in danger. If they should mention the Viscount Morpeth, he will be very interested indeed, though it is questionable whether the local members of P Division could take on a vampire lord.

It might be best to tell the truth — though if the quest for the sword is purely selfish, why should P Division allow it? In any case, if the crew do get through, P Division will make sure the hole is filled in afterwards.

Detective Inspector Tariq Bosan

Drive:	Protecting the public from the Hidden World
Physical Skills:	Athletics 1, Awareness 3, Melee 2, Shoot 2, Vehicles 1
Mental Skills:	Lore 2, Technology 2
Social Skills:	Conviction 2, Empathy 2, Streetwise 2
Traits:	Investigator
Endurance:	9
Will:	10
Damage:	d6+1 (combat baton), d6+3 (pistol)



3/10

PART TWO: AVALON

Initial Situation

Avalon — also known as The Land of Always Summer — is the Fae idea of a bucolic paradise shaped for humanity. When the player characters come into Avalon, they emerge in the Fields of the Blessed — terraced gardens on which grow fruit trees, fragrant flowers, and lawns. The trees bear both spring blossom and autumn fruit.

A few Fae come and go on the terraces, but none will stop the player characters unless they become violent, and they are easy to avoid. Any enquiries the player characters make are deflected with the suggestion that the player characters seek the King in the Palace. When they have gone to him, then they can speak properly.

The spiritual and physical centre of Avalon is the Summer Palace, a golden dome at the top of the terraces. If the player characters ask questions in Avalon such as how to leave, or where they could find a magic sword, they are answered with the reply that everything can be answered in the Summer Palace. The Summer King is always happy to speak to guests.

Should the player characters mention the name “Gwynn ap Nudd”, they are cautioned not to use that name here, only his titles.

First Location

Within the Summer Palace, visitors to the realm often visit the Hall of Perpetual Feasts, where food and sparkling golden wine is served in silver goblets to guests seated along several long tables. There may be no limit to the size of the Hall of Perpetual Feasts — at times there are thousands of guests.

Harpers, flautists, and singers entertain with music, some ancient and some contemporary. The musicians have a stage to the side of the tables, and can be heard throughout the Hall, however large it might be at a given moment. Renditions of songs recently sung at Glastonbury concerts are common; in faerie hands in this domain, a harp can sound like an electric guitar.

Guests come and go between the steady stream of courses served, eating as much or as little as they choose. On special occasions, the King of Summer is at the head of the main table.

The Fae Lord will more usually receive guests within his audience chamber. In contrast to the Hall of Endless Feasts, this room is sparse and somber, and reflects Gwynn ap Nudd's other title of Lord of the Dead. He sits on a silver chair raised on a dais; visitors must stand. Despite appearances, the Lord of the Dead is cordial and generous, and welcomes the player characters to his realm.

There are two ways of earning his favour: with social skills, or by showing one's value with knowledge or art. A social skill roll is an opposed test; a knowledge or art skill is at challenge level 10.

Each success earns a small gift, or information. A critical success earns two such. However, keep track of the number of gifts or pieces of information given out; this will be important later on.

Here are some possible gifts.

- Valuable jewellery or clothing, which only persists while in Avalon. A second gift grants something that persists even in the outside world, and is worth d6 thousand pounds.
- A magical potion, which looks like liquid silver. When drunk, it immediately heals all damage to Endurance.
- The ability to play any musical instrument.
- A poem by the most famous of mortal poets, Thomas the Rhymer, unheard so far in mortal lands.
- A magical potion, which looks like liquid gold. When drunk, it immediately restores Will to its maximum.
- A noble Fae to marry. Perhaps even one of the Lord's sons or daughters. After all, they will surely be as impressed with the character as Gwynn ap Nudd is.

Possible information includes the following.

- Ways into or out of other Fae realms, or ghost realms;
- A secret location of the Hidden World;
- The means to get out of a particular Ghost Realm;
- A being's vulnerability.

The location of the sword Galatine counts as both a gift and as information, meaning finding it requires a critical success or two successes to succeed in the above tests. It lies within the Lake of Dreams Gone By. Asking about the lake counts as further information.

One thing the Fae Lord will not do — he will not tell player characters the way out of Avalon, or send them away.

Leads

Most people in Avalon know that the Lake of Dreams Gone By is at the base of the terraces, tucked out of sight behind the southern hedge. It is easy enough to find, and most people will be happy to take the player characters as far as the hedge, though not beyond it.

A guide might also know some of what Thomas the Rhymer knows, as outlined in the boxed text.

Thomas the Rhymer The player characters may well seek out the poet Thomas the Rhymer if they know he dwells in Avalon. Thomas is a Scottish laird, poet, and prophet from the 13th century who came to live in faerie. He is married to a daughter of Gwynn ap Nudd. The players or player characters may have heard of the folk ballad *Thomas the Rhymer*.

Thomas will help fellow mortals with information as long as he is approached in a friendly manner. Thomas knows the following. The Charm skill will steer the conversation down a fruitful avenue.

- Drinking from the waters of the Lake of Dreams Gone By brings not exactly forgetfulness, but ambitions becoming unimportant. Including an ambition to leave Avalon. He should know — he drank from the Lake and is now content here. It's advisable not to accidentally imbibe water.
- There is a monster in the lake. It sleeps at the bottom.
- The Lady of the Lake will quiz any who visit the lake, and she can see through any lies.
- Only the Lord can open a way by which one can leave Avalon. And he chooses not to.
- But there is a way to get kicked out, and it is not with polite requests, but insults. Gwynn ap Nudd especially does not like the use of his name or the use of the words Fae, Faerie, and so on.

Complications

Should the player characters proceed past the hedge as suggested, they can see the sombre shores of the Lake of Dreams Gone By. A radiant dark-haired Fae woman awaits them. She is the Lady of the Lake.

The Lady of the Lake will quiz the player characters why they want the sword. If they lie, she shouts with enraged fury as a warning. All must make a Conviction roll at challenge level 8 or lose d6 Will. If the heroes continue to lie, the Lady transforms into a monstrous

serpent with a crocodilian head — an avanc — and attacks unless immediately soothed. There is no third chance to avoid attack.

A similar situation applies should a character attempt to sneak past the Lady but get caught, or simply go past without permission. The best option is for a character to convince the Lady that they will use Galatine to perform a noble deed. If they suggest something specific, simply allow it; if not, make a Rhetoric test at difficult number 11.

New Trait: Shout of Fury

A monster with this Trait can spend one Will per other being present to force everyone else on the scene to make a Conviction roll at Challenge Level 8, or lose d6 Will. If desired, the creature can spend double the usual Will to raise the Challenge Level to 10.



The Lady of the Lake in monstrous form

Drive:	To ensure the sword goes only to someone worthy.
Physical Skills:	Athletics 2 (Specialisation: Swimming), Awareness 3, Survival 2, Melee 4, Stealth 2
Mental Skills:	Lore 1
Social Skills:	Conviction 3, Taunt 4
Traits:	Supernatural Strength, Monstrous Toughness, Night Sight, The Sight, Faerie Tongue, Shout of Fury
Limitation:	Vulnerability (Salt)
Endurance:	18
Will:	11
Damage:	d6+6 (teeth)

Final Location

The sword Galatine is at the bottom of the Lake of Dreams Gone By. The sword is of course magic, and unaffected by such things as rust. The waters of the lake are also magical; anyone entering the lake must make a Conviction test at Challenge Level 8 to remember why they did so.

Drinking the waters of the lake can lead to one forgetting a Drive, or that they want to leave Avalon. Hence mortals who do stay here are content. There is also a curative value here; forgetting a curse is the same as a cure in this case. One who the vampiric Viscount Morpeth affected with Demand can gain release from the compulsion, but a Conviction test at Challenge Level 10 is needed to avoid forgetting other things as well.

Finding where the sword is within the lake is simply a matter of entering the lake and swimming to the lake bottom — a difficulty 10 Athletics test. Failure means swallowing the lake water, with the above effects.

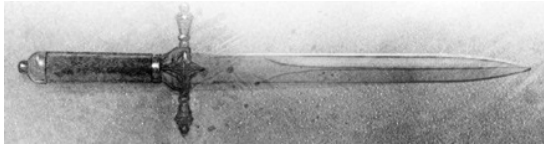
Galatine

The sword Galatine is a two point magical artifact. It is a late Roman spatha, a sword with a blade one metre long, and a long grip meaning it can be used one- or two-handed. It does +4 damage, and grants a +2 bonus to Melee when used to attack.

Furthermore, any being is vulnerable to it, even one with magical protections or that is unsubstantial. It ignores protections due to wards.. When used against a being with rapid healing, the damage from Galatine does not heal rapidly.

A player character who decides to keep Galatine should pay the Trait point cost, or be working towards paying the cost. If they do not, it's fair for the GM to let them make use of Galatine for a while, but have it break as it strikes the killing blow in a suitably dramatic combat. So they get some use out of the sword, but it's not a free power.

A quest might repair the sword, but that is another adventure.



Leaving Avalon

The conclusion to this case is not just gaining Galatine, but leaving Avalon. And the King of Summer will initially laugh at those who ask to leave. It is paradise, and they are honoured — why would they want to leave? And the only way out is through him, he says.

The secret is to offend the Faerie Lord. However, it's hard to do this in the right way; a minor offence will be laughed off and a major but mundane offence will lead to imprisonment for hours, days, or weeks. And one cannot avoid eating Faerie food and drinking Faerie drink for all that time...

To resolve this, make a Taunt test at a difficulty equal to 8 plus the number of gifts or pieces of information that the characters previously received. If a player character uses the name Gwynn ap Nudd, rather than titles, add a +2 bonus to the roll. On a successful test, the offending player characters are ejected from paradise; on a failure, they are imprisoned as noted above.

After a stay in prison, the characters may seek another way out. Surely the only way is not through Gwynn ap Nudd. Perhaps Thomas the Rhymer knows of another route, and can be persuaded to speak of it, though it is sure to be guarded and dangerous. But if they stay a while in Avalon, the characters will be months or years in the future.

When they emerge into the mortal world, the characters enter an anonymous almost abandoned street in Glastonbury — a street that is no longer there when they leave it. Potentially they still have the Viscount to deal with. The Viscount will still want to claim the sword. On the other hand, the sword is a perfect weapon to use against the Viscount.