Warlock's Journal
No. 28 — July 2016
"Twins"
The **Warlock’s Journal** is an interdimensional book that teleports from place to place, recording knowledge in whatever location it finds itself. The places it goes may be widely separated in time and space and even be in different dimensions or alternate realities. The handful of people who have actually seen the book more than once suggest that it sends its information back to some central location, as they have seen the book nearly filled with information, only to find it almost empty again, or filled with completely different information, at some later point. Of course, since there is no real proof that the book itself travels through time in a linear manner, such analysis is speculation at best.

In real terms, The **Warlock’s Journal** is a roving contest featuring creative writing in the RPG field. It moves from one site to another (usually blogs, but perhaps another type of site) on a monthly basis, but any site where it has appeared can help you find its current location. Contest details for the month are set by the host site, but the topic will always be related to roleplaying games and small prizes will be offered. All entries remain the property of their respective writers, but will be collected at the end of each monthly contest and made available to the public at least as a free PDF document, as well as being added to an ongoing archive. In addition, free annual collections of all the contest entries may be offered. Submitting material for consideration indicates the author’s agreement to these terms and conditions.

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The theme for this issue is **Twins**. They can be synergistic, antagonistic, opposites, or identical (but not duplicates). They can be items, people, spells, technologies, or whatever else you can imagine, either obvious twins or conceptual twins. But they have to be twins - two of a kind, more alike each other than anything else.

Geek history is replete with various types of twins - Kitana and Mileena; Batman and Owlman; Hrunting and Naegling; Law and Chaos; Chang and Eng; Plusle and Minun; Mournblade and Stormbringer; Good and Evil; Mary-Kate and Ashley; Adam and Eve; West Jordan and Votkinsk; Spock and Mirror Spock; Paladin and Anti-Paladin. The list is long. Now it's your turn to make it even longer.
Together We Fall
A Twin Titans Setting by Kezle

Namma the Wanderer, with her many moons and nomads collecting in villages clinging to her shoulders and hair. Munnu the Planet-Eater, with her spears and asteroid belt to fuel the great slings of her many arms.

The twin titans roamed the outer reaches when the universe was young, before the galaxy became the graveyard of titans. Then the Headsmen came in their graven masks and purple robes. Munnu, who had destroyed their homeland, was brought low. Only her shell remained and became the new dwelling place of the Headsmen.

Namma's wanderings across the galaxy were brought to a halt at the death of her twin. The link was broken and she collapsed, bringing the villages with her.

Across the years the twin corpses have remained, bearing two nations on a orbit around the first titan, Som. The villages of Namma were brought low by her fall and animosity remains between them and the descendants of the Headsmen, who have carved out their cities in the interior of Munnu. Every year their orbits bring them together and with it, tense trading, much debating, and occasionally battle before they drift apart once more.

The Firmament Weavers of Namma have long sought a way to revive the titan. They defy the Sibyls of the Moons who warn that to awaken Namma means also to revive her twin. In the towers and tunnels of the Munnu interior, the Graven Sentinels have passed down the legend of the rebirth for generations. They claim that if the twins are ever awoken, their destinies are switched. Namma is to be the scourge and Munnu the wanderer. The link between the twins must be severed because to awaken them now, when their orbits coincide, could spell annihilation for both nations.

Found in Munnu:
- Mask necropolis tended by watchful stones to honour those who fell in the titan war
- The three eyes of Munnu kept as trophies in the Heartstone Vault
- Messengers, smuggler chariots, and bloodborn racing along the black arteries through the titan arms
- Chain bridge to the rebellious Fifth Arm Colony rooted in the severed arm
- Pillar ribs glowing with unnatural light over the Hanging City of the Masked Potentate
- Graven Sentinels guarding the passages to the drying ichor mines
- Star sea vessels darting through the empty sockets of the splintered Skull Port

Found on Namma:
- Star fisher villages tethered to the splayed braids of the fallen titan
- The fallen moons, home to the crater seats of the Sibyls
- Firmament weavers gathering in elevated roundhouses and skywalks
- Flag strewn scaffolding of the many levels of the Palm Markets
- Sworn Preservers searching for the boreholes of illegal ichor miners
- Plated nets being carted across the surface by sun harvesters
- Village representatives gathering at the Crown Assembly to cast lots and decide legal matters through chance and cheating
**Rumours:**

- The eyes of Munnu have been stolen
- The power of the vein Sibyls use to access Namma’s memories is waning
- If the severed arm is reunited with the body, Munnu would be revived
- There is a Weaver spy in the Hanging City court
- The time between Namma and Munnu’s meeting is getting shorter with each orbit
- A new drug made from titan ichor grants abilities similar to a Firmament Weaver
- A Graven Sentinel is roaming the Palm Markets seeking a “genuine fragment of Munnu’s spear”
- A living titan has been spotted in the outer orbit
- Som is going to awaken and destroy us all unless Namma and Munnu are revived to defend us
- The Masked Potentate was murdered and it’s now their killer behind the mask
Celephak and Gitornis by Michael Barry

From before recorded history, the twin city-states of Celephak and Gitornis have been rivals over the Disputed Lands of Sarasi. This rivalry is unusual, however, because recent centuries have been without warfare.

Three centuries ago, the Tyrant of Celephak and the King of Gitornis, after a series of inconclusive border skirmishes, agreed to meet for a pitched battle. The day had seen storm clouds gathering, with a bitter night obviously coming. Forces mustered, both leaders arranged to join battle at dawn, then settled into their respective pavilions for a night of debauched gluttony while their soldiers endured short rations without shelter in the cold and wet.

In the No Man’s Land between the opposing forces, lightning shattered and set alight an ancient, massive tree stump. Taking this for an omen, night patrols from either side dragged together deadwood from the surrounding area, cooperating to build a great bonfire. Rapidly the hungry, frozen soldiers and camp-followers of both armies drew together to share the warmth of the massive blaze.

Their many fireside arguments reached agreement on one point: both cities could do without their corrupt, incompetent and tyrannical rulers. All declared before the dread Elder Gods that from that night they would be their own masters, refusing to obey unwarranted power.

“We call no biped Lord or Sir, and bend the knee to no man.”

The Tyrant of Celephak and the King of Gitornis emerged next morning into a new world. They and their sycophants found that their commands, once unquestioned law, were met with scorn and ridicule. Soldiers, whores and even piss-boys directed their former rulers to take care of their own needs; even executioners demanded that the aristocrats carry out their own sentences. Gradually the palaces were stripped, the treasuries drained and noble properties seized by those who had previously guarded them.

Faced with universal embargo, ignored and unfed, the nobility of both cities drifted away to take refuge with relatives in neighbouring kingdoms. The few remaining aristocrats earned the right to lead through the respect of their fellow citizens, alongside new leaders who had risen through merit.

The citizens of Celephak and Gitornis, free of their rulers and aristocrats, achieved what had eluded them for generations: peace, of a sort. It is a peace filled with argument, squabbling, robbery, duels and even assassinations, but without large-scale bloodshed. Anyone seeking leadership requires the support of their followers, obtained by reasoned argument and clear community benefit.

Today, passionate public argument is the “sport” of both Celephak and Gitornis. Citizens take a keen interest in the politics of their city; Celephakians enjoy loud, explosive discussions filled with expletives, while Gitornians prefer to listen, interrupting a few perfectly-chosen words at precisely the right moment. Celephakians consider the Gitornians to be smart-alecks; Gitornians regard Celephakians as boorish louts.

The common culture of Celephak and Gitornis is best illustrated by their customary insults and mottos:

“If you seek to lead, you must first stand up.”

“That may be a fine action, but can you back it up with speech?”

“Action is easy, but words display your soul.”

“You speak like a ruler; tell me how your feet and hands will get dirty.”

The cities still battle over dominance of the Disputed Lands of Sarasi, but it is a dominance of minds, not flesh. Nevertheless, anyone trying to exploit their differences will discover that the two cities are twin siblings: eternally bickering, but combining ferociously against a common threat.
The Virgin and the Defiler by Michael Barry

One city pursues another across the Great Plain of Tau Ceti IV. In Cegandar, "He-flees," silk pagodas sway atop wooden platforms, while the smooth sounds of flutes and tenor voices float on the warm breeze. Dreaming Cegandar sleepwalks the grasslands on wagons with wickerwork rails and clumsy metal pylons knee-jointed and shod in bronze.

Dilpharar, "She-Who-Chases," boasts no such locomotion. That city's masons construct new dry-stone buildings on the edge of the city closest to Cegandar, using materials from old structures on the farthest side. Each building pulls Dilpharar a few yards closer in pursuit of the fleeing Cegandar. Dilpharar is a chaos of bellowings for stone and ale, girls hauling stone to their aunts for the new walls. Yet none has ever known a father, and of men few words are spoken.

On the Great Plain, some betrayals remain too deep.

Wheels and legs and rolling stock always outpace masonry. Yet Dilpharar's every effort is bent towards reunion. The masons send forth spies, who report: this autumn Cegandar takes the vapours at the Baths of Madness -- and towers rise on that city-side; Cegandar is in the mountains for Festival, and Dilpharar's walls bend toward the highlands.

Cegandar, in her wandering, finds here a market, there a vendor of fine porcelain; or dallies with a purveyor of herbs that make dreams bright, or terrible, or bring laughter where once tears burned. For each purchase the men of Cegandar trade away some silks, while their wagons grow heavy with golden idols, herbs, and crystal flasks of perfumes, wines and unguents. Wagons merge into slow-rolling pavilions, from which warm breezes waft the scents of opium and musk.

Should the walls of Dilpharar breach the horizon, Cegandar flees until they are seen no more. Yet once a generation, Cegandar strikes an obstacle: a gibber plain of loose boulders; a shallow sea from unseasonable rains; lifeless dunes that wheels cannot cross.

So Dilpharar's march brings her upon Cegandar, and for a time both cities merge; the Defiler, it is said, has taken the Virgin. The masons rage throughout that newborn metropolis, while gilded greybeards and red-lipped boys cowering within ornate caravans. Tearing their tunics, the roaring masons expose flesh that reeks of stone-dust and sour ale. The men turn their noses from the coarse women of Dilpharar; yet their eyes drift back to the muscular arms, calloused palms and sweat-filmed breasts of their pursuers.

And all that long afternoon arise sounds unheard in a generation: of perfumed swains, bespectacled scholars and doddering elders swooning beneath the shouting, sweating, brawling mason-women; and perhaps, in places, a faint sigh as a Defiler rests in the soft lap of a no-longer-virgin youth.

That evening the stonemasons roll upon the streets, boasting their conquests over carafes of sweet brandy. One summons her friends, offering to trade lovers, or spinning lies of a particularly beautiful or adventuresome youth.

Later, the masons return staggering to their new loves, but the caravans are locked. Screaming, sobbing, they rage and beat the shutters, but without reply. Then, exhausted, the masons of Dilpharar descend into stupor.

When they wake, the sun boils their eyes and Dilpharar's walls echo with anguish: Cegandar's caravans and wagons are at the horizon, a tail of dust reddening the sky. The masons howl, tearing stone from the furthest buildings; new walls arise and Dilpharar lurches in pursuit.

And again, as for millennia, the Defiler pursues the Virgin across the Great Plain of Tau Ceti IV.
The Eyes of Ombradine

By: Caroline Berg

Once when the world was young, and gods walked among us, there was the Temple of Truth and Lies, dedicated to Ombradine. On an unadorned altar of plain stone, was a glorious uncut gem, scintillating with iridescence. The Eye of Ombradine it was called. For it saw into the heart of any matter, separating the truth from the lies. It was used to bring Justice. Until the day it was used to circumvent Justice. But this too the Eye had foreseen.

Used to make the innocent guilty, the Eye split into two pieces, no longer able to hold its abilities in harmony. One half became the Unblinking Eye of Justice, filled with Truth Seeking properties. The other became the Iridescent Eye of Night, for it obscured the true intent of any who held it. Both pieces were lost in legends. Until now.

Almost 6,000 years from their fateful split, rumors say the Eyes have resurfaced. While the Temple of Truth and Lies has long sense fallen to dust, other temples have suffered from a rash of portents, all pointing to the rediscovery of the Eyes. Now it is a race to find them, and harness the powers they represent.

Both Eyes are stone roughly the size of two fists. One side is flat, slightly jagged, and sharp from where it sheared away from its twin. They are semi-spherical, forming a smooth dome, but that is where the similarities end.

The Unblinking Eye of Justice is a pale watery green, a shade just shy of pond water at noon. When held it glows faintly, attuning itself to the holder, gaining one of six possible properties. It is surprisingly light for its size, following the belief that the truth will unburden you. At some point it was likely set into metal – silver, gold, or something more exotic – and put on a chain, to both protect the bearers from the sharp edges, and to make it easier to carry.

The Iridescent Eye of Night is filled with rippling iridescence which swirls from smoky dusk to shades of midnight. When held it gets darker, attuning itself to the holder, gaining one of six possible properties. It is heavier than expected, but not so heavy as to be impractical to move around. At some point it was likely set into a braided leather band or put into a pouch of some kind, both to protect the bearers from the sharp edges, and to make it easier to carry.

Charts:

Unblinking Eye of Justice:
1) Light of Truth – Detect lies, reveal hidden doors, shed light on what is otherwise obscured
2) Truer Words – Everyone in a 5’ radius can only speak the truth
3) Illuminated Blade – A sword made of light hovers nearby and does your bidding
4) Radiant Locator – A ray of light points towards the location of the Eye of Night, or any single object you want to find
5) Aspect of Justice – Gain a bonus when persuading/intimidating while telling the truth
6) Resplendent Vision – Can see in darkness, light, and even into ultraviolet and infrared spectrums

Iridescent Eye of Night:
1) Shadow Paths – Find less obvious paths through an area, whether smuggler’s paths, or hidden tracks
2) Obscure Intent – Gain a bonus when gathering information while lying
3) Form of Smoke – Fade away into the shadows, becoming very hard to see
4) Evading Visions – Harder to be located by magic, or the Eye of Justice
5) Daggers of Deception – A host of whirling smoky daggers leap out to attack at your bidding
6) Looks can be Deceiving – Gain a disguise, obscuring your true features
Music & Lights: A Bardic Mage Duo

By Phil Nicholls

Delotor the Music

Delotor is a human mage and graduate of the Collegium of Dance in the Kingdom of Eternal Summer on Arborea. He is young, slim, with dark skin and braided black hair. Delotor prefers loose, brightly-coloured clothing which gives him freedom of movement to dance and perform.

He is proficient with drums, lute and pipes, switching between instruments according to the needs of the dance. Augmented by his magic, Delotor prefers to lead audiences in vigorous dances, rarely restricting himself to just the ballroom or concert hall.

Many of his spells enhance his own dance stamina, or enable him to perform prodigious displays of agility. However, he also has a repertoire of spells to coerce reluctant members of the audience onto the dance floor. Delotor’s lively performances often culminate in a raucous line of dancers threading through the neighbourhood, sweeping up all the residents into a joyous frenzy of communal dance.

Tinnuthwen of Lights

Tinnuthwen is tall and pale, with short-cropped hair. She prefers white dresses, which she decks in colourful balls of light which roll across the fabric, or slowly orbit her body. Tinnuthwen snatches up these balls, then throws them into the air where they transform into glowing rainbows, clouds of drifting colour or explosions of light.

The pair have performed together long enough to tightly co-ordinate their magic, with music building off the light show, and vice-versa. For those unfamiliar with flashy magic, a performance by Music and Lights is an intoxicating experience.
Print **Helios / Selene** on opposite sides of a card and place in the centre of the table. Each side represents the influence of the deity. When an aspect of their portfolio is at hand in the scene, players and NPCs who incorporate it gain an edge toward their goals.

Using the mechanics of the system you're playing in and based on how centrally the theme is incorporated, grant a minor or major boon to randomized actions.

**Examples:**

With **Helios** showing, a ranger uses the bright sunlight to outline her targets and lets loose a volley of arrows. In *D&D 5E*, grant Advantage on the roll. If they describe it vividly, grant Inspiration that they can spend on this roll or later during the scene.

Again with **Helios** showing, this time during a session of *Monsterhearts*, the Serpent is setting fire to their estate when confronted by their parents. They try to escape by jumping through the blazing fire in the foyer. Grant +1 hold for the upcoming rolls, either to **Lash Out / Run Away / skin move**, or offer upgraded 10+/7-9/6- results with ‘Success at great cost’ on a 6-.

With **Selene** showing, an investigator slips into the police station under cover of darkness. They whisper quietly with someone locked in the holding cell, trying to gain an important clue. In *Call of Cthulhu*, this could confer 10-20% bonus to any rolls to maintain secrecy and stealth, and keep the prisoner quiet during their meeting.

Under **Selene**'s moonlight, Snargle in *Lady Blackbird* spots a Sky Squid that’s swum up from the depths to open space. They cut the

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<tr>
<th><strong>Helios</strong></th>
<th>When a scene ends, the GM can flip the card themselves or ask a player to choose the next influence. It doesn't necessarily need to alternate. However, if the past few minutes of play have been high-intensity consider offering Selene as a way to give subtle players the spotlight; if stealth and scheming has dominated the session thus far, flip to Helios to encourage the resolution of plans.</th>
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FACE in the MIRROR
By Ben Stone

The young wizard's knuckles were white as he clenched the gnarled staff in his hands. Facing his opponent, he watched him make the exact same movements and gaze back with an identical stare. For long moments they stood, gauging each for any sign that the other might be different in any way from them. If wizard saw a flaw in the other, they gave not a single indication.

Elsewhere in the large underground room, the sounds of battle could be heard. Sword clanged against sword and the whizzing sound of arrows was heavy in the air. Equidistant about the circular room stood mirrors, a straightforward magical trap the young wizard surmised as it was set off. As soon as he and his adventuring companions had stepped in view of the reflective surfaces, a dark counterpart of each of them stepped out of a different one.

Even now, the young wizard's allies fought their own twisted double. His brother, a noble knight, matched swords and shield with a dark armored warrior of identical caliber. The party scout traded dagger thrusts with a far more vicious looking version of herself, the duplicate's blade dripping with caustic venom. The quiet ranger knocked arrows out of the air and watched his get shot aside in turn by a sneering braggart of a woodsman. But the young wizard's match was something different entirely.

The wizard was not so noble as his compatriots, to him good and evil were mere philosophical differences. The only truth in the world was knowledge and no knowledge was so precious as magic. As he and his equal locked gazes, each knew at the same moment what needed to be done. Consumed, as their fellows were, by the thought that only one of each pair could survive, they strode towards each other, identical words of power issuing from their lips. Then, when they stood not five feet from one another, they completed their incantations in unison, blinding flame and smoke appearing between them, engulfing them both in a ball of white fire.

And when the smoke cleared, only one wizard remained.

Many years later, the former adventurers, long since retired and settled down, would often gather at the inn where they first met and regale their own children and the other youths of the town with their adventures. One of their favorite tales was of the room of mirrors, where they each defeated evil versions of themselves, emphasizing to the young listeners the lesson that good will always triumph over evil. But each time this story is told they make sure to gloss over the wizards' duel for when it was done and the heroes had gazed upon their companion they had asked tentatively, “Which one of you won?” and no matter how many more times the question was asked, the answer was always the same.

“I did.”
Two Brothers by Kyle Peters

Rahli

Let me start of by saying, I deeply regret the actions of my older brother. I know, we are twins. But he is older, if only by a small passage of time. I know that he thought he was doing the right thing, doing what had to be done. I also know that this comes as little consolation. Perhaps if you knew him better.

My brother Kahrn took his rites at a younger age than any who came before him, or any that have come since. When the goddess Aniri rained starfire upon him on his twelfth bornday, Kahrn did not cower and was unscathed. When Tolok, he who drinks the world, drained Kahrn of his very being, my brother did not falter. Then, at last, when Xliuch the Disguised whispered the unspoken into Kahrn’s ear, my brother responded in turn. As none have done before.

I see the look in your eyes. You think me mad or foolish. Perhaps both. But I speak the truth and you have heard this tale before. Most likely dismissed as rumor or delusion. Know that what I tell you now is the truth as only I can speak it, and it is all that I can speak. My brother was taken from us that day, taken by Xliuch and thought gone forever. Yesterday was our birthday. Kahrn is returned to us after thirty circles of season. I cannot, no will not, speak of where he was taken, what became of him. You think me mad enough already, and were I to repeat his words, you would be certain of it. I will only say that I fear he may have been right in his cause, if not in his actions. Please. Allow me to finish.

Kahrn returned with purpose, having been granted a vision of some far away tomorrow. In this vision, revealed by the Disguised, the goddess Aniri had gone mad with jealousy over being jilted by a careless lover. This man, for a man he was, was one of our own, but not yet born. Aniri brought the sky down upon our children's children and when she was done, there were none left. Gone! Our tribe ended!

I beg you consider this before passing judgement on Kahrn.

Kahn

I'm not Kahrn, I am Rahli! My brother deceives you. I know not why. I know not what has brought this madness upon him. I have not seen him since our twelfth bornday when he ran away rather than begin our preparations for the rites that would come one year later. I know not why he took the spirit eye and why he, how he... is it true? Aniri destroyed?

Look, look! This scar that runs the length of my arm, a mark left by a longfang. You there, you remember don’t you? How I saved those two children from being eaten alive just two circles ago? I am Rahli, I tell you! And you! Was it not I that helped to save your crops when Tolok drank all of the rain and nothing would grow? Please, I beg you, look at me. I am Rahli! Please.

For many circles I have walked among you and shared your burdens. Will you not look upon me now as you build this pyre around me? Will you not hear my voice? Call forth Xliuch himself if you will. He will show you the truth of this. Stop! I beg you, do not light that oil! I am Rahli!
The planet Khosht orbits the binary suns, Hatta and Marri as they themselves spin around each other. The suns give not only light to the planet, energy for growth but also their power and influence. Overlaying the seasons from Khosht’s tilt the suns give supraseasons, each lasting seven years.

The first off worlders to visit didn’t stay long enough to see the change of suns and struggled to believe it the same world when they returned to a different Supraseason. Khosht’s inhabitants, however, revel in the contrasts and variety their world provides.

**Hatta - The Equaliser**

Under Hatta’s influence winters are mild, summers cooler and these two seasons extend to virtually meet each other. Spring and Autumn last only a few days, bringing heavy rainfall and carpeting the ground with colour. The plants that grow best in this Supraseason are those with mild tastes, good for soothing upset stomachs and slow growing. Flora and fauna that doesn’t suit Hatta's influence will barely change throughout, some even go dormant or hibernate until Marri breathes life to them again.

Children born under Hatta are even tempered, the best will be great diplomats and problem solvers. They grow tall and thickly built, the strongest have a great slow power, to move mountains in their time. When Hatta dominates the sky they strengthen their weaknesses, while under Marri they lose some of their strengths.

**Marri - The Changer**

Marri brings four equal seasons. The winter is characterised by thick snowfall, bitter frosts and little light. Counterpoint is the fiery, hot, summer, with frequent grassland fires and droughts. Spring and Autumn mirror each other’s changeable nature, going from heavy rain to warm, breezy sunshine in a heartbeat and back again. The plants that grow best under Marri’s influence have intense flavours, they grow quickly and often thrive and germinate in the wake of fires. Flora and fauna that flourishes under Hatta’s influence often use Marri’s Supraseason for growth spurts or laying down energy stores.

Children born under Marri are inquisitive and determined, the best will change the world, overturning conventions and making discoveries. They often have quick tempers, lithe, short builds and question everything. When Marri is in the sky they excel in their strengths, more than making up for their loss in those areas under Hatta.

**Appendix**

Under Hatta
Hatta people see a benefit to their weakest stat.
Marri people see a detriment to their strongest stat.
Off worlder people see both a benefit to their weakest stat and a detriment to their strongest stat.

Under Marri
Hatta people see a detriment to their strongest stat.
Marri people see a benefit to their strongest stat.
Off worlder people see both a benefit to their strongest stat and a detriment to their weakest stat.
Heima and Heimsil by Jonas Richter

Twin childs to their parents Grotheim, Silkolf, and Toma, Heima and Heimsil are often seen in each other's company. With their green hair, bright blue eyes and sinewy bodys they both look just like their grandfather (say those who have known him). To help others distinguish between them, Heima and Heimsil each wear a necklace with their name, and their parents claim that they never even attempted to exchange them and see who would notice. The twins are amiable and charming. Between them and around close friends, they betray a wicked sense of humour, but never behave in mean ways. They are well liked.

Heimsil plots to kill her sibling and replace her with a copy of herself, without anybody noticing. She has build a secret lab to create her clone. Heimsil-9 is definitely an improvement over the previous eight, but Heimsil (the original, or "Zero", as she thinks of herself) knows she will need a couple more iterations before she reaches the refinement and cunning she is looking for. Heimsil-1 through 9 are destined to stay submerged in stasis tubes. Combined with their green hair, the light sources behind the tubes create a calm, green atmosphere in the central lab hub. Zero contemplates using 9 to help in the slaughtering of Heima. She suspects that at least one of her parents suspects her plans, but silently approves. Even if it’s merely a hope, this could be a powerful ally in the future. Zero occasionally takes 7, 8, or 9 out of their tubes and chats with them. She may take out 6 again, too, but the memory of what she only refers to the "incident" has refrained her so far. She still can hear 6's snarl, and the unexpected hate in her eyes. 6 was an important step forward, but... she should probably stay in stasis. Although researching her behaviour and mentality would yield results more meaningful than analyzing the same on 7, 8, and 9, in which certain aspects are already less pronounced but still present. Zero's afraid of hitting a dead end, and getting 6 out again may be her best option to move forward.

Heima is oblivious about Heimsil's plans. To them, getting to know strangers - whether through direct interactions, or listening to stories - is the most important thing in the world. Books abound in Heima's place, and chairs to sit down and enjoy a cup of bram, and there's a lovely shrubbery to walk around and watch butterflies and share feelings and thoughts. It is, obviously, ironic that of all fellow beings, their twin Heimsil's deepest wishes should remain unknown to Heima, ever looking for better understanding of other creatures. Recently, Heima has been taught by a strange, thin birder who looked like a twig, to converse with a low magnate from the incorporeality. The experience, and the influx of new knowledge, the access to new horizons, has changed Heima more than her closest relatives would allow. Heima seems to pursue her previous routines - inviting strangers to dinner, standing among flowers apparently in long silence, reading or watching plays for hours and hours - just as before, but they are rapidly making acquaintance with a host of incorporeal personas, getting soaked in everything these beings choose to tell her, and imparting everything about corporeality to them that Heima themself has learned.

Heimsil sits in the green glow before Heimsil-6's tube, pondering. Heima sits on a stone in a red sunbeam, trading secrets between planes of existences. Their necklaces glint in the light.
Sword and Shield by Rae Zin

Sword
Unnamed bastard sword, colloquially coined the "Slicer"

The origins of and the swordsman who forged it remain unknown and unrecorded in its history. What is known is that Slicer's blade is made of the material fresium, a rare material produced just moments before the collapse of an otherworldly star. In and of its own, fresium contains unlimited potential energy that constantly changes state - this causes Slicer to appear differently in time and place.

One thing remains unchanged - the sword's power. These were rumoured to be said by those who have seen it:

"It's amazing! How it cut through rock and metal as if they were paper!"

"It appeared like any plain iron sword, but when it struck the creature, the sword flamed to life and glowed a fiery orange! The creature shrieked when struck..."

"Alas, I heard it was lost, cast into the Sea of Sorrows in regret."

"I wonder what would happen, if Slicer met Shade. Would the sword be stopped, or the shield broken?"

Shield
Unnamed metal shield, colloquially coined the "Shade"

At a time after Slicer's appearance, the interdimensionary council of mages decided that the sword was too powerful and its presence would bring about certain catastrophe. They gathered five of their most powerful mages, giving instruction to each and what was to be created - a nemesis to the sword. And the nemesis should never become another threat, so it was decided that a shield was the answer.

The council simply named it the Shade, a shield so strong that it opposed any weapon. In it, each of the mage imbued their powers - Strength, Wisdom, Empathy, Regeneration and Knowledge. It was to be a shield that spoke with the mind of its bearer to create a connection so powerful that nothing could penetrate it, including the sword.

Fortunately or unfortunately, the shield was also rumoured lost, although it was said to be last wielded by a moon elf warrior bearing an ancient scripture tattooed on his chest.
Huginn & Muninn

A game of questions and tales for three players, taking about one quarter of an hour
by Shawn McCarthy & Siobhan Doherty

Two ravens perch on the great god Odin’s shoulders, closest among his companion spirits. Each day they fly out across the whole world and return with whispers for his ears. Odin is a god of many deeds and travels, visiting the whole reach of the World-Ash-Tree. He is of one hundred names, uncountable guises, dozens of children and lovers, and one burning, searching, eye. He hung as sacrifice to himself on the ash, and claimed the knowledge of the runes so his tales could be recorded. He holds the Hermit’s lamp on the oracle deck.

But he is a blind old fool without his ravens.

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One player picks up a stone, saying,
“I am Odin, and over Midgard my ravens fly each day.
I fear for Huginn that he may not come back, yet more anxious I am for Muninn.”

Pass the stone counter-clockwise, the player receiving says, “I am Huginn on Odin’s right shoulder. I am ‘thought’ and sometimes I am ‘carrion.’ I am the as-yet-unwoven future and I am war. Keep that in your head.”

The remaining player says, “I am Muninn, whispering in Odin’s left ear. My life is ‘memory’ and sometimes ‘mindfulness.’ I am the Norn-woven what-has-passed and I am family. Keep that in your head.”
Each day has a Sunrise, Noon and Nightfall.

The one holding the stone at sunrise begins.

If Huginn begins, he brings Odin a moment requiring a call of judgement - a trial, a puzzle, ethical dilemma

If Muninn, he brings Odin a moment requiring a question of tradition - something long lost returning, a taboo, something new that upsets the order

If Odin holds the stone, he describes an adventure he goes on that day.
At Noon, both other characters may say their piece.

If a raven began, the other should approach the moment from their temperament and role. Then Odin weighs in, praising the sage advice of his companions if they agree and asking them to convince him if they differ in opinion.

If Odin began, the ravens may each take turns complicating his exploits. They describe how the weave of fate is more complicated than Odin even knows, in a way in keeping with their temperaments. Odin may overcome or be stymied by these twists, but eventually emerges from the story safely.
Come Nightfall, the stone in passed counter-clockwise while the moon travels overhead.

Odin says, “Go, my Thought and my Memory, and return to me with news on the morrow.”

Continue for one or more rounds, by consensus or majority or fiat.

When a final day is called for and completed, Huginn and Muninn may each say whether they will bring news back to Odin as they have done since the dawn of this age, or fly away, never to return.