

Aftermath  
Surpassed







*What comes after?*



## Foreword

This story went far, but it did so in only one direction, toward an unhappy ending along an unhappy road. Fond or not, the memory is important. I remember **What Comes After** as the most engaging of all. Unrelated, the players' perspective is absent from this work.





# Contents

<i>Prologue</i>	11
<i>Act 1: What Remains</i>	15
<i>Act 2: What Fades</i>	25
<i>Act 3: What Breaks</i>	37
<i>Appendix: Answers</i>	47



## Prologue

*"Today's story is a story about life - the things that drive us,  
the things that tie us down - and you, the players, going to help tell it."*

### *Character Creation*

The year is 1993 and our story starts in Atlanta, Georgia. The players may choose any concept and background for their character fitting the setting. The only requirement is that in the opening scene of the story, they are all sitting in an empty church attending an anonymous support group meeting for survivors of a near-death experience.

### *Meeting: In Heaven Today*

Everyone has gathered in the First United Methodist Church for a biweekly meeting of the What Comes After support group. No one attending can deny that it helps to get him or her through the weeks that follow. After everyone has poured their coffee and taken a seat in one of the folding chairs, it's time to share. Today, Griff starts before each of the characters gets a turn. Everyone knows he was the sole survivor of a car crash almost a year ago. If not for the other driver's donor card, he would never have made it. Despite all his confessions, it never was made clear who was at fault for the accident.

"I woke up this morning... the same way I woke up yesterday morning. Some of us here have spoken about night terrors. I don't get those. I haven't dreamed once in my life, not that I can remember. But that doesn't mean that I awake without some weight on my shoulders. I think about my sorrow going away. I wonder what they're up to in heaven today. I wake up, every day, in an empty bed, in an empty house. My wife... my daughter..." Griff can't hold it together after that. Everyone thanks him for opening up. Then it's one of the characters' turn.

After all the characters have harnessed the kernel of their tragedy, Janice speaks up. Joseph has organized and steered these meetings for years now, though no one who still joins

nowadays really knows what her tragedy may have been. Janice is very supportive and thanks Griff and the characters for sharing.

### *Early February*

It is up to the characters to tell the story of their lives for these two weeks in between meetings. From whatever their circumstances may be, they are to fill in the days that follow sharing what they did in the meeting. By the end of it, each player should have an idea of their characters' concept and Archetypes. They are encouraged to think about how they heard about the meetings (through a friend like one of the other characters, through a therapist, through church, ...) and focus on one main Passion for the character. A number of triggers may help shape the story of these two weeks, including:

◇ The character passes by an old building with a crumbling facade. It seems to have once housed some wealthy family. On its side wall, a large mural of a Klu Klux Klan hood has been spray-painted.

◇ An unkempt man is playing a guitar and singing in the street while a fourteen-year-old boy holds out an empty tin can to passersby. A young woman with tears in her eyes drops a hastily scribbled check in the can before running off.

◇ The character finally wakes up shivering after a nightmare that seemed to have no end, feeling nauseous. The night hours were filled with visions of ceaseless storms, of dark waves roiling and crashing, consuming each other while the skies above turned ever darker and spun.

### *Meeting: Memorial Day*

In the characters' next support group meeting, Stanislav



speaks up. He doesn't speak often, but when he does he surprises any newcomers with his thick accent. He starts by reminding everyone that he emigrated to the United States a long time ago after what happened to him at home. Only some of the attendees may know of the details of his persecution and the violence that still haunts him. These days, though, he cries for his homeland. He's sure everyone attending has seen the news. He won't go into details about the war, but instead recalls words by Mayor Maynard Jackson on last year's Memorial Day. "For everyone to be free and for everything to be all right," which the mayor later alluded to being the definition of Liberty and Justice for all. Stanislav goes on to recall a young student from Clark Atlanta University with a remarkably deep voice reciting *In Flanders Field* by John McCrae, with slight modification.

After a long silence, Stanislav recovers with a smile, saying: "I wish I had a bottle of something! These men's memories deserve a toast." Janice thanks Stanislav earnestly, then asks if anyone else would like to share.

### *Late February*

The story of the two weeks that follow will solidify the players' characters. The players are encouraged to build on the preceding two weeks, diversifying their Passions and incorporating Fetters. After the story is told, let each player reflect on the decisions their characters faced and how they

*In Flanders Field*

*In [these deep] fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In [these deep] fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In [these deep] fields.*

handled them. Allow this to drive the distribution of Attributes and Abilities. The characters might also prepare themselves for what they intend to share in the next meeting. Again, a number of triggers may help the story come along:

◇ A character walks past a TV showing a CNN report covering the space shuttle Challenger disaster, now seven years ago. The reporter's words give the character a moment's pause. "In 1984, President Ronald Reagan announced the Teacher in Space Project. NASA wanted to find an 'ordinary person,' a gifted teacher who could communicate with students while in orbit. Approximately 17 percent of Americans witnessed the launch live because of the presence of Payload Specialist Christa McAuliffe, who would have been the first teacher in space. Who among us doesn't remember this day, January 28, 1986, when the NASA Space Shuttle orbiter Challenger broke apart 73 seconds into its flight, leading to the deaths of its seven crew members, which included five NASA astronauts and two Payload Specialists." Then, the footage of the disaster itself is replayed.

◇ Another character overhears two men arguing over their lunch. Clinton was sworn in exactly a month ago today. In that time, he has passed a bill mandating paid maternity leave for employees and followed through on his campaign promise to make abortions 'safe, legal... and rare' by reverting restrictions set by his predecessors.

◇ A child, out with his mother, is waiting patiently while she goes about errands. The character passes by and finds the kid staring straight him with a bitter expression. The child keeps staring as if the character were a monster.

### *Meeting: Seeing Janice*

In the characters' next meeting, before anyone else has a chance to speak up, Janice says she would like to share for the first time in over two years of organizing these meetings. She says hearing everyone share has always done her a great deal of good, that it inspired her to devote herself to the right things. She says "there is something I need you all to see," before she reaches into her purse and pulls out a small pistol. Her hand is steady and sure. The shot rings loudly through the church. The blood is everywhere, even hanging about the room in a thin mist for a few heartbeats. The grizzly sight of Janice's shattered face is imprinted in everyone's memory before she slumps off her chair.

By the time the coroner arrives, the characters will be asked who the victim is. The meetings being anonymous presents a problem here. The police will insist on getting at least one person's contact information, confidentially if need be.

### *Funeral*

Through the contact information the police obtained, one of the meeting members will be contacted with information intended for the whole support group. Janice was identified as Janice Doherty, age 35, no known family. In her apartment, the police found a note describing her exact intentions, including

both the events at the support group meeting and a detailed description of how she ritually slaughtered her cat. Lastly, it mentions she urges everyone who witnessed her death to come to her funeral, one she had even ascribed a date to and left funds for in cash. If all the characters can be reached, they may choose to follow Janice's wishes and attend her funeral later that week.

The only attendees are the priest, the What Comes After members, and the police officer who responded to the scene. The officer expresses his condolences, which feels awkward because he was right there before. He goes on to point out the headstone just as she had commissioned it in her suicide note, which doesn't feel much better. The priest begins to speak about grief in life, then stumbles a bit after mentioning family before remembering none of Janice's are here. He recovers by talking about regret in life. That those who remember her life would do her justice, what little there is to find in these events, by being mindful of mistakes, being mindful of what you regret, and acting before it is too late, before your regret consumes you. The priest briefly looks around to see if anyone has any words prepared. Afterward, the casket is slowly lowered into the grave.

In that long moment, the characters see something none of the other mourners do. For a brief moment, the polished surface of Janice's gravestone seems to fog up with the print of someone's hand. Then, it is as if a finger traces across it, spelling: 'See?' before the wind blows and the trace evaporates.

### *The Storm of the Century*

One last time, a story is built up by the players to cover two weeks' time. The story may well be devoted to the characters deciding to follow the priest's advice on resolving some of their regrets, or it may be a different story entirely of how a character deals with Janice's death. This time however, the characters will never get a chance to see their next What Comes After meeting. At first slowly, then all at once, the Storm of the Century hits. Over three days between March 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, the cyclonic storm engulfs the eastern coast and Georgia is plunged into a state of emergency. Suffering power outages, catastrophic winds, and nonstop snowfall, allow the players to describe the situation as they become in some form or other, trapped by circumstance. A cold night sets in for each of them in which they are helpless, ever struggling to get to safety. Hours pass for them before they realize something has long since changed. They find themselves still struggling to get free while looking over and seeing their dead body beside them. The storm hasn't subsided, but it has changed. The characters think they see screaming faces in the roiling clouds above and rending claws reaching out from the gusts of windswept debris. They remain trapped.



## Act 1: What Remains

*"Today's story is not about life.*

*Today's story is not even about death.*

*It's about what comes after."*

### *Trapped*

The malicious storm rages on. The characters are dead and their corpses stare back at the wraiths trapped in cauls. For each of the characters, a confrontation awaits. Inside this hazy prison, their corpses' voices speak on behalf of a part of them that has now separated. Their Shadows manifest themselves.

This moment calls for a flashback to a support group meeting for each of the characters. The theme is a true, deep fear they lived with.

The prologue featured an intimate look at each of the player characters. To create a firm barrier of mystery and distrust between the Shadow and the Psyche, each Shadow will be created in the absence of its Psyche's player. After all Shadows have been thoroughly worked out, each character will go through the realization of its existence, trapped with its voice, until they are reaped in the following scene.

### *Reaping*

The first reaping happens by the will of a being who does not give his name. His skin is pale and his face is hidden beneath a coarse sack, fashioned like an executioner's mask. A

### *What remains?*

After what has happened can no longer be denied, what remains? Not the body. Not the flesh. Not a touch. Not that which you could call life. What remains is only the psyche and that which you might call the soul. And these remains cast a dark reflection.





good-sized pouch hangs from a cord around his neck, heavy with Stygian currency. Chains are fastened to his waist by a giant girdle and he extends one of these to the character. "Every one of these links was once a soul no weaker than yours. I have reaped you and now I claim your freedom." [...] "Be silent. The maelstrom is quieting down, but a few of Oblivion's servants still linger."

Another character is reaped by the renegades known as the Hearse Riders. Through his hazy caul, the character will see a bright light approaching. A terrible noise grows ever louder. It takes a moment before the character realizes what it is before the hearse comes to a halt, dimming its headlights. Hank Moody steps out, his face wrapped in a handkerchief and hidden behind sunglasses. He drags the character to the back of the car and locks him inside the displayed coffin. Briefly, the character will have seen other, small figures sitting in the car, their faces hidden as well. They start to argue as they Hank starts the car again. [...] "Shut up. The Emerald Legion will pay more than the whoever wants to haul them off to the forges."

Lastly, one of the characters breaks through and removes his own caul after being tortured by his Shadow and having agonized over the sight of his own corpse for hours. This character takes in the horrid landscape of what lies beyond the

shroud more vividly than the other characters until he simply starts wandering. Eventually, the character will find a tall, robed figure crossing his path. Its passage is noiseless but for long pole it drags on the ground behind it. Towering a head above the character, it stops in its tracks. "You are lost," it states, "Do you know your destination?" [...] "Is it your wish to remain here in the place which is called Atlanta?" [...] "Then I have no services to offer you." (alternatively [...] "You have no means to pay the fee.") [...] "The Anacreons of this Necropolis hold the seats of their offices in the State Capitol building. It is their custom to take in lemures such as yourself, ascribing allegiance to those who share in the manner of your death. Set out on your path, lemure." The ferryman then leaves.

A coarse, black dust filters down from the colorless dawn heavens. The city's skyscrapers are jagged skeletons of their Skinlands representations. A cold wind blows and carries the dying sound of nameless souls' agony.

### *The Emerald Legion*

The characters are each headed for the State Capitol building. They may know the story of the west wing burning down in '79, remembering the way the janitor responsible for the incident was publicly hounded and attacked. Here in the Shadowlands, however, the west wing is still standing, populated by the Hierarchy leadership.

The characters are one by one led into a small waiting room, where they are surprised not only to see each other, but to see the others manifest as an icon of their self-image. An administrator, wearing a unblemished white suit with a shoelace tie, brings back word to the characters' captors from the Anacreon of the Emerald Legion, handing each a payment of two oboli. "One soul for the price of two," the administrator drawls, "is ample compensation, you'll agree." When they have left, the administrator announces to the characters that they will be summoned when the Deathlord's own representative in Atlanta, the Anacreon of the Emerald Legion, is ready. Here, we complete the character sheets by filling in Backgrounds and using Freebie Points.

After the characters have had a chance to ground themselves in the apparent reality of what has happened to them, they will be summoned. Climbing white staircases past stained confederate flags that look as if they were recovered from the battlefield itself, the characters are guided to Sarah Chandler. Before taking his leave, the administrator finishes with: "To the venerable Anacreon of the Emerald Legion of Atlanta, I present the three lemures reaped from the Skinland effects of this week's maelstrom." The figure who turns around from the window overlooking the desolate Necropolis landscape reveals herself to be a short girl with bright green eyes and blond hair. She wears the dress she died in, white except where it's stained by her blood and torn where the wagon wheels hit her. Chains hanging from her neck mark her office.

"We're all here." [...] "I don't just mean the three of you and myself. The city of Atlanta is populated by the dead. Among this populace, I was the first." [...] "Even with the ineffable rate



*Act 1: What Remains*

with which the living seem to expand, there always were more of the dead than there were of the living.” [...] “Not all those who died remain, however. That, my young ones, is nearly all there is to say about our condition. All that’s left is to warn you of the dangers this existence offers. I have no exhaustive list of the threats that persist even after all my years, years spent far beyond my erstwhile lifetime in this place, but I trust the course of what brought you here elucidates enough—the storm and the soulforges at the least.” [...] “Against such threats, the Emerald Legion asks your aid, and offers you aid. Like yourselves, we died in circumstances beyond our control, victims of happenstance, accidents, and disasters, all.” [...] “We would like to offer you shelter and guidance in this.” At her last word, Sarah raises her arms toward the window’s somber view.

“On this the 48th year since the Fifth Great Maelstrom, in the name of the Emerald Lord, who rules from the Seat of Thorns in Stygia, I, Sarah, Anacreon in Atlanta, hereby induct you into the ranks of the Emerald Legion.”

After she says the words, a man without a face enters the room. Sarah makes a motion with her hand and the man asks with no mouth to make the words: “Where do you wish to be marked?” Before the sigil of the Emerald Legion glows in his palm and it is applied to each character’s Corpus, marking them permanently. The faceless man makes his exit and Sarah turns

around again, lastly telling the characters about Haunts, how it is important to hold these places, and that they can serve as a home and hearth for wraiths. Recently, such a place was created by a terrible act in the Skinlands. Sarah petitioned the governor and the other Anacreons and obtained rights to this new Haunt. She would like the characters to have it. She gives them the address and tells them she will look for them after they have settled in. The address points them to the First United Methodist Church.

*Ashes of the Living*

The ashes have stopped falling from the sky and the Skinlands are already coming back to life. The characters drift through the city where the living slowly go about their lives again. Cars rush past and the living drift by. It dawns on the characters just how much they have become spectators to a broken reflection of the world they left behind. The living are bright with the emotions they carry with them. For them, the storm is over. The characters see joy and hope with such intensity that it pierces torment for just a moment. Somewhere beyond the veil, the sun shines bright. The characters are each awarded a point of Pathos and the players may learn the details of lifesight and other characteristics all wraiths share.



### Haunt

Few buildings stand as strong and clear in the Shadowlands as the First United Methodist Church. The first sight they see when they enter is the minister walking past the pews, laying out pamphlets. He mumbles to himself as he does so, which in itself does not strike the characters as strange in an old man. More alarming is the deep, dark stains that haven't washed away in the Shadowlands. Janice's blood is everywhere. The legs the folding chair she occupied seem to have scorched marks into the floor. The characters may realize the minister's mumbling is actually a rehearsal of a sermon he intends to give. It starts with 'I know most of you have heard about the terrible thing that happened here in this very church since we last congregated...'

It is clear to the characters as they wander through the old structure that the Skinlands seem less distant from here. The place is both comforting and unsettling at the same time. There is both relief and pain in the characters' new home.

### Drifting

The characters will watch the time pass in their designated Haunt. There are questions on all their minds regarding the things they left behind. By the time they decide to set out, the streets will be truly busy. The world of the living has truly come alive. The sensation may be too much for the characters as they try to make their way across town. There are dangers to their Corpus if they aren't careful. The characters may also consider making use of the rails in order to get where they're going, or perhaps even hitching a ride. Individually, the characters encounter things on their journey through the Shadowlands of Atlanta. Each of these presents the opportunity for them to follow up on what they see:

◇ Passing by a row of storefronts, the characters notice two figures stand out from the living, both of them wraiths. They stroll down the pavement side by side until they reach a door that has no counterpart in the world of the living. The narrow building suffered a fire not long ago and is still undergoing reconstruction. A soulforged sign stands out over the door the pair enter: Theater of Dreams. The man, dressed in a tuxedo and a silk hat offers the lady, who is at least three times his weight and dresses in extravagant yet tattered layers of embroidered cloth, the opportunity to enter first with an outstretched hand. See *Theater of Dreams* below.

◇ The character hears moans coming from an alley, high-pitched crying, like a child's. It doesn't sound like something from the Skinlands. The character may enter the alley to see it ends in a small courtyard, surrounded by apartments. A tall, dead tree stands in its center. The floor is littered with broken branches recently blown off in the storm. Out of reach in the tree, the source of the whimpering hangs suspended. The character sees a child pinned to the tree, impaled through the chest. The child opens its eyes and stares at the character from where it hangs upside-down. The character can't quite tell if it's a boy or a girl, but sees the dark tears flowing. "Are you going to hurt me?" the child asks. If the

character looks carefully, he might see the branch impaling the child is no branch at all, but the haft of a spear of some sort. The child claims it is a victim of the recent maelstrom's stormriders. It can't move and asks the character for help. There aren't enough branches left to climb the tree, though with the help of one of the other characters, the child could be freed. In truth, the spear belonged to a Legionnaire and the child is a Spectre who was left behind. See the *Hungry Stripling* below.

◇ In a busy part of the city, perhaps in the middle of a subway car or perhaps in the middle of the street, a woman is leaning against a wall, sitting on the floor, slowly laying out tarot cards in front her. She has been staring straight at the wraith character ever since he entered into view. There's no mistaking her for not being one of the living, yet she can see the character. After laying out three cards (the Magician, the Hanged Man, and the High Priestess), she lays one more face-down on the ground and leaves, staring intently at the character until she is gone. The back of the card shows the address of her shop 'Seeker's Paradise' in the Old Fourth Ward. For all the Quick, her souvenir is a successful publicity stunt. Someone even goes over to turn over the last card, 'The Fool', which makes bystanders laugh. The character may interpret it differently. See *Seeker's Paradise* below.

### Lives Left Behind

As the characters are reunited with their Fetters, they all face the consequences of what the world of the living makes of them now that they are no longer among them. As in the prologue, the players are encouraged to contribute to their characters' situation and fill in what has happened in the world of the living since their death. Their sense of time is skewed at best, but in truth it has been weeks since their death. The storm delayed their reaping. Their funerals have already passed. Note any strong emotions to come from the players' telling, rolls for the characters to regain Pathos from their Passions may become appropriate.

### Seeing her again

When the characters return to their Haunt, it will be later in the day. The church they return to is empty. One by one, the characters will rejoin each other. They may exchange accounts of what they witnessed today. Suddenly, the room turns colder and a moment later an odd voice then whispers: "See?" The characters turn around and see Janice standing by the door in a wide summer dress.

To the characters' astonishment, she looks just perfect. Not any younger than she was, yet somehow more beautiful than she was in life. A smile stretches across her cheeks and no wounds mar her countenance. "Will you walk with me?" she asks.

### A Walk With Janice

Janice walks with the characters to the nearest park. Underway, she expresses her appreciation for this new existence. She tells the characters about how everyone they



have ever missed can be found here. She herself is still looking for her little boy, but she has made some friends who will help her. Janice may further reveal how she had help from the other side before she made her decision to come across, but she can't reveal her patron's identity. Should the characters ask, she is part of no legion, as this patron advised her not to meddle with what he (or she) referred to as 'the Hierarchy'.

By the time the characters reach the park, Janice will invite them to walk a circle around it before they head back. The trees' shadows are lengthening all around them. Janice eventually goes so far as to call the place around them 'Heaven'. She mumbles something about how everyone is brought together here, and how gods are watching. By then, they walk by a man sitting a bench by himself in the world of the living. Lifesight shows the characters the man is in pain. Perception + Empathy may reveal that, more specifically, he suffers from a broken heart. In his hands, he holds a picture of a woman. Janice gasps and walks up behind him. Then, to the characters' surprise, she starts whispering: "She loves you still. Go to her." The man leaps up, looking up at the heavens, before he breaks out in a run, the emotions he exudes having completely changed. Janice seems to drink it all in as she starts twirling in the last rays of cold sunlight. Some of the characters' Passions may also be triggered by this.

Janice can't stop smiling when they return to their walk. If the characters ask about how she whispered to the man, she will tell the characters it is art her patron teaches her. She may even

reveal with a meaningful stare that her patron can fully materialize in the world of the living and cross back and forth as he (or she) pleases. Eventually, the characters have ended up on the other side of the park, where Janice says she must leave them. The sun is setting over the living world and she has an appointment to keep. At their parting, before she leaves the characters to return to the church on their own, Janice ominously says: "Soon we will all be reunited."

On their way back, the Shadowlands' night overwhelms them. Never have they seen such dark. Terrifying sounds echo through the hollow structures of the city, wailing and howling. Now and then everything goes suddenly quiet and each character feels truly alone, detached. Then, far-away screams build up again.

### *The Bullies*

After the sun has set in the world of the living, the characters sit in their dark church. There are no means to make a light, though they don't have much trouble seeing. In all, there isn't much to do here but talk.

Deeper in the night, visitors will come through the characters' door. Three rough-looking men erupt incorporeal under the church's roof. As they take shape again, the characters see they all died of stab wounds which they openly display. They also, all three, wield a Relic knife in their hands. One of them says: "So good to be home!" as if the three had been talking all along. They then act surprised to see the characters

here. With Perception + Empathy, the characters may realize it is all an act as the three insist the characters have broken into their Haunt. “This here is our church. Hell, this whole part of the city is ours. We fought over it. We bled for it. Now it belongs to us, the Standoff Brothers.”

They slowly circle the characters. From the moment the Standoff Brothers were reaped in the Shadowlands, they put their rare Relics to good use. They’re used to getting their way. Before suggesting the idea of the characters renting the place from them, they hurt one of the characters. They make a point of how green the characters are at the sight of their Corpus deteriorating. “You don’t know what happens yet, do you?” they taunt. They make a drawn-out display of choosing which one of the characters will get ‘it’ before they stomp, cut, and beat the existence out of him, sending him into a Harrowing.

Before the rest of the characters’ eyes, their companion simply shrinks and shrivels, and then vanishes through a dark pool in the ground. The Standoff Brothers finish their message for the characters: “We’ll give you a chance to get the rent together. We’ll be back for it tomorrow. From then on, it’s weekly collections. Obuli, one per week. If you don’t have it, maybe Artifacts. If not, we’ll go after the things dear to you. Think about that. If you don’t want to see us in a while, all you have to do is pay in advance.” They march off, whistling.

### *Good Spectre, Bad Spectre*

The character is hauled into a Harrowing. His very being decomposes. The strands of his soul fall through the pores in the ground like quicksilver. He is gone and then he relives something.

The destroyed character comes to in a meeting of the What Comes After support group. He sits down on the folding chair and a circle of faces turn to regard him. He remembers this meeting just as it plays out before his eyes. He is not just a spectator, though, it his voice that answers Janice’s question: “Who would like to start by sharing today?” [...] This was the most important meeting of all. This is the one where he shared enough to know he would need to come back to every meeting



that came after. The player is encouraged to think long and hard about what he says, taking the core concepts of his character into account. What the player doesn’t know, is that as a recurring system throughout the story, Harrowings will serve the secondary purpose of allowing the character’s Shadow to glimpse vulnerable information.

The scene remains a Harrowing and the other two players will fill the roles of Spectres in the audience. As the character begins to speak, the church will grow dark. The light will fade to a central, shrinking beacon around him. The faces in the audience will become hard to distinguish, except for these two. The character remembers them. They are the two who responded to what he had to share.

### *Theater of Dreams*

Scarlett Cramden has entered into a small business venture together with Thomas Kershaw. Thomas offers his services as a Sandman to any wraith who desires to experience life through dreams again. Scarlett acts as his assistant and allows payment through her use of Usury.

### *Hungry Stripling*

The characters may stand on each other’s shoulders to reach the branch and help the child. In truth, the thing is Spectre, a Doppelganger Stripling. As soon as it is freed, it will try to drag the characters a step closer to Oblivion. It possesses the first three tiers of the Dark Arcanos Larceny. While innocently asking the characters about how they weathered the storm, and then eagerly listening to all they have to say, it will employ the Emotional Infection on them. By the time the characters realize the child is up to no good, it will persist in its efforts while slowly getting within arm’s reach of the Legionnaire’s spear. By then, the characters can clearly see that the Stripling is not holding its hands behind its back willingly, instead they are chained. Should the characters try to stop it, it will fight them to the last, using Steal Corpus and Savor Agony to stay ahead. If the thing is overcome, the character may take the chains and spear with them, both soulforged. Other wraiths will not let them keep them for long, however.

### *Seeker’s Paradise*

Should the characters seek out the shop in the Old Fourth Ward, they will find its narrow entrance squeezed in between a coffee place and a touristic gift shop called ‘The King’. Inside, a young woman the characters don’t recognize is minding the register. The shelves are littered with stones, incense, and countless books on meditation. Despite their strong occult theme, everything in the shop looks as distant and dead as anything else. The girl is listening to something loud through headphones and there isn’t a single customer in sight. She flicks through pages of a dog-eared Anne Rice novel, biting her lip and sending Passions of her own through the dusty shop.

At the back of the shop, a curtain of beads leads to a small room with stairs going both up and down. The characters can hear a voice upstairs. As soon as they pass through the curtain

of beads, something amazing happens. The curtain parts for them. The beads roll down their arms as they pass through. The girl at the register is too occupied to notice. Upstairs, beyond an open door to her apartment, the shop's owner is listening to a recorded lecture on dreams. She is seated on her rug, surrounded by books and a few burnt-out candles. She looks right at the characters for a moment, before closing her eyes again. The recording keeps on playing. "Say what you have come to say, spirit," she tells the characters. For a long time, the medium just listens to the characters. If they have anything to ask of her, she will make it plain that she expects services from the characters in return. She will promise to do one favor for the characters, likely with regards to the world of the living, if they can take a look at something she bought at an auction last week. She rummages around a closet before she pulls out a poorly preserved canvas painting. It shows a grim scene of a boat being led through mists. The medium places it on her sofa for the characters to look at. Then, she takes a photo from the auction and places it next to it. The photo is of the same painting, same frame, but the contents look different to the characters. In the photo, there is only the boat and its passenger lying on his back with what seems to be arms folded behind his head. It looks like someone on vacation gliding towards the sunset. When the characters look at the painting itself, however, they see the boat is guided by a tall, thin figure in robes wielding a pole through the water. Instead of a sunset, the boat is headed toward an island with twisted spires looming above the fog. If they explain the difference to the medium, she will grin and snigger a bit morbidly before she explains the auction was on behalf of an old artist up in Nashville. Suffice it to say, she says, she has an eye for haunted houses. She promises to return the favor for the characters. Before they leave, she will introduce herself as Belle-Caroline.

### *Sunday Service*

All around the characters' Haunt, people will start filing in for a Sunday service. It's the first in full attendance since Janice's act turned the place into a home for the characters. Those in attendance are wearing their Sunday best. They mutter greetings to neighbors they haven't seen in a while. Not one of them notices the great dark bloodstain on the floor.

The church organ then bellows and everyone listens in attendance. By the time the droning howls of the organ have stopped, the minister has taken his place and begins the service.

"Since we last congregated, a terrible thing has happened in this church. An ultimate, selfish sin transpired, and I know you have all heard about it. People are complicated. I look around and I see your depths. I see your doubts. I see the need. I see the need. People are all by their very nature dead in sin! You've heard it said before. Children of wrath is what we are! The only justification in this world is faith. By faith alone are people just. We are back here today because faith alone can bring peace inside and outside. Holiness is in our grasp!"

The minister leads his gathering through prayer while a depth of fear first manifests in his audience, but then is caressed

away by promises of holy light that will touch everyone's life. Slowly, the characters notice that the sheer collective sway of emotion is eroding the walls of their very Haunt. The walls pale and the bloodstains fade. The minister and his audience seem far away and sinking further. The Haunt is healing.

### *Guidance*

Sarah Chandler and Nancy Martin will visit the characters at their Haunt to check up on them at some point. Sarah will be wearing more contemporary clothes, namely jeans and a 'Casper the Friendly Ghost' T-shirt. The characters will notice for the first time how short she really is, and just how young she was when she died. Nancy in turn strikes a very different image with a band shirt and her countless rings. They will first ask the characters about their time settling in, taking note of any concerns they might have. They will confiscate the Legionnaire's spear and the soulforged chains from Soulless Chad if it comes up. If the characters tell them about the Standoff Brothers, Sarah will take it to heart on a bureaucratic level, saying something about the Anacreon of the Legion of the Grim. They give the characters an Obulus to pay the thugs with should they come collecting, but seem to be in no hurry to prevent them from coming back to the church. Meanwhile, Sarah promises to settle the dispute between Anacreons.

After dealing with all the characters' concerns, Sarah will address the news she received from the characters previously, namely the matter of Janice and her nefarious accomplice. She asks the characters if they would be comfortable going ahead with Janice's plan to meet with the characters at their Haunt. If so, they might act on the Legion's behalf in capturing her while her guard is down, without the need of force or Legionnaires. Nancy extends a fresh pair of soulforged chains with an ornate key.

### *Shakedown*

The Standoff Brothers return to the church later that night. Before they burst through the doors, the characters can hear them whistling as they approach. "Where's..." one of them begins, "our..." another continues, "... money?" the last finishes. The Standoff Brothers smile at the Obulus the characters hand over. "No advance payment? You know what that means, don't you? It means we'll see each other again, soon."

Just before they leave one of the Standoff Brothers takes a look around the church and halts the other with a sharp whistle. "Look at this shit," he says, pointing at the walls. "What the fuck are you little twerps trying to pull? This place is losing its touch. Did you really think you could just damage our property after we agree to let you stay here? You guys disappoint me, really, you do. Alright then, which one of you is it going to be? Which one of you is going to learn the lesson on behalf of all three this time?"

The Standoff Brothers will line the characters up again and take a grueling long time before placing their second victim on his knees. "This is your own fault," one of them whispers in his ear before he draws his knife and plays with it close to the



character's eye. "You're going to remember this one, aren't you? You're going to remember to take of this place we're letting you stay in. You're going to remember what fear is. You're going to make sure every living soul is terrified of this place, keep real estate values rising." The bully then rises. "You know what else you're going to remember? What my mercy feels like." Then they leave without harming any of the characters.

### *Treachery in Sanctuary*

By Monday evening, it will be time for another meeting of the What Comes After support group. Stanislav enters the church earlier than the others. He seems to hold the keys now. Slowly, he will start unfolding chairs until Mary, an orphan the characters remember who laments never having had the opportunity to go to college, joins and helps him. Before long, Griff walks in with his carpool who the characters can hear Stanislav still refer to as 'the newlyweds' even though their tragic honeymoon was several years ago. Josephine and Caleb say something to the effect of everyone being here and the characters realize that these five members really is all that remains of the support group after what happened.

Mary starts the meeting by rolling up her sleeve and revealing the hospital tag around her wrist. "It's finally time and in a way I'm excited." That's when Janice walks in. "The doctors are petitioning the adoption agency to release the identity of my biological parents so they can get an accurate history and perform genetic testing." Janice's eyes are briefly on the characters, briefly on the fading bloodstain on the floor, but then focuses only on Mary and what she's saying. "Meanwhile, I do have to keep telling myself it's a small consolation. I feel a little worse every day." If the characters haven't stopped her yet, Janice has by then moved up right behind Mary's chair and places her hands on the living woman's shoulders. Janice's dress rustles and her skin becomes blurry and then translucent. Everyone in the world of living facing Mary gasps in shock. Josephine starts screaming. Only Mary doesn't see what's going on. Behind her, Janice has materialized naked as a grotesque fog. She whispers: "There is nothing to fear," and tries to smile.

While Janice is this distracted, the characters can easily subdue her. When the chains lock on her wrists, her smile fades and realization strikes. "What have you done?" she will keep asking the characters.

### *Delivering Janice*

The characters will have to bring Janice in chains to the State Capitol Building. By the time she has stopped asking the

characters questions, she will fade into a sort of fugue state. Then, slowly, a dark grimace grows over her countenance. Some part of Janice flinches and mutters "No. No... No," until the darkness takes complete hold. Then, Janice's Shadow fights to escape this fate. Janice's body convulses first and the characters can see something grow inside her and works its way up her chest and through her throat. Falling to her knees, Janice's mouth opens with agony and until a great black ball rolls out of it. The ball unfolds and shakes off a layer of slimy ectoplasm as it takes the shape of a small black cat. The cat looks at the characters once and then dashes off through the city. Janice meanwhile rises again and looks up at the skies above. Something black still oozes from the corner of her lip. Then, Janice's shadow lets out a horrid wail, a screech that pierces the characters' ears and travels far and wide. Looking down at the characters again, the Shadow behind Janice's voice says: "We should head inside the nearest building we see. Hell is on its way."

Within a matter of minutes, the Shadow's Spectre ally will arrive. The first signs are a shaking of the ground in the world of the dead and streets lights flickering in the world of the living. Janice keeps instructing the characters on where they should go. "It's a Nephwrack. You may not know what that means, but I promise you that there will be nothing you can do if it finds you." Perceptive characters may notice a black cat dashing just a few corners ahead of where they are being led. After a while, everything will go quiet and Janice makes the characters stop. "It has surfaced. We need to be quiet and we need to go out through the back alley." The black cat dashes ahead to show the way. Even outside, the characters notice the air is dead quiet. Janice points to a sewer grate and motions for the characters to go down it. Anyone who linger will see shadows in the streetlight beyond the alley. Tendrils of darkness are reflected on the building's face, tall and menacing. Anyone who lingers longer will see the tendrils crawl into view on the street, on the buildings, and even crawling into the alley. They consist of endless millipedes, branching and joining into ever fatter vermin at its root.

Janice leads the characters through the sewers, pursued by the hideous alien horror. The characters can defy Janice and find a way back to the surface. If they manage to tangle the horror in the meanwhile, they may get away with their prize and reach the State Capitol Building. Otherwise, the black cat leads the characters to a section of sewer near a loud crossing of railway tracks where a Nihil awaits for them to 'escape' through.





## *Act 2: What Fades*

*"Today's story is not about lingering.*

*Today's story is not even about loss.*

*It's about becoming lost yourself."*

### *Falling*

The characters endure their tumble through the Nihil. They hear cries of anguish and most of all grief. They can hear the recently orphaned, the recently widowed, all in a dark void through which they feel weightless until they hit the black water. For the first moments, all they feel is the shocking cold, colder than anything they have ever known, something that defies life itself. Darkness surrounds them, but they can hear the others struggling to keep their heads above water. And they hear Janice's Shadow celebrate its victory. "Welcome to the Sunless Sea."

### *Floating*

A cry sounds in the distance, and a faint light reflects across the water, revealing its dark surface. A raft floats downriver, pulled toward its destination. Janice begins to swim toward it. The cries are clearer as the raft comes into view. In a small coffin laid amidst wilting flowers, an infant struggles and weeps. A small stuffed doll tucked under her arm.

The raft is respite from the water. A few candles burning on its prow light the way as it slowly drifts further down what the characters slowly realize must be a river. Janice has been looking at the child with a narrow smile. A tear rolls down her cheek before the Shadow takes complete and unyielding hold for the last time.

"Did you know Janice was a teacher? A professor of literature. Come, and listen to this:

*The flood subsides, and the body, like a worn sea-shell,  
emerges strange and lovely.*

*And the little ship wings home, faltering and lapsing*

*on the pink flood,  
and the frail soul steps out, into her house again  
filling the heart with peace.*

*Swings the heart renewed with peace  
even of oblivion.*

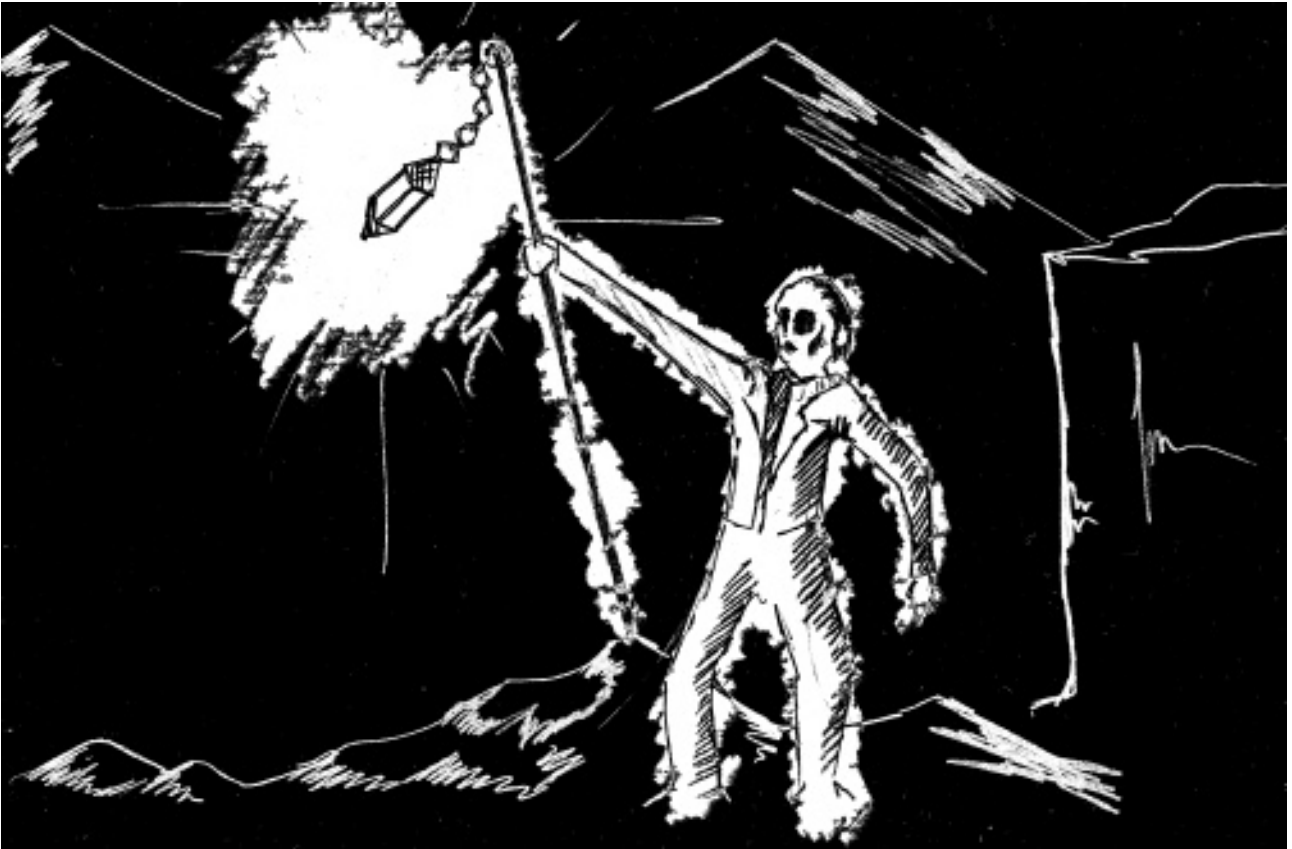
*Oh build your ship of death, oh build it!  
for you will need it.*

*For the voyage of oblivion awaits you."*

Janice's Shadow will strangle and then start to eat of the child's soul. If the characters interfere, she will throw it in the water. After the terrible act has passed, she will utter: "Oblivion awaits you." She tries to escape by leaping into the water. Without looking back, she whispers: "You will see." The characters can try to hold on to Janice. She will only become a greater burden to them on this journey.

### *Drifting*

The characters have very little control over the raft as it tumbles through the river. Other lights are visible in the distance and sometimes the characters are overtaken by another raft. A foul wind picks up before rain black as tar falls from the sky. It stings where it touches the characters. The storm then truly arrives and waves form on the river. Carelessly, a raft in the distance is overturned, sending another soul in the depths. Then, the sky is lit for a split second by lightning. The characters see through the thick haze of black rain and see horizons in the distance, specks of islands and rough spires and cliffs. Then thunder roars not unlike the beasts, shapes of which they saw in



thick clouds overhead. Another flash of lightning, and the characters can see the beasts coming closer. A perceptive character may at the same time have seen that one of the lights on the river is actually coming from the shoreline. The light seems to sway back and forth.

The acid rain has rendered the water of the river harmful to the characters. If they do not hesitate, they may swim to shore or direct the raft by paddling despite the loss of Corpus before the phantoms of the sky descend, screeching, tearing rafts apart. Whether intact or each on their own split log from the raft, when the characters near the shore, they are wading through countless souls face-down in the water. The figure they approach is a man in a worn, black suit. On a long pole, he brandishes a lantern as he keeps climbing further up the shore with the ever rising water. The black rain still falls and the winds still roar. "Come quickly, strangers, come into the light if you can. Be damned if you are the kind of creature who cannot!" [...] "Join me in the light, strangers! I have courage enough for four."

With the man's light, the characters are blinded beyond his silhouette and his pole. The water rises up to their ankles, then to their knees. Long hours pass with the storm overhead. The water lowers after it reached the characters' waists. Their savior lowers the lantern and the characters see the devastation of the maelstrom. Rafts and stranger ships with sails lie in ruins as they drift down the river. Countless souls drowned and adrift wash away all hope of the afterlife.

The characters see their savior better. His black suit is that of

a preacher, though his collar is torn along with the rest of him. Scars of violence mark both his face and his hands. The man looks battered, but no part of him speaks of how much he has endured as the expression he carries.

"You are strong souls to have weathered the water. Fate is not done with you yet." [...] "Tell me, how vividly do you remember life? How long ago did you last breathe, and caress, and feel warmth?" [...] "Remember it well."

The preacher looks over the water again and his expression sours further. His shoulders sag and every part of him seems to give in, to give up, everything but a faint light in his eyes. "What are your names?" [...] "Remember them well." If they ask, the preacher will tell the characters to call him 'Father'. The light in the preacher's eyes grows and he finds some resolve in what the characters can see is pure anger.

"There are those among the dead who claim the realm we inhabit is but a reflection of the world of the living. That it was Man who tainted his own afterlife, polluted it with atrocities, wars and genocide. A flood of death, a river overflowing, and ocean roiling, and the storms that followed." [...] "I look around me and all I see is the hubris of God."

Father begins to walk back up the shore and up the cliffs.

### *Choosing*

As they reach the high ground, Father will explain to the characters that they must not think him a Ferryman despite his pole and lantern, which he continues to use as a walking stick. He says he inherited the artifacts, but neither a Ferryman's duty,

nor one's resolve. He cannot be their guide to a destination of their choosing. Father is going one way, he says as he points downriver, and the characters may choose to go another, he finishes as he points upriver. "My destination is the Heaven that was promised to me. You are welcome to wander the Tempest with me, but I am not the one to say where your destination lies." [...] "You must make your decision now."

The characters can see the madness in Father's eyes. His destination is not for them, if it exists at all.

### *Swings the Heart Renewed*

When the characters choose their own road off of the river, they will clamber on the banks in darkness. They climb, navigating only by the sound of the water and by what they feel with their hands. Sometimes, their hands reach out and find not rock but another washed-up soul, motionless. "If only we had a source of light, you could see in their eyes the meaning of lost hope," Janice reminds them. It's not the first such corpse and it won't be the last. Occasionally, the characters notice Janice trying to eat of the souls they stumble on once again.

### *The Ship of Death*

Janice is the first to notice it when all around the characters, sounds indicate that they are no longer alone. Shapes half-seen as they obscure pinpricks of reflected light on the river rise from a crouched position. All around the characters, the density of the washed-up dead had been increasing and these strangers had been kneeling over them. The characters hear the tools in their hands, pliers of some kind, and knives, before they see them. A very faint red red light is emitted from lanterns the scavengers have placed on the ground. Each of the figures moves away from a washed-up soul and outside of the light to close in on the characters. They characters see they were using their tools on the bodies but cannot fathom why.

The strangers surround the characters, bringing with them a stench of rot and decay. One of them standing closer to the water picks up one of the lanterns and lifts it higher. The characters can just make out the prow of a creaking old ship moored there. The light shows the skeletal outlines of the figures surrounding them. "Bráð?" one of them asks the others. "Fórnir?" another suggests. The tallest of them decides: "Drælar." By then, the characters count nine of them.

"No," Janice whispers to the characters with a hint of earnest urgency in her voice, "this can't happen. That last word meant 'slaves'. Remember when I promised you a fate much worse than Oblivion? Well, this is it." [...] "You have to fight. We have to fight tooth and nail and make away with one of their lanterns." [...] "We're outnumbered, but we can take them if you give it your all, if you don't deny your other half." What's left of Janice is truly afraid of the fate the scavengers have in store for them. The characters have to decide quickly how much help they ask from their Shadows. Should they succeed in getting away with one of the lanterns, they will now be able to see. The first thing they notice is that all the corpses for miles upriver from here have their nails torn from their fingers.

### *Washing Away in a Dying Mind*

The characters keep marching upriver, now guided by some light at least. After what they can neither express in miles nor hours, the river has washed away all signs of the maelstrom. Dead water as far as the eye can see, slowly slithering past the rocks. "You did good back there," Janice says after a long silence. "Do you understand why that fight was necessary?" [...] "There are some who say that the twisted reflections that we have walked through since dying exist outside of time and are no world at all. They are the dying mind spinning yarn in an endless split second. It is the mind that must accept what has happened, because there is nothing left to do about it. In this theory, one of us is simply trapped in a dream and everything else, the others included, are figments of the dying mind's imagination. Trying desperately to let go." [...] "The dream mustn't turn into a nightmare. But the dream cannot go on forever without turning into one. The dream must end." [...] "If this is my dying mind we inhabit, it makes a certain sense since you are all there in this endless moment, watching what I did, witnessing my death. Then you are figments of guilt that I have not yet let go in order to truly die as I want. Then it is my duty to convince you to let go." [...] "If it is not my dying mind we inhabit, but one of yours, then I share a duty with two of you: to let the dream end, to accept death." [...] "Which is it?! Will you have to let me go or will you have to come to accept Oblivion yourselves?"

### *Bound for a Far Shore*

Countless silences later, the characters notice a bright light drifting down the river, brighter than anything they have seen since they came ashore. The light is accompanying a raft with two figures on it. A woman, sitting calmly with her legs crossed, is being guided by a tall, hooded figure bearing the same tools the characters had seen the preacher use, a pole and a lantern. With the pole, the Ferryman guides the raft downriver, calmly avoiding its islands and sharp, jutting rocks. Janice will try to stop the characters from getting the Ferryman's attention. Should they succeed, however, the Ferryman will slow down the raft and lift its lantern high and bright to see the characters on the bank. It will point straight at them with an outstretched arm and slowly incline hits hidden face. Then, it turns back to the river and continues its passenger's journey without another look back. "You do not know what it wants," Janice remarks when the Ferryman is out of sight, "and yet you risk everything on some faint hope that it will do your bidding. What is wrong with you?" [...] "Why do you insist on perpetuating stupidity under the pretense of hope?"

### *Confrontation's Culmination*

Janice tries wriggle herself so fiercely under each of the characters' skin, each with a different flavor of distrust, that she triggers a confrontation. This will not be the first time the characters fight with more than words over what to do with Janice. This time, she will goad them on and wait for an opportunity to slip away. She cannot allow herself to be in the

Ferryman's custody. If she succeeds in getting away from the characters, the characters will be alone when the Ferryman comes back for them, which is also to their benefit.

### *Bound for the Eternal Necropolis*

By the bright light of its lantern, the characters see the Ferryman from earlier return, effortlessly poling the raft upriver. The previous passenger has been ferried and now the raft has come for the characters. Bathed in the bright light, the characters are blinded while the Ferryman moors on the banks and asks: "Have you strayed from your path?" As their eyes adjust, the characters see each other more clearly than they have in an uncounted span of time spent in the dark. They look ragged, like paper-thin flesh stretched over sharp, brittle bones. The clothes they imagined are faded, torn, and eroded either by the acid rain now long past, or some other forgotten calamity. [...] "Do you seek refuge from the Tempest?" Looking over the Ferryman, the first thing the characters realize is that it bears no pole at all, rather it is an enormous scythe. Its robes are pure black, though weathered, and its face is veiled. [...] "Do you know your destination?"

Should the characters ask the Ferryman to guide them upriver to the Nihil, it will recite part of its oath sworn long ago: "I have pledged myself as an instrument of safe and secure passage for any and all souls who seek aid to reach the Far

Shores," as if that should explain precisely why it won't do as the characters ask. [...] "It is a Necropolis you wish to return to, I gather." [...] "There is a place in the Sunless Sea. To this place I could take you. You bear the markings of its allegiance and it offers refuge from the Tempest." [...] "It is the Eternal Necropolis: Stygia, home of the Deathlords, the Lady of Fate, and the Onyx Tower which awaits the return of the once and future emperor." [...] "Have you now a destination?" [...] "Then we must discuss my payment." [...] "Have you any means to pay the toll?" [...] "Then I shall demand an oath of each of you."

The Ferryman lunges forward with its scythe, enveloping the characters in its blade one by one as they deliver their oath. Of one character, the Ferryman demands: "Swear by Charon's Oar: I pledge myself to ask not a single question of anyone until I have reaped a soul and give it the tools to overcome its death." Of another character, the Ferryman demands: "Swear by Charon's Oar: I pledge myself to cause no one harm until I have saved a soul from the forges and redeem it." Of the last character, it demands: "Swear by Charon's Oar: I pledge myself to pass no judgment on a soul until I have overcome a Spectre and ensure it may never cause harm again."

After everyone has sworn, the Ferryman guides them onto the raft. It pushes away from the rocks and the characters find themselves floating on the great, dark river again, going



downriver. "It is my honor to be a component of your journey, of your Fate, chosen ones." Any character looking upriver in search of a sign of Janice cannot see her, nor will they ever see her again. The Ferryman then finishes: "Do you trust me?"

### *Sirens*

The river banks around the raft pass slowly as the Ferryman guides it past jagged rocks and occasional twisted islands. Countless moments pass in which the characters may converse and their guide remains silent. The Ferryman is unforgiving if in his presence, the characters already break one of their vows.

By the time the river starts to slowly widen, the raft approaches an island basking in light. The Ferryman is saying something the characters can't quite make out because they were trying to distinguish what they see and hear on the island. There are figures there, golden winged women. It's mesmerizing. The island is surrounded by driftwood and collapsed rafts, some with lanterns still attached to the bow, shining bright. By the time the Ferryman's voice cuts through, warning them, a twin song sung by two of the women washes over the characters. One song is heard only by the characters, the other is heard only by their Shadows. The first song starts with "Woe is the day that the road ends and no one is left to follow," and speaks of loneliness and despair. The second song starts with "Ode to the night where knees buckle and footfall ends," and speaks of anger and retribution. Any characters with Passions close to the first song's intent may regain Pathos just as Shadows with Dark Passions close to the second song's intent may add Angst. As per Keening's Requiem, the characters may also become paralyzed. All effects may be averted if a character reacts to the Ferryman's warning and chooses to resist with a Willpower roll.

By the time the characters recover, the Ferryman will have raised the lantern high and steers the raft straight for the island. The Banshees flock out of the way, screeching and wailing. The Ferryman skewers one through the chest with its scythe, hurls her to the ground, and brings its lantern closer until the Spectre is burnt to ashes in the wind.

When the Ferryman returns to the raft, the other Banshees will have dissolved into the dark overhead sky. It hands an ordinary lanterns to each of the characters, scavenged from the island's other wrecks. Then, it pushes the raft away from the bank and they move on downriver again.

### *A Mentor in the Arcanoi*

Their journey continues and the Ferryman explains to the characters that what they saw was the use of an Arcanos, as they were clearly unfamiliar with this. The Ferryman explains that the art they witnessed was perfected by those known as the Chanteurs before the disbanding of the Guilds. Although it has never practiced this power, the Ferryman is adept in many other Arcanoi, as are most wraiths who endure in this existence.

Their conversation may take a turn where the Ferryman offers to introduce the characters to the Arcanoi in exchange for knowledge of the living. It explains that it has served as a

Ferryman lifetimes beyond counting and that it has been long since it understood the world of the Quick. Its duty is to aid souls beyond what the characters see around them. Once, it explains, "I ferried souls who did not understand their mortality, but did accept it. The ways of the dead have deteriorated since then, from its waters to its empire. I can only assume it is the same for the living. What has inverted these tides? Why is it that a young soul now feels she understands mortality and yet can find only less acceptance of it?"

If the characters succeed in enlightening the Ferryman, each character may choose the first dot from the Arcanoi: Argos, Castigate, Fatalism, and Moliate. The Ferryman takes its time instructing the characters, saying: "We have all the time in the world." While they slowly discover the Arcanoi, the characters pass through meanders before the banks widen and no shore can be seen in any direction.

### *The Sea of Souls*

If it were not for the Ferryman's gentle poling through the water, the characters would think they were adrift in an endless ocean. By the time they have control over an art they did not even know existed, the characters approach Stygia. The Ferryman removes its pole from the water and lets the raft drift on. From the darkness ahead, the characters hear sounds. A light fog dissipates and the characters see limbs rising from the water. "We have entered the Sea of Souls," the Ferryman says as he turns the raft and slows it down. Below the surface of the water, the characters see the corpses of the dead writhe in chains, interlocked, forming a great mass rising and falling with the waves. At the edge of the fog, the souls rise from the water, stacked high and pinned on shards of steel to form a great bulwark. The Ferryman begins to traverse the length of this wall of the dead and the characters see more lost souls drift by here than during the maelstrom on the River of Death.

Occasionally, the characters spot a structure rising above the wall of agonizing souls, once a white roof, and another time the point of a pyramid. When the wall comes to an abrupt end, the characters realize the sheer size of the perimeter they have been traversing. They drift into a vast bay where a million more souls cry out. "We approach the harbor of Stygia, called Weeping Bay," the Ferryman says over the souls' anguished cries. The raft approaches the harbor and the characters can't believe what they see. Beyond the sheer inconceivable size of it, they see ancient ships moored with chains made of bones. They see vessels made entirely of steel unlike any in the world of the living. Crooked structures lean against walls of screaming souls where the water ends and the land begins. A narrow road climbs up a cliff past homes carved into the rock. Ever higher, even stranger buildings rest, some crumbling into dust and others thriving on the rubble of what was forgotten. "Charon came here long ago, to the Isle of Sorrows, alone in the Sunless Sea, and He built the Necropolis you see before you. And it is in this very bay that during the Fifth Great Maelstrom, He vanished." The Ferryman says no more on the matter as he leaves the characters near a rope ladder. "In parting, I will say that I



admire each of you deeply. Remember that there are dark times ahead, that your future will always be tribulation and never celebration. Remember your vows. Now I shall leave you.” At the Ferryman’s parting words, everybody loses two Angst.

### *Weeping Bay*

The characters climb onto the planks of the harbor. From all around, the screaming of souls can still be heard. Dark figures work these docks, some with disfigured faces and others hidden behind ornate masks. All are detached from the sheer multitude of agony around them, moving about their business and setting to their labor on this island of the dead. The characters have a hard time detaching themselves. They just want to get away from the screaming.

Blocking the way unto the land from the docks stands a skeletal figure in a worn toga. Thin hair clings to her scalp, adorned with a wreath of thin, shining steel. In her hands, she holds a ledger and a quill. “You have set foot on the isle, thus you must pay the tax,” she says, in a tone that suggests she has been saying the words for centuries. “First,” she continues, “the isle must know your names and your allegiance.” While the characters speak, the woman idly scribbles down their answers in the ledger while never taking her eyes off one of the characters’ chest, a place where the clothing is torn and eroded from the Tempest. Later, her eyes wander over parts of the others’ skin too, before looking up once with a brief quizzical expression. “Show me your brands,” she says. After verifying their allegiance to the Emerald Legion, she seems content to forget her previous curiosity. “You have set foot on the isle. You have shown the isle who you are. Now, you must pay the tax. You have no goods, no ship, and no mooring. The sum owed is three fifths of an Obulus each.” [...] After the characters try their best to communicate politely that they have nothing to pay

her with, she seems to think very little of it. “I will mark a debt of one and four fifths of an Obulus to the Hierarchy for each of you. You have set foot on the isle. You have shown the isle who you are. The time, tide, and amount of your debt to the isle have been marked.” She takes a step aside, extending an arm to the land and letting the characters pass. “May Stygia’s splendor wash over you.”

The harbor ends at a wall of cliffs. Steep staircases rise, chiseled into the rock itself. Narrow arched bridges extend from rock wall to rock wall, passing by dwellings of mortared stone. The higher the characters climb, the larger the homes become. By the time they reach the top, they spot the columns of great villas overlooking the horrors of Stygia’s port. A last look down toward the sea reveals menacing black ships circling the perimeter of this grotesque Eternal Necropolis.

### *The Streets of Stygia*

Away from the sea, the characters enter a network of alleys. All around them loom tall buildings. After crossing through enough streets that they can’t see the harbor anymore, they still can’t make sense of the place. At first, all the buildings seem to share an ancient Mediterranean quality. Then, the characters pass a faceless concrete structure with broken windows neighboring a domed building with monstrous statues outside. Not long after, the characters enter a small square centered around a white obelisk decorated with bones charred black. All the while, the strangest of souls pass by on the streets. There is a narrow, stooped man, with eyes like black coals, wandering around with three children tied to chains as if they were dogs. There’s a woman in a green gown leaning out of a third floor balcony fixated on a small ballerina toy she balances on its ledge. Two tall figures in robes covered with stray pieces of bronze and steel plates of armor haggle over a sum of hundreds

of Obuli. As soon as they characters are in earshot, they turn their masked faces in their direction and stare silently, slowly cocking their heads. Whenever the characters look down a wider street, ever taller structures loom ahead.

A Perception + Alertness roll may reveal a shape standing atop a rooftop far and high. The figure seems to be observing the characters until it is out of view.

### *The Charity of Stygia*

At one of the many crossings, the characters are stopped by a man leaning against a wall. The man looks old and weak, with glassy white eyes that pretend not to see. One arm and both legs have been cut off, exposing the shattered bone underneath. With his one remaining hand he reaches out to the characters, repeating only: "They took everything from me." If the characters ignore the man or try to move on, he will scream and eventually chase the characters in a sick, impaired display until they blend into a crowd. The taste of despair still clings to the characters after they leave the man.

### *The Speakers of Stygia*

The winding roads eventually join at an amphitheater where many have gathered to listen to two speakers. Legionnaires bearing spears form a wall around the podium below and many of those attending murmur amongst themselves with wild gestures and paranoid looks. The speakers, both of whose faces are again hidden behind a mask of their office, take turns reciting passages from the Annals of the Dead. The characters can't quite make out whether this is intended as a debate or as propaganda before it is over and everyone in the audience rises to praise the speakers.

### *The Treachery of Stygia*

When the crowds file out of the amphitheater, the characters find themselves swallowed up by their number, trying to find their own way through. A voice from behind them starts to repeat: "Hold up there." If the characters get a chance to look around, they will see a woman approach, a head higher than the rest in the crowd. She flashes them a disarming smile as she comes closer. She tells the expression of bewilderment on their faces betrays that it's their first time in Stygia, then she shows them a brand of the Emerald Legion just above her ankle. She urges them to follow her out of the streets, where the characters will be safer. On the way, she asks what brought the characters to the Eternal Necropolis and how she can help. Before long, she will offer to show them to her home, maintaining that she can contact the Legion from there. If the characters ask for her name, she will answer 'Nephila' and ask after theirs as an afterthought. A character newly familiar with Moliata may be alert enough to use the basic ability of Shapeshense to reveal not only her unnaturally elongated limbs, but also that the Emerald Legion brand on her ankle is not unique. It was placed there very recently, replacing a long history of other marks. Should Nephila succeed in luring the characters into her home, they will enter a small clay dome at the base of a '50s skyscraper.

There, she will seat them around a table before slipping into the next room. She will ask one of the characters to come in and give her a hand with something, where her first victim will find soul strands stretched to form great webs all over the walls and ceiling. Nephila walks these webs with ease and tries to ensnare the character from above like she has done to the other souls trapped in her webs, staring down with lifeless eyes. Should the characters manage to overpower her instead of simply fleeing, she will surrender before the last of her Corpus leaves her, with true fear in her eyes.

### *The Order of Stygia*

When the characters make it out of Nephila's lair, they will be able to spot a group of Legionnaires patrolling the wider street ahead. They may already have heard the distress coming from the alley, or the characters might hail the guards themselves. Their commander sends his men into the alley, staying behind himself to hear the characters' account. He wears a buttoned tunic and a spiked helm the characters may not know originates from the Prussian Army. Slung over his shoulder, he has a rifle with a bayonet. The man is decent enough and sticks around long enough to help the characters find their way. With Perception + Empathy, the characters may realize the elder wraith does not speak in any way condescending about the Necropoli in the Shadowlands compared to Stygia. In fact, he envies the characters. Should the characters catch on to this, he might explain how there are those here in Stygia such as himself, who cannot return to the Shadowlands. After the toll of years and the impossible task of maintaining Fetters all throughout, the odds are such that a wraith loses all ties to the Skinlands. Those who can endure this fate sometimes carve out an existence here in Stygia. Should they characters mention they are only here on transit back to the Shadowlands, the Legionnaire commander will tell them that there is a way. He takes a black-and-white stance on his duties as a Legionnaire, however, and refuses to say more than that the characters should ask around for 'the Midnight Express'.

If the characters haven't sent Nephila into a Harrowing, the Legionnaires will drag what remains of her outside, subdued in chains. "Collect all the evidence you need for a swift trial," the commander orders, "but save us all some time and take her to the forges first." This may provide one of the characters with a chance to fulfill their oath to the Ferryman, though they may not relish the idea of redeeming Nephila's actions.

By the time the characters clear the narrow street, heading back the way they came, they may notice they have been watched ever since they entered from the harbor. A Perception + Alertness roll may reveal the same figure from before atop a rooftop closer to the characters, yet still out of reach. The shape is hunched, hanging on to a gargoyle with one outstretched hand. The characters can't tell much more from the shape other than that it is wearing robes.

### *The Way Out of Stygia*

The characters may ask around about a way out of Stygia, or



specifically about the Midnight Express. Strangers' reactions to the characters are unpredictable, some explosively offended at being stopped in the street, others morosely interested in the characters' naivety. They will be offered services unsolicited, from transport to a hundred sinful ways to feel alive, none of which the characters can afford. Eventually, a man in a neat black suit shows the characters a towering pillar in the farthest distance. He names it the Onyx Tower, a landmark visible in all Stygia, and tells the characters to walk straight toward it from here. They should find a small station between there and here. If the land starts to slope upward again, they will have gone too far.

### *The Eyes of Stygia*

Along the way, another Perception + Alertness roll may reveal the same figure once more standing on a rooftop. It matches the characters' pace, climbing from building to building, parallel to the street they walk on. The characters by now recognize her to be a woman. After following them for the length of a block, she darts ahead of the characters and out of sight. Before long, the characters will then spot her in the crowd ahead, one face blending in with the rest as she removes her hood and starts walking towards them. She will give chase if the characters try to evade her. All she's after is a closer look at them.

When at last, the characters stand face-to-face with the wraith who has been stalking them since they entered the city, they will find her to be far less intimidating than their imaginations allowed. She's short and skinny underneath her wide robe, with a fair, freckled face and uncombed hair. At first, it seems as though she is going to halt in the middle of the passing crowd. Instead, she quickly inspects the characters' torn clothing, pausing once on each of them. Then, without missing a step, she moves along with the crowd around her, lifting her hood again. When the characters look back, she slips away into an alley and disappears without a trace.

### *The Station*

The characters may follow a stranger's instructions to reach the nearest train station. From a distance, it has the look of the kind of station that died along with a ghost town almost a century ago. One track passes through it, with what was once a wooden platform featuring a working clock. The characters can just about make out the clock is indicating five minutes to midnight before they are stopped by the broadest Legionnaire they have seen so far. This one is armed with a traditional spear and has scars that look as though they must have been self-inflicted in their artistry. He blocks the characters' way with his girth before he asks for names. While he browses through a ledger he carries on a chain from his back, he asks if the characters have any debts. When the Legionnaire discovers that they do, he closes the ledger loudly and tells them to back away. "Think you can just skip town, dogs? No one with outstanding debts to the Hierarchy is getting on this platform. Don't come back until you have paid your dues and bring a fare for the



ride.” As the characters get out of the man’s sight, he will mouth the words ‘filthy lemur’s’.

### *The Way Out of Debt*

Rejected, the characters are left to wander the strange streets of Stygia once more. At least, they might think, it’s not like it’s getting dark. All the shadiest types among the dead were all around from the start. If they ask for help, the characters will have a hard time distinguishing a treacherous offer from a plausible one. To make matters worse, they may gradually notice someone has been following them from a distance since they left the station.

After taking the time to gauge the characters’ desperation, the figure will try to approach the characters. He reveals himself to be the very same man who directed them to the train station. The man, still dressed in an unblemished dark suit, breezes past an explanation about his commute to make the characters an offer. “You need currency and you need it fast. The method I propose is free of risk and requires very little of your time. That is not to say it will come easy. It will be demanding. I am no salesman by profession. I have stated the terms as clearly as I can. Are you interested?” [...] “I will furthermore demand a fee for my role as a mediator, one Obulus for the three of you.” [...] “If we have a deal, then let us shake each other by the hand.”

### *The Usurers’ Guild*

The characters are instructed to retrace their steps back to the amphitheater. There, they should find the Legionnaire standing guard named Matthew and tell him “Give to him that asketh of thee and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.” Matthew will look away from the characters and whisper for them to find Luke inside the building behind them, the one with the colorless facade and the black doors of stone.

The building is tall, though it doesn’t resemble a modern skyscraper, nor even an old one. Instead, it looks like several individual buildings each crushed beneath the weight of the one above it. The lowest of them is held together by crooked gray bricks. Inside, there is a narrow hallway followed by a small square room, all made of plain stone. Beyond a separator, the characters can see a figure seated with folded hands. The figure’s face is hidden behind panels, though the characters feel it is waiting for them. As soon as the characters ask for Luke, a woman’s voice beyond the separator replies: “Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” The characters recognize the voice, but can’t quite place it yet. They realize there’s something rehearsed about it.

After the characters clearly state that they are here to avail Obuli, the woman will slide open a narrow slit in the separator, confirming that she is the same Stygian who collected taxes from them at the harbor. “How much are you asking for, and by when do you need it?” again, her voice sounds rehearsed. On top of their debts, the characters should take into account the



train fare to get to the way station. Coldly, the woman nods. She rises from her seat and tells the characters she must see their worth. After performing an Assessment on each of them, she takes out a small set of scales. Next, ceremoniously, she takes out a meat cleaver, a key, and a tray with two types of weights. From under the desk, the character hear a lock and key turn before she stacks the required amount of Obuli on the table. Then, with the cleaver, she splits one to the exact amount specified. The Obuli are placed on the scales, and the woman begins to stack weights under the scales even out.

“At the going rate, figuring in a fee for my service, I can make you an offer.” She stares at each of them coldly again. “Half.” [...] “I will require half of each of you.” [...] “You misunderstand. I will require half of what you are, having said you are not very much at all.” [...] “That said, you may distribute the cost among you however you see fit.”

What the woman will draw from the characters in payment amounts to half of the sum of their remaining Corpus and half of the sum of their remaining Pathos. When the characters are ready to commit to the payment, the Usurer will finally move to the back wall and pick out a small chest. She places it on the desk in front of the characters, and the box trembles with a faint

noise coming from inside. Opening the lid, the characters are shocked to see a shriveled infant propped inside. Its paper-thin skin is wrapped around bones broken to accommodate the chest. It tries to thrash, but hasn't the strength. The woman indicates for the first of the characters to reach their arm through the separator so she may begin. Every inch of Pathos and Corpus drawn from the characters first brightens the face of the Usurer, then breathes warmth back into the infant in the box, leaving the woman pale again, and the characters ever more drained. With every drop transferred, the characters' Shadows feel the presence of one of their own kind growing stronger in the room. As the infant grows stronger, it tries to fight to escape, but the woman simply flicks it in the face. The thing relaxes in euphoria every time another transferral starts. Finally, the desired amount has been extracted, and the woman swiftly closes the lid on the box. Inside, the thing thrashes wildly as it is placed back in a rack on the far wall. The characters can't help but notice the wall is stacked from floor to ceiling with similar chests.

The woman then hands the characters their Obuli, minus what they owed to the Hierarchy. Those she keeps without saying a word. If the characters ask about it, she simply states it was part of her service to handle and resolve the administration of the characters' debt to the Hierarchy. She tells them they are free to leave and points to the door. One last time, as they leave, the characters think on the way the woman stared at them, but not at their faces. She stared where she stared at the harbor, where the mysterious woman stalking them stared.

*Marked*

After several times that someone has inspected them in this strange way, the characters may try to figure out what it was the others were looking for. All the characters will be able to find

near where their eyes lingered is a mole they have known all their lives. It's small and perhaps slightly triangular. The strange thing they will find is that they each share an identical one.

*Faded*

When the characters return to Stygia's streets, they feel awful. They feel like they are barely there, their footfalls light on the ground. Everything about them has faded a little further. When the station is in sight, the characters are stopped by a man who had been trying to get their attention, the man who arranged their meeting with the Usurers. He demands his payment.

*All Aboard*

The frightening Legionnaire acknowledges that the characters have paid their dues and lets them into the station. The clock still indicates five minutes to midnight and the train is nowhere in sight. A man in a torn conductor's outfit takes the characters payment and hands each of them a stamped ticket. "Train'll be here in five minutes," he says with a sick grin. "It's never been late, not once."

The characters wait on a bench for what seems an eternity, feeling cold and numb—tired, torn, and spent. The train will arrive, eventually, and the characters will feel a little less lost. They will not notice that someone will get on the train with them, someone who has been following them for a long time.

*The Way Station*

The characters stop at the way station, where the Midnight Express arrives as the clock strikes midnight. The station here is bare and adrift in the Tempest, revealing only thick mists below the tracks, and darkness above. The Midnight Express' journey from the way station first passes through Alaska, then ever west.



*Interlude*

This point in the story has been set up to allow for the pre-written scenarios in **Midnight Express** to be inserted.

*"Today's story is not about Steggia anymore.  
Today's story is not even about what's been  
happening back in Atlanta.  
It's about the journey of a lifetime."*



## Act 3: What Breaks

*"Today's story is not about your hopes and wishes.*

*Today's story is not even about your redemption or your recovery.*

*It's about your ultimate fate."*

### *With Fate on their Heels*

The girl from Stygia boarded the train after the characters. She hasn't stalked them from too closely. That would attract too much attention, now. Instead she simply follows the trail they leave on the strands of fate. She gets off the train in Atlanta, just as the characters do, and thus by necessity from the same carriage. The characters are likely to recognize her. She will simply smile and walk off into Atlanta's Shadowlands on her own. If the characters make an attempt to stop her, she will dissuade them, saying only: "Don't follow your Fate when your Fate already follows you."

### *Fall from Grace*

The characters see the Atlanta they had left behind from the tracks of Five Points Station. The mortal world has transitioned from Spring to Autumn and the night-time skies look darker than they remember. It's the middle of the night and the characters might decide to seek out their benefactors at the Emerald Legion at the earliest opportunity. There are Legionnaires stationed all around the departing Midnight Express, keeping a careful eye on it and anyone getting off.

The characters might follow their patrol back to the State Capitol Building, only to find their Legion is not represented by their Anacreon at this hour. They will however run into the Governor of Atlanta himself, escorted by the returning Legionnaires. His face is hidden behind a particularly haunting mask, even compared to those the characters saw in Stygia and he bears his scythe. James Johnson claims to nothing if not approachable by Wraiths in his city loyal to the Hierarchy. He may hear the characters out, ensuring them that he is the law in the city, even though he holds conclave with the Anacreons.

Should the characters unburden themselves of all their dilemmas, the Governor will slowly become less patient with them. Eventually he will cut the characters short with some very bad news: "Forgive me for stopping you there. It sure sounds like a pickle you got yourselves in. I cannot begin to explain to you, however, that as of the last few weeks, Atlanta has much bigger problems than this. Excuse me as I go to tend to them."

### *Falling Further*

The characters are going to be curious about what has happened to their families, homes, and fetters in their absence. The characters who have it worst check back in with their family only to find they're doing just fine. It's like they don't miss him at all. Others have left widows who are only in town visiting friends. Their houses are empty, though they haven't been sold yet. Tracking down their things proves difficult. They may be surprised to find a forwarding address within the city marked on some of the outgoing mail. It leads each of them to the same storage unit between Midtown and the Old Fourth Ward. Inside, all their things are put away in boxes labeled only by name. That's one of their cars in there.

### *Terror from a Hearse*

The characters, while walking around Atlanta at night, might become witnesses to one of the Hearse Rider's antics. One of the characters may recognize the austere hearse driving down the street from his reaping. The others may only find it eerie how its lights seem to disappear in some local fog rather than illuminate the street like other passersby in the Skinlands.

Meanwhile, the characters might have noticed a careless drunk march straight from the bar into his own car. The moment



it leaves the parking lot, the Hearse Riders Embodiment long enough to give the man behind the wheel a reason to back up straight into and through the bar's door.

### *Labor for the Legion*

The characters are overdue for an appointment with the Anacreon of their Legion. Sarah receives them in her office at the State Capitol Building, where concerns of the city weigh heavily on her and her patience. She is prepared to hear the characters' story in great detail before explaining what has happened to their ventures in Atlanta. The church indeed lost its status as a bastion. The other Anacreons have made a point of how valuable another stronghold would have been against the darkening skies, the maelstrom everyone expects to arrive soon. At that, she expresses her disappointment in the characters.

As Sarah sees it, the characters owe a great debt. "There is much work to be done in facing the dark times ahead. You will report back here tomorrow, at the same time, for your orders."

### *Relentless Fog*

The characters leave from the State Capitol Building in each other's company. Despite the rough times behind them, they cannot deny it's better company than their Shadows'. Slowly, all around them, fog descends, clinging to every surface of the city's macabre reflection. Before long, it grows thicker than the characters have ever seen in life. It becomes hard to find their way except by the occasional passing lights of a car. This fog persists until past morning.

### *Summoning*

While navigating the city's Shadowlands, the characters feel something strange. It takes a while for the feeling to manifest itself strongly enough for them to believe it's a tug, a voice calling them to a place in the city. They can't recognize the voice, though they may realize when they get closer that the voice has been calling them to the mysterious storage unit containing all their things.

By the time they get there, their benefactor has already given up. The characters can see a shape roll down the door of the unit and leave in the fog. Getting closer, the characters will realize it's a familiar face, Belle-Caroline from Seeker's Paradise. She notices the characters' presence too when they approach. Standing underneath the bright street light, she turns around, shouting that she knows someone's nearby. Today, she can't make the characters out, but she can hear their voices faintly across the Shroud.

The characters have little trouble making out that Belle-Caroline is actually a little terrified. She's not sure what she's summoned and she keeps clutching a talisman around her neck. By the time the characters have convinced her that they mean her no harm and that it is in fact them, she will explain that it was her who tracked the three of them down. She will note how remarkable the circumstances of their deaths were. "If there is such a thing as a coincidence, which I doubt, then there can never have been so much of it to explain the three of you." [...]

"You each escaped death once. Then all of a sudden, fate strikes. You each left this world to see some familiar faces at least." [...] "It's as simple as this. I too am going to die one day. I've always just wanted to know what to expect. Favor for a favor, you hear?" [...] "Stay in touch."

### *Lost in the Fog*

Wherever the characters go, the fog only gets worse. Every few turns, they got lost for a little while before finding their way again. One time, while they're trying to find a way out of a park that seems to turn into a forest, everything gets very quiet. From somewhere in the fog, they can hear a suppressed sob, a helpless moan, then a frightened gasp.

Beyond the bushes, there's a narrow path with a park bench hidden under the arm of a great oak tree. When the characters get closer to the bench, there's a lot to process. There's a lighter and a pistol, both dropped on the ground. On the bench, there's a small pile of ashes in the Skinlands, but in the Shadowlands, there's a perfectly preserved, tangible photo of a young couple. The letters on the back of the photo match two letters carved into the bench, and on the bench, there's a girl, trapped underneath her Caul.

The girl's name is Amanda and she's scared. The past months have been madness for her. Early in the summer, her boyfriend disappeared. Then, later, she started hearing his voice. The characters have choice to make. They can reap the girl by removing her Caul and they will have a great weight of



responsibility about what to do next. If they do, the first words out of her mouth are: “He told me to do it.”

### *Amanda*

The characters can ask Amanda all the question they think they need to. More than anything else, the girl is frightened. She did not expect to feel this cold and she did not expect to be trapped, alone. The characters may decide she needs to be taken to the Hierarchy or they may even decide to hide her, possibly with a friend like Belle-Caroline. Before they leave the scene of her death, Amanda picks up the photo that crossed over to the Shadowlands.

Later, before the characters have exited the park, they will find it ever more difficult to navigate the fog. Suddenly, a tall figure looms before them on the path. It had been walking their way before it stops. The fog disguises all its features. “Amanda,” it begins, “you were supposed to wait for me.” Its voice almost sounds kind. [...] “What did you let these thugs do to you?!” [...] “Josh will be very disappointed.” [...] “Josh is my best pupil so far and you are only here to please him. Do you understand?!” [...] “Now come with me.”

The characters may resist. Amanda’s fate is in their hands. They may have suspicions about the involvement of Janice’s mentor and they may even want to confront the architect of much of their misery for this reason alone. If the figure is attacked, it will flee from the Shadowlands by using Materialize. The characters will see it beyond the Shroud, bright as a hot flame with the emotions of hatred and shame. As the figure appears there, the characters briefly see a man, illuminated by a world spared the fog. His face is stern, bearing long scars across one side, crossing over short-cropped hair. The man wears a uniform of military green where the characters can make out an array of decorations, among which the star indicating the rank of general. His voice promises them from across the Shroud: “You will regret this!” [...] “You will regret this so much it will tear you apart.”

### *Affairs with the Hierarchy*

When the characters to the State Capitol Building, several points of business await them. First, word is spreading of a meeting held tomorrow night. All are urgently advised to be present in the Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium at midnight. Word is even spreading to those who aren’t particularly loyal to the Hierarchy, mostly because of the topic at hand: how to weather the coming maelstrom. Another reason for all of the Necropolis’ population to consider coming is its organizers: the Legion of Fate.

Concerning Amanda, the characters may learn that most consider her belonging to the Silent Legion, though they may try to arrange a different allegiance for her. No matter how hard they try to spin it, no one agrees that her death was happenstance. Amanda will be anxious to be separated from the characters. It is entirely up to them how much responsibility they intend to take for her afterlife.

When the characters visit with their Anacreon, she will give

them instructions on how she intends to prepare for the maelstrom. She explains that one of the greatest threats that’s overlooked in a maelstrom is threats from within. She has a list of names of wraiths who have shown signs of erosion in the Shadowlands. “Some minds cannot endure this existence for long,” she explains. Rather than waiting for them to give up, she would like an early assessment from the characters. Those on the list they believe to be a threat will be collected by Legionnaires and taken to be soulforged. “Better they serve as a weapon in our hands than as traitors to Oblivion.”

### *Fear of the Dark*

Before long, if she can still find the characters, Amanda will come running to them. Any other encounters with wraiths of Atlanta will have been far from comfortable for her. She will confide in the characters that the few friends she tried to make either wanted her to become their pet or wanted to outright hurt her. She doesn’t understand why anyone would be so cruel, let alone everyone here. Looking at her, it hits the characters just how frail, adorable, and innocent she looks.

Amanda needs help, and that’s why she approaches the characters now. She doesn’t feel right. It come on quite suddenly, like someone hit her over the head, except now it hurts deep inside her chest. She feels hollow, and afraid, like she used to be afraid when she was a small child. She used to be terrified of the dark until her parents bought her a night light, but now that fear is all she feels, that, and the despair she never felt before until she came to that park to do something terrible.

The terror inside Amanda only grows worse. The characters may guess at this having something to do with a Fetter of hers. They may even suspect the involvement of Janice’s mentor. To their credit, they may also realize that Amanda isn’t holding it together all that well. In between the bouts of pointless hyperventilation and half-suppressed screaming, her shuddering stops and a smile plays across her face occasionally. She is losing a battle with her Shadow.

Until the characters manage to calm her down and truly comfort her against the dark, Amanda’s Shadow will try to engage the characters’ Shadows as well. It’s new to this game and uses Tainted Touch as its opening move.

### *Assault*

Whenever next the characters venture to their storage container, they will notice something strange has happened. They can see an intricate sigil hastily painted on its door and in the Shadowlands, they cannot step through it. Unless they succeed a Willpower roll (difficulty 9), any attempt to become incorporeal through either the door or the walls hurts the characters, but does not allow them to go inside. Worse, it throws them back some distance and forces them to become corporeal once again.

The next time the characters go to visit Belle-Caroline, they will find her dead-tired and bedridden. She looks decades older than the last time they saw her. With a croaking, pained voice, she will explain something tried to break in to the storage



container, first in the lands of the living, then later through the lands of the dead. In her current state, she cannot maintain the barrier she has set up. In fact, she's sure she wants to far and that she's dying. The characters can see the fear and despair in her when she makes the characters understand she cannot afford to die now.

She gives them brief, urgent instructions. There are two keys on the wall of her apartment. One of them, the characters can pick up, the other they can't. There's a chest underneath it, with a lock that can take either key. If the characters turn the lock with the key they hold, they will be able to open the chest and take out something that the living can't even see. It's an old, clay chalice that's cracked and split. Belle-Caroline tells the characters to take the chalice and reach into one of the living. She doesn't ever want to hear who they chose. If the characters bring her the contents of the chalice back to drink, she stands a chance of surviving this ordeal. If the characters are resistant to what she suggests, she will remind them: "You have no choice," before slumping back into bed out of exhaustion.

### *Hail*

The city has darkened every hour the characters have walked through it. When the fog starts to lift, the characters may mistake it for a good sign. The clearer the streets become, the heavier a drizzle becomes from high above. Only a brief window appeared where the characters could see down the length of a whole street before the downpour obscures anything in the distance once more. The rain is heavy and sharp. Before long, it doesn't even resemble rain, but rather shards of glass that tear at the soul. Traveling through the rain for any consecutive span of time longer than crossing a street builds up a single point of Angst.

### *Falling Together*

The characters have had a hard time since they returned to Atlanta, with many challenges on both their Corpus and their Psyche. At the impending depths of their peril, the characters all look each other in the eye and feel the ground give way beneath them. A Harrowing is due. They fall, together.

Each of the players must roll a die. On an even number, they must out loud reveal one of their Fetters to the other players. On an uneven number, they may instead lie and make up a Fetter that won't hurt them. The characters have been thrown into what seems to be a joint Harrowing, but in truth isn't. They each open their eyes and find themselves back in the First Methodist Church, some weeks before the Storm of the Century. The other two characters are present in the church, as are Janice and all the other familiar faces. The characters realize they are reliving a memory, a time when they shared something deep and personal with the rest of the group, namely the subject of their revealed Fetter. The characters each have yet to realize that in their personal Harrowing, the other two are Spectres, played out of with intimate knowledge of their past and personality. The Spectres are out to cut deep with something that seems earnest and true, coming from a reliable source.

### *The List: Close to Madness*

The list the Anacreon gave the characters is valuable soulforged parchment inscribed with relic ink. The first name on the list reads 'Sibyl Jannisen'. Public records will show she was born in 1946 and died in 1989, having been incarcerated in the Central State Hospital for the last two decades. Should the characters manage to dig deep, they may find a report of her suicide and a mention of the cast-iron headstones used for deceased patients on the asylum grounds. Further facts of the asylum itself may shock the characters, from the expose written in '59 about how some of the doctors were themselves patients, that it has had a population of 12000, and that it is still operational in the world of the living today.

Sibyl has only two weak fetters left in the world of the living. Both are on the asylum grounds quite a distance from the metropolis. The hospital is a horror to behold in the Shadowlands. The suffering of the living leaves a shadow of endless pain and madness. Sometimes, a patient will stare right at the characters and start screaming. Sometimes, the characters will realize only later that they other wraiths among the patients, tormenting the living, reliving their own madness, and slowly pulling the building ever further into the Shadowlands. Sibyl may startle the characters as they're searching for her headstone among thousands marked only by a number. She asks what they are doing here and will calmly engage in conversation with them, so long as it is not revealed that they serve the Hierarchy. If the characters mention the truth, she will start to run through the maze of madness to escape them, using Pandemonium wherever necessary.

Concerning the decision what fate to recommend for Sibyl, appearances suggest that she is nowhere near as great a threat as the rest of the asylum. What is happening in the world of the living feeds directly into the mouth of Oblivion, overflowing with helpless, unstoppable anguish. The truth is that the asylum is so far outside the city limits that the Necropolis of Atlanta is not concerned with it, some even believe it to be an excellent lightning rod. Another truth is that Sibyl is the only wraith from the grounds who regularly visits the city of Atlanta, motivated by feverish visions from when she was alive of an end to the world. She believes she is delaying the fate of the living by her work with a cult of Heretics called the Burning, whose sinister acts unwittingly hasten Oblivion's arrival. How much of this the characters learn depends entirely on their actions.

### *Fate Speaks*

When the characters join the assembly at the Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium, they will be shocked by the sheer numbers of Atlanta's dead. The stadium is packed. The majority of those not even affiliated with the Hierarchy have shown up, simply because of the topic of tonight's gathering. Everyone is terrified of the maelstrom. Among these crowds, the characters may pick up on rumors of the last time they assembled because a maelstrom was approaching. The Legion of Fate had promised that they could avert the storm, but failed in keeping that

promise.

Most of those attending are sheltered from hail by the stadium's roof. Unlucky latecomers are forced to sit in the lowest levels. A little past midnight, three figures walk onto the field under a makeshift umbrella fresh from the soulforges. The larger of the two figures is Governor James Johnson, who the characters saw briefly before. At his side walks a thin woman, her hair done up in a tight knot. Whispers around the characters will identify her as Mary Anne Robinson, Anacreon of the Legion of Fate. Lastly, the short woman who followed the characters to Atlanta from Stygia walks at their side, holding the umbrella.

Johnson offers a few introductions the characters cannot hear. The thunderous noise of hail falling above their heads makes what the Anacreon says even more difficult to follow. The characters may attempt a Perception + Alertness to pick up a subset of the following phrases: "Fate guides the city." "There will be a calm yet, brief, before the storm. That is how we will know our last hours are at hand." "Saviors are among us." "Weather the storm inside ourselves." "Three will reveal themselves." "Weather the storm that's coming for us all."

There is a long pause across the whole of the stadium. Before Johnson can say anything else, everyone is looking up at the sky. The hail has stopped falling. When most of those attending start to leave the gathering, they do so morbidly, out of fear and a desire to return to their Haunts and Fetters as soon as possible, by disincorporating and diving through the bleachers. The characters shudder at the sight of the countless dead souls gliding through the streets and across the sky.

The mysterious and as of yet nameless woman carrying the umbrella tries to find the characters after the speech. She simply says that she wants to introduce them to the Anacreon. The after tomorrow, at dawn, they can find her at the State Capitol Building.

### *The List: Brothers in Bloodshed*

The next name on the list given to the characters by their Anacreon is Marco Defalle. The two names that follow are Adriano Fernandez and simply 'Blue'. Looking into death records will reveal that Marco Defalle died in 1975, cause of death stated as violence. Adriano Fernandez has an identical entry. Linking local news articles of the time, the characters may be able to dig up a report of the incident. Three men were involved in rival gang violence. The incident occurred in a local bar, with enough witness to give an accurate account. The men had come alone, sat at a table, each with an untouched drink in front of them. Within a minute of their conversation, one of them pulled a knife and the other two responded in kind. All three died of their wounds that evening, bled out before anyone could intercede.

The characters may be certain at this point that the next three on their list now call themselves the Standoff Brothers in the Underworld. They shudder at the thought of such a malefic bond between the three wraiths who had terrorized them before. They must also know that to find them, they may have to go

through the Legion of the Grim. It's also possible that they decide to search the area they asserted to be their turf. Alternatively, they may decide that they already have enough of an impression of the three to give their verdict on these names.

### *Fickle Things*

When the characters make their way through streets that seem dark even in the daytime of the living, they will see a familiar face approach with a familiar grin. The woman from the Legion of Fate who followed them to Atlanta all the way from Stygia seems to follow them still. She rounds a corner only a few paces away from the characters and says "Ignorance and understanding are fickle things," as she passes by.

The characters may not think anything of it. The woman keeps walking and disappears at the end of the street. When the characters are one block closer to their destination, they are shocked to see a mother and child cross a busy street, heedless of an oncoming truck. Whatever the characters might try to do to prevent an accident in the world of the living, they will soon find the woman and the child disincorporate morbidly. Closer up, there is no mistaking them for the dead rather than the living. The child is crying. The mother is angry, but not at the child. Incorporeal, they drift by, filling the street with unspoken hatred.

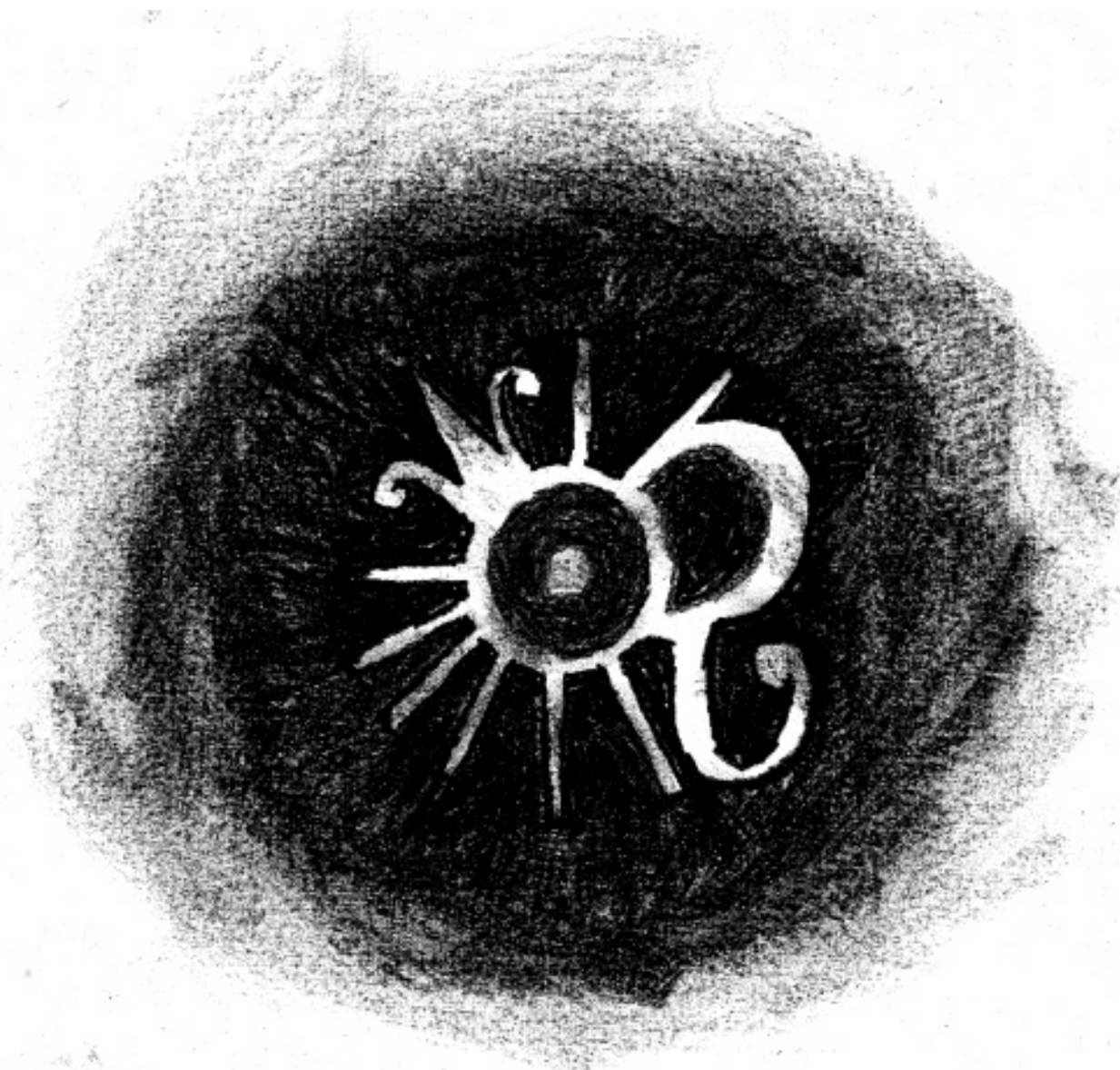
### *Madness among the Quick*

By the time the hail has stopped, Belle-Caroline has picked up on the same problems the Hierarchy has. Janice's mentor is getting more active by the day. Suicides and haunts are spreading across the city at an alarming rate. Minor maelstroms have started to form in neighborhoods away from downtown, with no regular pattern other than a steady growth in intensity.

### *True Calling*

The characters may follow up on the invitation they received at the gathering organized by the Legion of Fate. When they find the appropriate office, the administrator opens the door for them, revealing their meeting is not just with the Anacreon of Fate. Besides Mary Anne Robinson, Sarah Chandler, their own Anacreon, is there, and even the Governor, James Johnson. Sarah has a tight grip on her seat and looks like a child about to throw a tantrum next to her regal and cold rival. The governor's presence seems nothing more than a formality even to him, as he stares disinterested out of a window, into the street where the darkness of the night deepens ever further. Mary Anne asks for the administrator to stay and act as a stenographer. "Not in decades," she begins, "has Atlanta been graced with three individuals so clearly touched by the hand of Fate." [...] "Will you please describe for all of us present, how death and you three are intertwined?"

Halfway through the characters' story, they are interrupted by Sarah. She insists that no measure of serendipity can take away the mark that her legion has placed on their Corpus. Suddenly, the characters realize what this meeting concerns. Mary Anne looks at the characters with rehearsed resignation.



The governor, tearing his eyes away from the window then says: “Rebranding is strictly forbidden. The Hierarchy will not tolerate the legions to recruit from the others’ ranks.” Already looking away again, he finishes: “Even the highest of officials who are involved in such a thing will be punished.”

Sarah seems pleased at that, but Mary Anne isn’t done. “How are you marked?” she asks the characters. [...] She repeats the question until the characters reveal the triangular birthmark they discovered in the previous act. [...] “There you have it, Governor Johnson. It is the mark of Fate, which my legion has taken as its glyph. They were marked before they were reaped. The rebranding is not mine. It is hers.”

The governor takes stock of the evidence only briefly before moving toward the characters. “Think on your answer, and answer truthfully. How were you first marked?” [...]

Depending on the characters answer, they may find themselves recognized under the Legion of Fate from this moment forth. They may also choose loyalty to the Emerald

Legion, though they will likely need to deceive the governor to do it. If thwarted, Sarah demands the list back and storms out. Whether her scheme fails or not, Mary Anne will drop lightly into a seat in her office and say only: “Fate has reached out and delivered you three. Go forth and become our salvation, Chosen Ones.”

### *The Storm Ascends*

The time spent waiting for the storm has passed. The streets are at their darkest and from the darkness, the characters peer into Oblivion itself. In the deepest corners, they seem to peer through alleys and see the roiling waves of the Underworld rise. Blending before their eyes like a grotesque film of double exposure, the Shadowlands are swallowed whole. Where lanterns once stood providing light, small islands form and waves crash to swallow even them whole. Buildings topple and sink and shapes writhe in the depths.

The characters have to run to keep from drowning. The

shapes in the depths slowly rise, revealing a face contorted in a noiseless scream until they breach the surface. Long-limbed figures in tatters held together by chains wrapped all around them lumber forward, stepping out of the water as if a staircase bore them. They seem to take only a passing interest in the characters, as if they are looking for someone else. One of the Mourners does chase after the characters and once it has touched one of them, the others converge on them as well. The characters catch a brief glimpse of the purposeless agony in the Mourner's eyes before they fight for their existence. The wailing is maddening.

Before they are overwhelmed, headlights approach from the distance. Wherever they illuminate, it is as if the car drives over a wet road rather than gliding over the vast depths at the characters' feet. When the car is close enough, the characters recognize the hearse from before. It opens at the back and a young voice yells for them to get in.

### *Saved by the Hearse*

From the back of the hearse, the characters see only the outlines of the kids cramped together in the front. As they drive through the carnage of Atlanta being slowly swallowed up by the Underworld, the characters remain surprised by the age of their rescuers. "Sarah sent us to find you," a boy says. [...] A girl shakes her head then, and speaks up: "I don't know what you did to earn her trust, but this hearse is a secret, a big secret. Do you understand?" [...] "Not a word to anyone."

From inside the car, the characters see the road ahead illuminated as if it had simply been raining all night. A little further down the road, however, waves roil and swallow wraiths whole. More than once, they see arms flailing, begging the hearse for help as it passes by. Before long, a rolling wave gathers in the road dead ahead of the characters and the kids in front tell them to hold onto something. The girl behind the wheel presses down hard on the gas and the characters feel something strange happening all around them. Briefly, just as the wave was about to strike the car, the flood vanished. The night-time streets seemed clear, full of color. Through the shaded windows of the hearse, they glimpse the world as they haven't seen it since their passing. Passersby in the world of living stare straight at them, startled. It lasts only a moment before the engine roars again and the darkness and the flood return.

"We're supposed to take you somewhere safe, somewhere indoors. It's the best thing to do now, just wait out the storm." [...] "You have a place like that?" [...] The Hearse Riders will drop the characters off wherever they choose, whether it's Belle-Caroline's place or the First Methodist Church, or somewhere else entirely. "Stay put," the girl says before they take off, "we'll come find you here if something changes."

### *Holed Up*

Wherever the characters go, they will find themselves completely alone and isolated. Belle-Caroline's shop and apartment are deserted. Even their living family's homes are

empty. The places themselves seem changed, an even darker reflection of the world they left behind. Outside, the storm rages violently. Every now and again, the characters hear screams begging for mercy, begging to betray every last soul in the city to postpone their end. Other times, all they hear is some creature sniffing outside, or the dragging of chains. The passing of hours is difficult to measure. Knowing anyone could simply pass through them, walls have never felt less safe. Thunder came after the first few hours. Now, howling winds erupt outside.

After hours, the winds suddenly let up for a moment. The complete quiet is broken by footsteps drawing nearer. A dark voice says: "I have taken you to the place you sought. The three are inside. Now, I must take you away from this place." [...] "Give me a moment with them," Amanda's passionless and defeated voice answers, "let me ensure that they will get what they deserve and I will come with you willingly."

Amanda bursts into the characters' hiding place first, followed quickly by a tall, gaunt figure in robes not unlike a Ferryman's. However, when it reaches forward to put a restraining hand on her shoulder, it is skeletal with writhing maggots falling from its grip onto the floor. Amanda has deep sunken eyes. Her jaw is somehow disfigured she limps more than she walks before speaking: "Your nemesis is at the Woodruff Arts Center. He has your witch and he's going to kill her in front of everyone. You're probably already too late and he's not going to stick around for long." [...] Amanda's hand clenches into a fist and she looks like she wants to do more, but for the grip on her shoulder. "Have a fucking beautiful ending," she says before she lets herself be drawn away by the other figure.

### *Daring*

The screams still roll over the city outside like a dark wind. Amanda and her gaunt captor have long since gone. The characters know where their fate lies. The only question that remains is whether they dare face it. The storm rages outside and the characters may take as long as they need.

### *Flayed Remains*

On their way through the horrors of the maelstrom, the characters find it is impossible to avoid the sources of all those screams. They watch as tortured souls are dragged down through sewer grates, bones breaking as a hungry pair of eyes glows from within its depths. They watch a procession of slaves chained behind a towering creature with black wings as it dangles them from their necks while it takes flight. They endure it all until they see a face that is familiar, looking up at them from where she lies disemboweled, cut by a thousand shards of glass, on a small island in a drowned street. "We could have guided you!" she howls at the characters as she slowly fades from existence. "I followed you here from Stygia itself because I saw greatness in you! And you squandered it!" She weeps blood. "We could have directed your fate to save us all!" Anger is replaced by horror before she completely vanishes,



screaming: “Remember me! Don’t forget me! My name is Tabetha! Please remember me!”

### *Forbidden Arts*

The Woodruff Arts Center is a sprawling campus in Midtown. It consists of a theater, a symphony hall, and a museum, among other facilities. After the characters have crawled through the violent streets to reach it, statues with twisted necks look at them from the flooded lawns and a vile dirge calls them into the symphony hall. Two men with recent scars of hanging themselves stand by the great entrance which, in the Shadowlands, is a crumbling facade, as if abandoned halfway through construction. “Tickets, please,” they say in perfect unison, showing teeth in the mockery of a smile. [...] “If you don’t have tickets, you can’t be in the audience.” [...] “We’ll have to put you on stage.” The two men will guide the characters inside. If the characters resist or try to run, they will laugh loudly.

Inside, the characters hear slow, thundering music echoing in from the Skinlands. Posters in the hallway all mention a gaudy magician performing with a self-playing orchestra. When the characters see the seats, they realize they are packed in the Skinlands, men and women who look like they’re enthralled by some excitement that seems to mock the horror beyond the Shroud. They watch a short man in a fine suit lead an orchestra. The music tears at the characters. They can’t explain it, but they know it is a dirge for countless funerals yet to come. A woman they pass in the audience wipes away a tear.

Before long, the characters are close enough to realize that the musicians before them are not like the audience or the conductor. They are not a part of the Skinlands, but their instruments are. They are wraiths plucking the strings of distant fetters. The characters try to imagine the cruelty of what the audience is seeing, and of the architect of death before them, who envisioned the end of the musicians’ lives, and knew what would keep them here. The short man looks straight at the characters, face expressionless.

All this time, the flood outside has been slowly trickling down into the symphony hall in the Shadowlands, gathering near the stage. The water level rises slowly, submerging the feet of the first row of the audience.

The music stops before long and the man asks of his audience in a commanding tone: “Do you know what fear is?” [...] “Do you know what it is to feel fear?” [...] “What you feel is your very soul shriveling up inside. Cowering, you enter that deep dark void where your options are despair or madness.” [...] “That void is inescapable.” With a stiff lack of showmanship, the conductor motions to the stage, where a coffin is brought up. Inside lies Belle-Caroline, eyes closed, but still breathing. The dirge starts playing again.

The characters know what their nemesis intends to do before he draws a knife. The audience watches intently. If the characters disrupt the musicians, it will halt her execution and draw her murderer back into the Shadowlands, where he appears as the characters saw him before: a military man of

high rank with his name stripped from his uniform. Whether their confrontation happens before or after Belle-Caroline's fate is set, whether the audience leaves because the music stopped or because of the horrific bloodshed in front of them, the characters facing off with their nemesis is inevitable.

The man is strong and furious. He insists on his followers staying out of it. He mumbles to himself, something about a 'true leader'. The characters may notice he compulsively stays far away from the water gathering at the base of the stage, which has already consumed the first two rows by now. If the characters manage to destroy their nemesis with their own hands, he will go screaming into a private Harrowing. If they manage to submerge him in the waters, he will vanish and the storm outside will let up. Water will retract and sink, leaving no trace of the man. Terrified of the waters, he will try to prevent it at all costs. However, if left with no choice, the man will try to drag the characters down with him.

*The Man of Oblivion*

If any of the characters fell into the water, this scene will apply to them. Swallowed up by darkness, they will feel adrift. They cannot see and they cannot hear. A foul taste lay on their lips for a moment before that is gone too. They don't know how

long they have been here. They don't know how far they have drifted. They can sense they are not entirely alone here. They are not the only ones adrift. Some of the other struggle. Some of the others resist.

The character is given a chance to defend whether they resist or not. For every argument that is found, the characters' Shadow offers a rebuttal. Clear losses or victories may adjust the difficulties in a seminal roll for the characters' soul, Willpower vs. Angst as usual, to determine if the character is claimed by the void in the maelstrom's deepest grasp.

*Surpassed*

The characters emerge from the Woodruff Arts Center to find the skies slowly growing less dark. The maelstrom is ending and Atlanta still stands. They have proven that they have the fortitude to endure in this existence another day.

Eventually, the characters will find a tall, robed figure crossing their path. Its passage is noiseless but for long pole it drags on the ground behind it. Towering a head above them, it stops in its tracks. "You are lost," it states, "Do you know your destination?"

*The End*

# Answers

*Would Belle-Caroline's chalice have hurt our nemesis while he was in the Skinlands?*

No, it cannot take life from those who have none left.

*Who was the third Ferryman?*

The third time the characters encountered a Ferryman was aboard the Midnight Express. It called itself Nicholas.

*According to the Legion of Fate what was so interesting about the places where we were marked? Also, how were we marked there?*

The characters each bore a deathmark, a strange omen made stranger by their companionship. Each of them had a mole somewhere on their body and each may have looked similar in the right light.

*When were we marked so?*

At birth.

*Was the priest in the First Methodist Church actually an asshole?*

Relatively, yes. Absolutely, no.

*Until what moment could Janice have been saved?*

Absolutely, until the last, but Fate is not easily thwarted.

*What was going on with Janice, the ritual, and her cat?*

Mania, grief, and hope.

*Did Janice summon the Nephurack? If yes, how many times?*

Yes. Once.

*Were we really in danger from the Nephurack?*

Yes. But Janice was more dangerous by far, not to mention the Tempest.

*What happened to Janice after we left her in the Tempest?*

Oblivion.

*Why was Amanda afraid of the dark? Why were the lamys in her house broken?*

A remnant of an innocent childhood. A haunting.

*What caused the fire in Amanda's house?*

Her Shadow.

*Why wasn't Amanda at the orchestra at the end of the story?*

She was drawn away by her captor, a Spectre more terrifying than your nemesis.

*What did the Legion of Fate want to hear about how we were marked?*

It would have been enough to know the location of the deathmarks.

*What were we so ignorant about according to Tabitha?*

She believed she understood the ties of Fate and she

*Wasteland Lost*

believed she could have wielded you as instruments, but it was she who was ignorant.

*How could we have saved Atlanta during the maelstrom?*

Atlanta prevails, but more souls may have been preserved by cutting it off at its source early, before fear and doubt spread like a disease.

*What was our fate?*

To confront the storm of a lifetime.

*Why was holding Amanda so sickening?*

Her Shadow was bleeding through.

*Why was the Waystation so heavily guarded?*

The onslaught of Spectres and worse were once not uncommon.

*What comes after What Comes After?*

The great bleak of a normal life.

*Was Sibyl eroded in the eyes of Sarah?*

Yes, she is too harsh for mercy.

*Why were kids' small children driving the hearse?*

Because they thought it was a thrill, and they were right.