A Companion to the Archive of Lost Histories

THE LORE GUIDE

THE SHARD · MARGINALIA · THE TRAVELERS · THE HEROES · THE ECHOES

ROBERTS BROS GAMES · DEVBERRI

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How to read this book

The world in the margins of history, where lost chapters drift.

In a little studio called DevBerri, three founders and their two closest cohorts woke a strange purple crystal and found a window onto history. They only meant to watch.

But every visit left a crack, and from the cracks, shards fell through time. The heroes who picked them up were pulled out of their moment and into Marginalia: a world in the margins of history, with its own towns, orders and queen, that never asked for visitors.

Now the Travelers, Devin, Collin, Bekah, Brody and Andy, have followed the shards in to set things right. Every Echo you defeat restores a lost chapter to the Archive and brings a hero one step closer to home.

This is the Archive of Lost Histories. Every page you unlock was written down by Bekah and the Registrar, Calvin Pennywevvy. Read on, Reader.

What is in here

Every page of this guide comes from the Archive of Lost Histories, the great library on the Spine, where Bekah Kent and the Registrar, Calvin Pennywevvy, write down every arrival as a story rather than a list. It is the same Archive you unlock in the game, gathered into one book: the Shard and how it cracked, the realm of Marginalia and its people, the eight Travelers, the heroes of all five colours, and the Echoes they face.

Reading the pages

Colour pips show a hero's set: Gold, Cobalt, Emerald, Garnet and Quartz.

What really happened. Boxes like the one below keep the real history. The heroes go home to the exact second they left, so every one of these notes is simply true.

The Reader is you: the one person who can play the heroes' borrowed strength back at the Echoes.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

George Washington (1732 to 1799) commanded the Continental Army through the American Revolution. On the night of December 25 to 26, 1776, he led about 2,400 soldiers across the icy Delaware River and surprised the Hessian garrison at Trenton the next morning, a victory that revived the Revolution. After the war he presided over the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and served as the first President of the United States from 1789 to 1797, stepping down voluntarily after two terms.

THE FIVE COLOURS AND THEIR LEADERS

GOLD

Inventors & Industry

COBALT

Thinkers & Dreamers

EMERALD

Frontier & Explorers

GARNET

Rebels, Pirates & War

QUARTZ

Founders & Revolution

THE SHELVES OF THIS BOOK

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“Bekah Kent has practically moved in. With Calvin’s help and the Inkbinders’ grudging permission, she has started writing the Archive’s records as stories rather than lists, because she believes people should be remembered as people.”

THE ARCHIVE OF LOST HISTORIES

PART ONE

The Shard

How one small studio, one crystal and forty-seven attempts cracked history open.

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THE SHARD · I

Attempt Forty-Seven

The DevBerri lab, the present day

Every great story starts somewhere small. This one starts on a workbench at DevBerri, a little studio that three friends built out of stubbornness, late nights and far too much coffee.

The friends were Devin Roberts, the builder, who has never met a machine he didn't want to open up; his brother Collin Roberts, who has never met a door he didn't want to walk through; and Rebekah Kent, Bekah to everyone, who writes everything down because, as she likes to say, a thing that isn't written down didn't really happen.

They were never really alone, either. Brody Vinson, the Successful Scaler, who runs his own company, Scale for Sale, and ran DevBerri's projects too, kept the whole operation on schedule with color-coded boards and a collector's love of putting things in the right order. Andy Varnes, the marketing and business mind, made sure the world actually heard about what DevBerri built, usually with a camera in his hand. The three founders and their two closest cohorts: that was the team.

The rock came first. Collin found it in a box of odds and ends: a lump of purple crystal about the size of a fist, heavier than it looked and faintly warm, like a mug someone had just put down. It hummed when you held it near a speaker. It made compasses nervous. Devin took one look at it and cleared the workbench.

Bekah's notebook records the next few weeks in neat, increasingly excited handwriting. Attempt One: nothing. Attempt Nine: the crystal glowed, briefly, and every clock in the lab stopped. Attempt Twenty-Two: a smell like rain on hot pavement and, for half a second, the sound of a crowd cheering in a room that was empty. Attempt Thirty-Eight: the lab's coffee maker brewed a pot by itself. Nobody could explain that one.

Attempt Forty-Seven was different. Devin had built a cradle of copper coils around the crystal and was feeding it a slow, careful current, the way you might coax a campfire. Collin was holding the fire extinguisher, because somebody had to. Bekah was writing. Brody had the test plan on a clipboard and was ticking off steps. Andy was filming, just in case something happened.

At 11:52 in the evening, the crystal rang like a struck bell.

It did not break. It opened. A thin sliver split away from the rock and hung in the air above the workbench, turning slowly, catching light that wasn't coming from anywhere in the room. Inside it, like a window no bigger than a playing card, the five of them saw a beach. Grey sky, cold sand, a wooden rail on the dunes, and two men in dark suits bent over a fragile machine made of spruce and cloth.

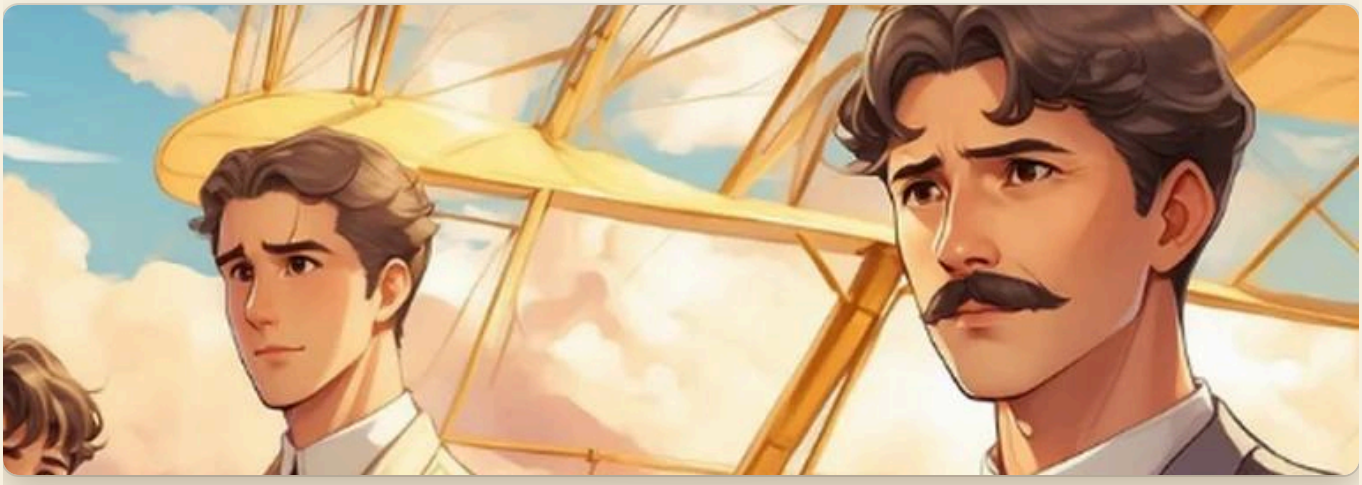
Bekah wrote the date she read on a newspaper blowing across that sand: December 17, 1903.

Nobody said anything for a long time. Then Collin said, very quietly, "Is that Kitty Hawk?" and Devin said, "I think we just built a window," and Bekah underlined something twice in her notebook. Andy lowered his camera very slowly. Brody looked at his clipboard, which had no step for this, and wrote one in.

They called the floating sliver the Shard. Everything that followed, the wonder, the mistakes, the whole wide world in the margins of history, started with that one ring

ATTEMPT FORTY-SEVEN, CONTINUED

of a crystal bell on Attempt Forty-Seven.



THE SHARD · II

Just Watching

The first journeys

It took Devin two weeks to learn how to step through the Shard, and it took Bekah two minutes to write the rules.

She pinned them to the lab wall on an index card. Rule one: watch. Rule two: don't touch. Rule three: come home. Collin added a fourth in pencil underneath, "bring snacks," and nobody took it down. Brody turned the whole thing into a proper project plan, with a checklist for every trip, and Andy photographed every card on the wall, because one day, he said, people would want to see where it all began.

The Shard did not send them into history exactly. It set them down beside it, in a thin grey space like the white edge around a printed page. From there they could see and hear everything, walk right up to it, feel the weather, but nobody in the past could see them. Bekah called it standing in the margin. The name stuck.

So they watched.

They stood on the dunes at Kitty Hawk and saw Orville Wright lift off the sand for twelve seconds that changed the world, and Collin cheered so loudly that he was glad nobody could hear him. They stood in the back of a crowded hall during the Current War and watched sparks jump between the ideas of Thomas Edison, George Westinghouse and a tall, quiet man named Nikola Tesla. They stood on a cold street in Montgomery, Alabama, in December 1955 and watched a bus pull away, and none of them said a word for the rest of the night.

They stood on the frozen bank of the Delaware River on Christmas night, 1776, with sleet stinging their faces, and watched soldiers in ragged coats push boats into the ice. Devin wanted to hand one of them his jacket. Bekah put a hand on his arm and pointed at the index card in her head: rule two.

Every trip came back with pages of notes. Bekah filled one notebook, then five, then a shelf. She wasn't just recording dates. She wrote down the way Orville's brother Wilbur ran alongside the wing, the way the crowd in Montgomery went quiet, the smell of the river. History, she said, was made of people, and people deserved to be remembered properly.

They were careful. They were respectful. They followed the rules every single time.

It turned out the rules were missing one.

THE SHARD · III

The Cracks

What watching cost

Bekah was the first to notice. On the eleventh trip, she held the Shard up to the lab lamp and saw a line in it, fine as a hair, that had not been there before.

On the twelfth trip there were two.

The Shard, it turned out, was not just a window. Every time they opened it onto a moment, the moment pressed back. Standing in the margin was like leaning on a pane of old glass: nothing seemed to happen, until it did. Each visit left a crack, not only in the Shard, but in the moment they had visited. And from each crack, tiny splinters of purple crystal fell loose into history.

They didn't land in a pile. They scattered. A splinter might fall where the travelers had stood, or years away, or centuries away, wherever the crack happened to run. A glint in the sand at Kitty Hawk. A chip of purple on a workshop floor in New York. A strange stone in the ice of the Delaware. One, much later, in the grey dust of the Moon.

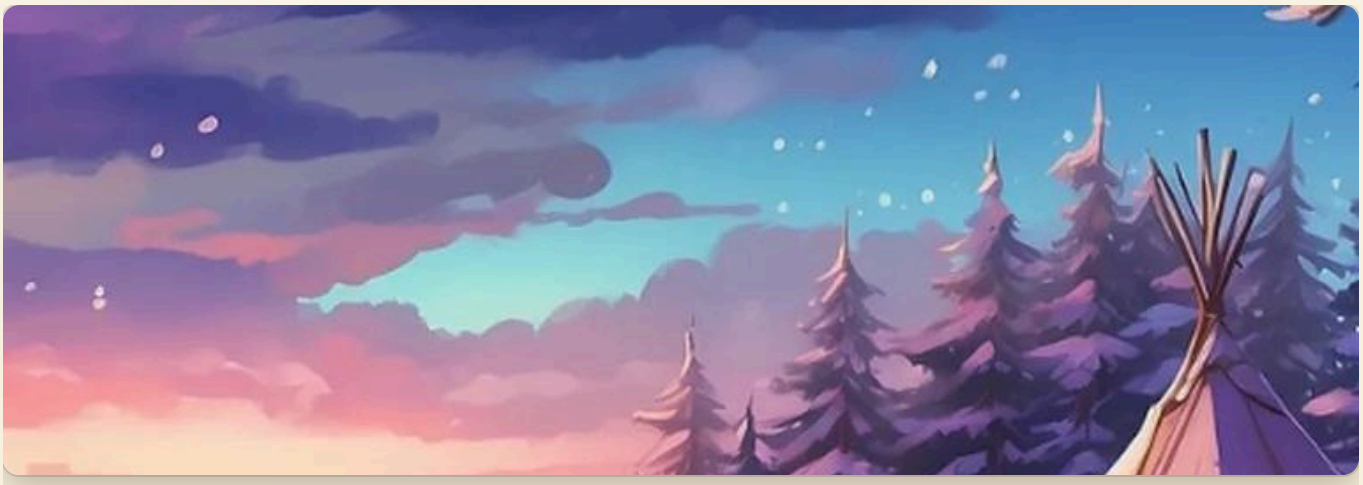
A shard is not dangerous to look at. It is only dangerous to pick up.

And people pick up interesting stones. Especially curious people. Especially brave, restless, extraordinary people, the kind history remembers. Nikola Tesla picked one up because it hummed at a frequency he had never measured. Amelia Earhart caught one that rattled across her cockpit floor. Blackbeard pocketed one because it looked valuable. George Washington picked one out of the river ice because he thought it was a signal lamp.

Each of them vanished from their moment. Not forever, and not the way you might fear, but they were gone, pulled sideways out of the page and into somewhere else entirely.

At first it was one or two. Then a dozen. Then more than anyone could count: inventors and poets, generals and pirates, presidents and pioneers, pouring out of every era like pages shaken loose from a book. The cracks spread from the moments the travelers had visited into the moments around them, and the shards kept falling.

The team in the lab knew none of this. Not until the night the Shard stopped showing them history, and showed them a tavern instead.



THE SHARD · IV

Into the Margins

The night the Shard showed a tavern

It was supposed to be Kitty Hawk again. Collin wanted to see the fourth flight.

Instead, when Devin opened the Shard, the window filled with warm lamplight. A crooked sign swung over a doorway: The Folded Corner. Through the window they could see a crowded taproom where a knight in plate armor was arguing with a tall man in a stovepipe hat, a goblin with a pair of goggles was taking apart a telegraph key, a woman in a leather flying cap was drawing a map on a tabletop in spilled cider, and a young man with a tray was trying very hard to serve all of them at once.

Bekah whispered, "That's Abraham Lincoln."

"We didn't know, but we did it. So we're going to help fix it."

Devin whispered, "And that's Amelia Earhart."

Collin said, "What is that goblin doing with Tesla's notebook?" and stepped through before anyone could grab his sleeve.

That is how the Travelers came to Marginalia: first Collin, because Collin always goes first; then Devin, because he wasn't letting his brother go alone; then Bekah, with a notebook, a flashlight, and a very firm opinion about rule three. Brody and Andy came through an hour later, once Bekah's note came back through the Shard saying everyone was safe. Brody arrived with a packed bag, a first-aid kit and a plan. Andy arrived with his camera, and the first thing he photographed in Marginalia was the crooked sign of the Folded Corner.

They learned the truth in pieces over the following days. The shards had not dropped the heroes back into history. They had pulled them into a world that lies in the margins of it, a realm of towns and forests and snowy mountains and a great ink river, full of people who had lived there quietly for longer than anyone could remember. Its people called it Marginalia. Its queen was named Clarise. And from the point of view of everyone who lived there, the sky had started raining strangers.

The Travelers were brought before the Queen in her hall at Spinehold. It was Andy who arranged it, charming his way past three secretaries and a very suspicious guard captain in a single afternoon. Bekah did most of the talking, because she is best at it. She told the whole story: the rock, the Shard, the watching, the cracks. She did not make excuses.

"We did this," she said. "We didn't know, but we did it. So we're going to help fix it."

Queen Clarise studied the five of them for a long moment. Captain Isguard of the Queen's Guard, standing beside the throne, said that in his experience people who broke things were rarely the ones who mended them. Devin said that in his experience the people who broke things were the only ones who knew exactly where the pieces went.

INTO THE MARGINS, CONTINUED

The Queen almost smiled. Brody, who had been waiting for this moment, stepped forward and handed her a single neat page: what they knew, what they needed, and a plan. She read it twice. Then she gave them rooms above the Folded Corner, a pass to the Archive, and one condition: every problem the strangers brought into her realm, the Travelers would help to solve.

They have been solving problems ever since.

THE SHARD · V

The Reader

Where you come in

Here is the problem the Travelers ran into almost at once.

Every shard that cracks releases an Echo: a copy of a hero made out of legend instead of flesh, loud and hungry and spoiling for a fight. Echoes don't negotiate. They don't get tired. And the only thing that stops them is history itself, pushed back at them by someone who understands it.

The heroes could fight, of course, and many did. But every hero who stepped into a battle risked cracking their own shard further. Devin did the arithmetic one night on the back of a tavern menu and went very pale. The more the heroes fought for themselves, the longer it would take any of them to get home.

So Devin and the Inkbinders of the Archive built something new. They took the shard dust that glitters in every rift, bound it into ink, and pressed it onto cards. Each card holds a page of a hero's story: not the hero, but their courage, their cleverness, their best moment, lent willingly. A person holding those cards can call on that help without pulling anyone else out of their century. The glowing crystals you spend each turn are the same dust, refined.

There was just one catch. The cards need a reader. Someone from outside Marginalia, who knows the real history, who can tell the true chapter from the Echo's twisted version and play it back with conviction.

Bekah named the role. "Every story needs a reader," she said, and then she went looking for one.

That's you.

When you sit down at a battle table in Marginalia, the Travelers are right behind you. Bekah keeps the record. Devin keeps the cards working. Collin keeps an eye on the exits. Your deck is a borrowed library of heroes. Your Leader is a hero who has chosen to stand beside you. And every battle you win mends a crack, restores a chapter, and brings someone one step closer to home.

Welcome to Marginalia, Reader. Mind the margins.

QUARTZ · A CARD IN THE SET

Strange Purple Rock

A shard, on a card

Some Readers find a shard printed right there in their deck. It isn't a mistake.

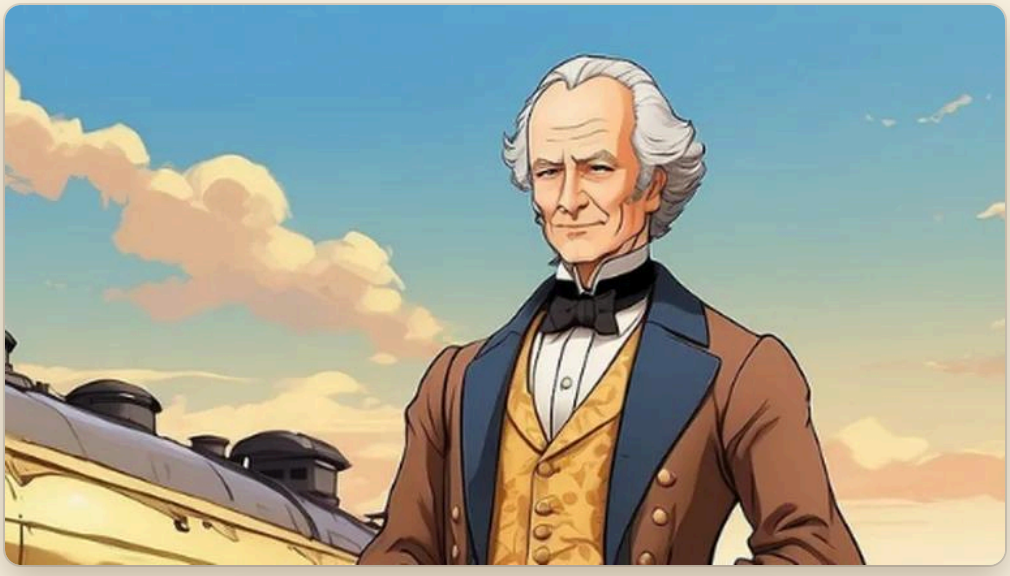
Every Reader eventually notices it. Tucked into the Quartz set, among the founders and presidents, is a card with no hero on it at all: just a lump of purple crystal and the name Strange Purple Rock.

It is exactly what it looks like. It is a shard.

When Devin and the Inkbinders first began pressing shard dust into chapter cards, one of their early test batches came out wrong. Instead of holding a page of a hero's story, the ink simply showed the crystal itself, glowing faintly on the card. The Inkbinders wanted to destroy them. Devin wanted to keep them. Bekah settled it: every Reader should carry at least one reminder of where all of this started.

So the Strange Purple Rock stayed in the set. When you play it, it gives you two crystals of energy, a small burst of the same power that opened the first Shard on Attempt Forty-Seven.

Collin carries one in his pocket everywhere. He says it's for luck. Devin carries one because he's still studying it. And Bekah keeps one pinned to the first page of her notebook, right next to the index card with the rules.



Cornelius Vanderbilt

Shipping tycoon who turned water into wealth and competitors into footnotes.

THE SHARD · CANON

How the World Works

The rules of the fiction, from the Archive's own bible

The Shard. On Attempt Forty-Seven, the purple crystal rang like a bell and a sliver split off, hanging in the air as a window onto Kitty Hawk, December 17, 1903. The Travelers called it the Shard. It lets a person step into "the margin" beside a moment of history: you can see, hear and feel it, but nobody there can see you.

The cracks. Watching is not harmless. Every visit left a crack, in the Shard and in the moment visited. Cracks spread along a person's timeline (which is how Earhart's 1937 flight cracked even though the Travelers never watched it). From every crack, small purple **shards** fell loose into history, near the moment or far from it.

The pull. A shard is harmless to look at and dangerous to pick up. Anyone who picks one up is pulled sideways out of their moment into Marginalia. Curious, brave, extraordinary people pick up interesting stones, so the arrivals are mostly heroes. Not always.

Margin time. Marginalia sits outside the page, so time at home does not move while a hero is away. When a hero goes home, they return to the exact second they left. Real history stays real. This is why every "What really happened" note is simply true: the heroes go back and live it.

The cost of staying. A hero can only go home once their shard is mended. While a cracked shard's Echo is loose, that hero's living page in the Archive fades: a **lost chapter**. Nobody knows what happens if a page fades completely, and nobody wants to find out. Lost chapters also seem to feed the **Blank Margin**, the pale fog at the edge of the world, which has begun to move.

Echoes. When a shard cracks, an Echo leaks out: a reflection of the hero built from legend (statues, songs, pulp magazines, exaggerations), louder, simpler and angrier than the real person. Echoes seize places, drag pieces of their hero's history into Marginalia and grow if left alone. The only thing that breaks an Echo is the true story, played back at it. When it breaks it dissolves into ink and purple dust, the crack seals and the page comes home. Great Echoes wear a hero's face; **lesser Echoes** are echoes of places and moments (the Echo of Menlo Park, the Echo of the Crowded Bus). Songs that inflate a legend make its Echo stronger.

Legends who arrive as people. When a shard cracks near a folk legend (John Henry, Paul Bunyan, Molly Pitcher), what comes through is somewhere between the story and whoever was behind it. They are warm and real, not Echoes. The Inkbinders are still arguing about why. Bekah's theory: their stories were told with love.

Rifts. When a shard shatters completely it tears a rift: a crackling purple tear in the air. Inside, floors and rooms from every era are stacked like pages from different books glued together. Rifts leak Echoes and, in the north, rimecrawlers. Small rifts close themselves; large ones must be descended floor by floor and sealed at the bottom, where the **Rift Warden** waits (a composite of every Echo that broke inside that rift; each Warden seems a little stronger than the last).

Shard storms. Shard dust from closed rifts drifts on the wind. When enough dust from one era gathers, it becomes a storm that twists that whole era into a single force with its own rules. They roll in weekly on the winds down the Spine. Storms telegraph their moves a turn ahead.

Chapter cards and crystals. Heroes who fight for themselves risk cracking their shards further. So Devin and the Inkbinders refined shard dust into ink and pressed it onto cards. Each card holds a borrowed page of a hero's story, lent willingly. The glowing **crystals** spent each turn are refined shard dust (Drack Balistar sells most of it). The cards need a **Reader**: someone from outside who knows real history and can tell the true chapter from the Echo's legend.

FOR PLAYERS

The Game Inside the Story

How each part of the game lives in the fiction

GAME SYSTEM	IN THE FICTION
The Chronicle (5 chapters, 20 battles)	Five lost chapters; Readers clear the lesser Echoes and break the great Echo at each chapter's heart
Echo opponents ("Echo of Edison")	Shard-born copies made from legend
Leaders and Commands	Heroes who stand behind the Reader and lend their strength
Life cards ("chapters")	Pages of your own story at stake
Crystals	Refined shard dust
Weekly bosses	Shard storms
Rift Run	Descending a rift to seal it; relics are shard-touched luck
Puzzles	The Inkbinders' Riddle Room in the Archive
Ranked / friend play	Poppy's Ladder in the Folded Corner's back parlor
Lore Archive screen	The Archive of Lost Histories itself; entries written by Bekah and Calvin
Companions	Creatures of Marginalia (see Creatures and Companions)
Strange Purple Rock	A shard, left in the set on purpose as a reminder

Henry Ford, Vehicle Visionary

Assembly-line architect who put America on wheels and workers on timecards.

PART TWO

Marginalia

The world in the margins of history: its towns, rivers, laws and quarrels, and the people who never asked for visitors.

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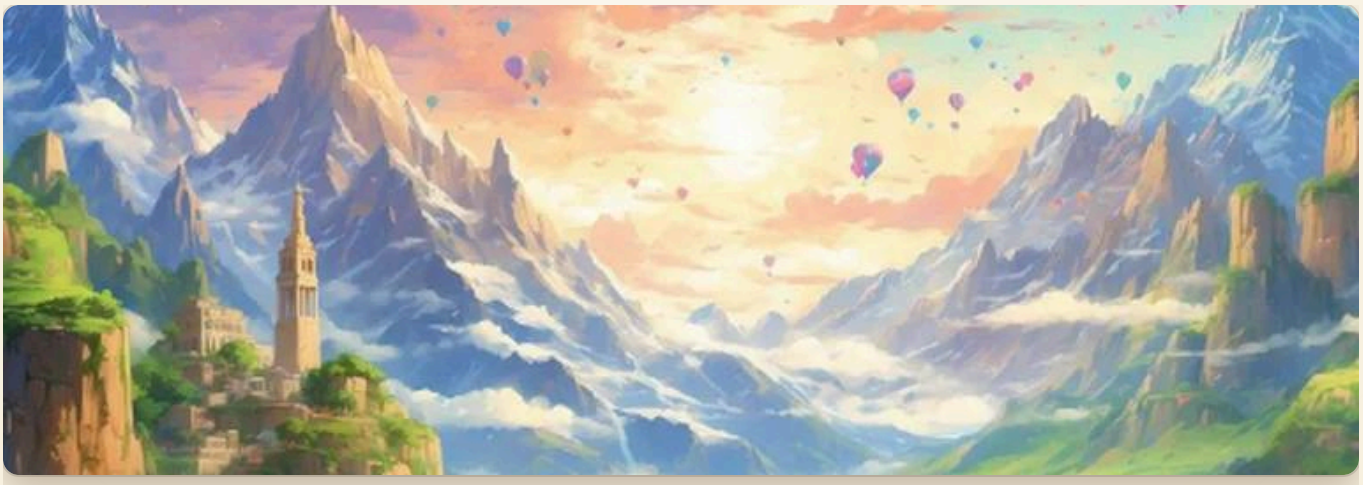


MARGINALIA · THE REALM

Marginalia

The world in the margins of history

Open any old book and look at the edges of the page. There is a strip of white around the words, the margin, where readers scribble notes, press flowers and doodle little dragons. Marginalia is that strip of white, grown into a world.

It is not the past and it is not a dream. It is its own place, with its own weather, its own history and its own people, and it has been there, quietly, for as long as anyone can remember. The Marginalians say their world was written in the spaces history left blank. Their oldest songs call it “the land beside the story.”

From above, Marginalia looks a little like a book lying open. A long ridge of hills runs down its middle, the Spine, where the capital Bindwell and the royal castle of Spinehold stand. The Inkwash, a broad dark river, winds from the mountains to the sea. To the north lie the frozen peaks of the Rimefold. To the west and south the ragged forest of the Deckle Wilds grows thicker and stranger the farther you go. At the far edges of everything is the Blank Margin, a pale fog where the world simply stops being written.

Marginalians are a mixed and lively folk: humans, elves, goblins, frost-born and the horned Wildkin, living side by side in market towns and farmsteads. They have guilds and taverns, feuds and festivals, seven great orders of knights and mages, and a sensible, much-loved queen.

What they did not have, until very recently, was visitors.

Now history’s heroes arrive every week, sometimes every day, falling out of the sky, stumbling out of the fog, stepping out of rifts that crackle open in fields and cellars. To the people of Marginalia this is not an adventure. It is an invasion of strangers from other centuries, bringing their wars, their machines and their rivalries into a world that never asked for any of them.

Some Marginalians open their doors. Some bar them. Some sell tickets. Every one of them has an opinion.

MARGINALIA · THE REALM

Dogear Crossing

The market town where it all happens

A crossroads town that has stopped being quiet.

Dogear Crossing sits where the King's Road meets the Longroad, on the east bank of the Inkwash, about a day's ride from the capital. It got its name from the way the old town walls fold back on themselves at one corner, like the turned-down corner of a page someone wanted to find again.

It used to be the kind of place where the biggest news of the year was the autumn cheese fair. It has a market square, a stone bridge, a clock tower that runs eleven minutes slow on purpose (nobody remembers why), a brewery, an apothecary, a stable, a goblin workshop quarter called the Cogwarrens, and one very famous tavern.

Then the shards started falling, and for reasons nobody fully understands, more of them fell on Dogear Crossing than anywhere else in Marginalia. The Inkbinders think it's because the town sits on a crossroads, and crossroads are where stories meet. Calvin Pennywevvy thinks it's because the paperwork office is here, and the universe has a sense of humor.

Today Dogear Crossing is the busiest town in the realm. Paul Bunyan once had to sleep in the market square because no building was big enough. Theodore Roosevelt organized the town's first volunteer fire brigade within an hour of arriving. Benjamin Franklin has opinions about the clock tower. The Longroad Lancers keep a post by the bridge, the Queen's Guardsmen keep a barracks behind the church, and the Folded Corner has not had an empty table since spring.

The townsfolk are split right down the middle about all of it. Half of them have never had so much business. The other half want their quiet cheese fair back.

MARGINALIA · THE REALM

The Folded Corner

Tavern, card parlor and accidental embassy

The first hero fell through its roof. It has been the center of everything ever since.

The Folded Corner has stood on the market square of Dogear Crossing for five generations, and the Wellington family has run it for all five. It is a warm, crooked, noisy place: a taproom with a great stone fireplace, a card parlor in the back with green baize tables, a billiard room, a courtyard stable and a dozen guest rooms up a staircase that creaks on every other step.

It was the first building in Marginalia to receive a visitor from history. One wet spring night a tall, thin man in a black suit fell through the roof of the card parlor, landed on Poppy Albright's dealing table, sat up, straightened his collar and asked, in a polite accent, whether anyone had a voltmeter. That was Nikola Tesla. The hole in the roof is still there. Alise Wellington had a round window fitted into it, and the regulars call it the Tesla Light.

After that, the arrivals kept coming, and most of them found their way to the Corner sooner or later. Partly because it was close to where the shards landed. Partly because Alise Wellington never turned anyone away. And partly because, as Blackbeard put it, "it is the only establishment in this entire world that serves a proper rum."

Today the Folded Corner is a tavern, an inn, a card hall, a message board, a lost and found for entire centuries and, unofficially, the embassy between Marginalia and history. The Travelers live in the attic rooms. The back parlor is where Readers play their practice matches, under Poppy's watchful eye. Jane sings by the fireplace most nights. Bertha Bute rules the kitchen. Bella Bute polishes everything. Alex Wellington carries trays between Lincoln

THE FOLDED CORNER, CONTINUED

and Blackbeard as if it were the most normal thing in the world, which, at the Folded Corner, it now is.

If you want to find anyone in Marginalia, start here.

MARGINALIA · THE REALM

The Archive of Lost Histories

The great library on the Spine

A library that records every arrival, and every chapter that goes missing.

The Archive of Lost Histories is the oldest building in Marginalia and, most Marginalians will tell you, the most important. It stands on the Spine above Bindwell: a vast library of honey-colored stone and green copper domes, with more floors below ground than above it.

Nobody knows exactly who founded it. The Inkbinders, the order of ink mages who tend it, say it was always there, that the first shelves appeared by themselves the day the world was written. What everyone agrees on is what it holds: the stories that slipped between the pages of history. The ideas nobody finished. The letters never sent. The inventions sketched on a napkin and lost. For centuries Marginalians have come here to read the chapters the rest of the world forgot.

When the arrivals began, the Archive took on a new job. Every person who falls out of history is recorded here, by name and date and place, in the great Book of Arrivals kept by the Registrar, Calvin Pennywevvy. Beside every name, the Archive keeps a living page: that person's own chapter of history, the one they were pulled out of.

And here is the frightening part. When a hero's shard cracks and an Echo breaks loose, their page in the Archive starts to fade. The words go pale. The edges turn blank. The Inkbinders call it a lost chapter, and nobody wants to find out what happens if one fades completely.

That is why the Archive matters so much now. Every battle a Reader wins against an Echo restores a page. The words darken again. The chapter comes home to its shelf.

Bekah Kent has practically moved in. With Calvin's help and the Inkbinders' grudging permission, she has started writing the Archive's records as stories rather than lists, because she believes people should be remembered as people. The book you are reading now is part of that project. Every entry you unlock is a page she and Calvin wrote down.

MARGINALIA · THE REALM

Bindwell and Spinehold

The capital and the Queen's castle

A capital of bridges and bells, ruled from a castle on the ridge.

Bindwell is the capital of Marginalia, a city of tall narrow houses and copper roofs strung along the Spine like beads on a thread. Its streets climb so steeply that half of them are staircases. It is famous for its bells, which ring for every hour, every wedding and every festival, and now, by royal order, for every new arrival.

At the top of the city stands Spinehold, the royal castle, built from the same honey stone as the Archive next door. It is more palace than fortress these days: long galleries, a throne room hung with blue and gold, kitchens that could feed an army (and lately have), and a council chamber with a round table where the heads of the seven orders sit with the Queen.

BINDWELL AND SPINEHOLD, CONTINUED

Queen Clarise has ruled from Spinehold for twenty-two years. Before the arrivals, the most serious crisis of her reign was a border dispute between two villages over a particularly good apple tree. She settled it by planting a second tree. Marginalians still tell that story as an example of how she does things.

Since the arrivals began, Spinehold has become a much busier place. Diplomats from history's many nations turn up asking to speak to whoever is in charge. George Washington has been received formally three times, because each time he insisted on the proper protocol. Ben Franklin has been caught in the royal library after hours twice. Sengrid Asimov, the royal cook, has learned more recipes in six months than in the previous twenty years.

The Travelers go to Spinehold often, usually to report to the Queen and occasionally to apologize to Captain Isguard for something Collin did.

MARGINALIA · THE REALM

The Inkwash

The great dark river

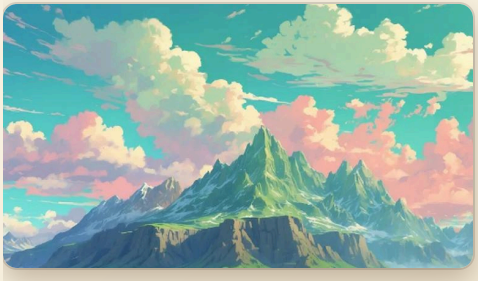
A river of dark water that remembers everything poured into it.

The Inkwash is the great river of Marginalia. It rises in the snows of the Rimefold and runs the whole length of the realm to the sea at Errata Harbor, broad and slow and so dark that it looks, from a distance, exactly like spilled ink.

It is water, mostly. Marginalians swim in it, fish it and ferry across it. But it has one odd property: things that are written near it tend to stay written. Letters carried on Inkwash barges never fade. Contracts signed on its bridges are considered unbreakable. The Inkbinders draw their ink from springs along its banks.

The river is crossed by dozens of bridges, from the stone arches of Dogear Crossing to rope spans in the Deckle Wilds, and every one of them is kept in repair by the Bridgecrew, a rough and cheerful order who charge a toll for the privilege.

Since the arrivals, the Inkwash has seen strange traffic. Lewis and Clark paddled up it for three weeks to find its source, with Sacagawea translating between them and the Wildkin villages along the banks. A steamboat that nobody remembers building now runs a regular route from Bindwell to the harbor. And after Echo battles, when a chapter is restored, fishermen swear the river runs a little clearer for a day, as if something had been rinsed out of it.



MARGINALIA · THE REALM

The Deckle Wilds

The ragged forest at the edge of the world

A frontier forest where the trails rearrange themselves.

Paper made by hand has a rough, feathery edge called a deckle. The Deckle Wilds are Marginalia's rough edge: a huge, tangled, beautiful forest that runs along the west and south of the realm and gets wilder the farther you walk.

Near the towns it is ordinary woodland: oak and birch, deer and foxes, charcoal burners and mushroom hunters. Deeper in, the trees grow taller than church towers, the trails move when you aren't looking, and the Wildkin, the horned, blue-skinned folk of the forest, live in villages you

THE DECKLE WILDS, CONTINUED

can only find if they want you to. The Deckle Rangers patrol it. Elfie Layloft knows it better than anyone alive.

The Wilds have become the natural home for history's explorers. Daniel Boone arrived in a clearing and was happily lost for four days before anyone found him, and he says it was the best four days of his life. Lewis and Clark are mapping it, though the map keeps changing. Davy Crockett claims he has already wrestled something in there that he refuses to describe. Paul Bunyan has been asked, very politely and several times, by the Wildkin council, to stop cutting down trees.

The Wilds are also where many rifts open, because the edge of a world is where it is thinnest. Rangers have learned to watch for the signs: birdsong going quiet, a smell like hot copper, purple light between the trunks.

MARGINALIA · THE REALM

Errata Harbor

Docks, smugglers and a pirate problem

Where the Inkwash meets the sea, and every mistake washes up.

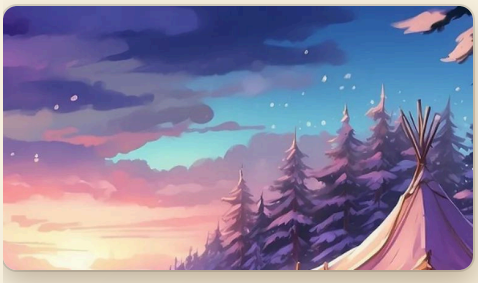
Errata Harbor is Marginalia's only real seaport, a jumble of docks, warehouses, fish markets and crooked alleys where the Inkwash meets the sea. The name comes from an old joke: everything that goes wrong in Marginalia eventually washes up in Errata.

It is the home port of the Bridgecrew and the rougher end of the realm. Errata Row, the waterfront street, is lined with gambling dens, sailors' boarding houses and shops that sell things without asking where they came from. If you want to hire a boat, a guide or a blade, Errata Row is where you go. That last one worries Captain Isguard a great deal.

The harbor's quiet, crooked life changed forever the morning a forty-gun ship sailed out of a rift in the fog, smoking, with a man on the quarterdeck whose beard was full of lit fuses. The Queen Anne's Revenge had arrived, and so had Blackbeard.

Since then, Errata has become a pirate town all over again, with visiting crews from every decade of the Golden Age of Piracy. Bartholomew Roberts has set up a very orderly operation with written rules. The Bridgecrew have adopted Blackbeard as a sort of unofficial patron saint. The Queen's Guardsmen have doubled their harbor patrols, and the harbor master has taken early retirement.

Errata is loud, dangerous, colorful and, strangely, one of the places where Marginalians and arrivals get along best. Nobody in Errata cares what century you are from, as long as you pay your tab.



MARGINALIA · THE REALM

The Rimefold

The frozen north

Snow, silence, and a figure nobody can explain.

North of the Spine, the land rises into the Rimefold: a range of white mountains and frozen valleys where winter never quite ends. The Inkwash begins here, trickling out from under a glacier the frost-born call the Old Page.

The Rimefold is home to the frost-born, pale, white-haired people with curling horns who are famous across Marginalia for three things: their patience, their songs and their astonishing cooking. Sengrid Asimov, the royal cook at Spinehold, grew up in a Rimefold village called

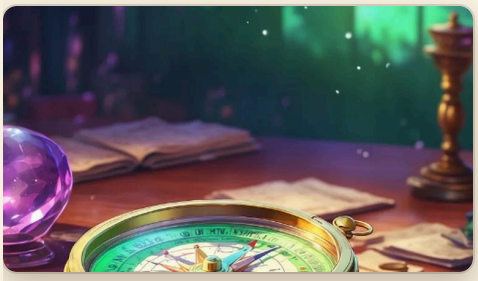
THE RIMEFOLD, CONTINUED

Hoarlight and still sends letters home every week.

The frost-born are the most worried people in Marginalia about the arrivals, and they have a reason. Rifts open in the Rimefold more than anywhere else, and the things that come out of them there are not heroes. They are rimecrawlers: glassy, many-legged creatures made of frost and shard light, drawn to warmth. The frost-born have dealt with them for as long as the rifts have existed, but lately there are more.

And there is the Mysterious Man. The frost-born have a dozen names for him and no answers. He walks the passes alone with a sword of blue ice. Where he has been, rimecrawlers lie frozen and still. Where he is going, a rift usually opens soon after. Some say he is protecting the north. Some say he is hunting something. A few say, very quietly, that the huge white shape sometimes seen in the clouds behind him is a dragon.

Washington's army made its winter camp at the foot of the Rimefold, which the general said felt very familiar.



MARGINALIA · THE REALM

The Blank Margin

Where the world stops being written

A pale fog at the edge of everything. Lately it has been moving.

Every map of Marginalia ends the same way: a pale border, and then nothing. Marginalians call it the Blank Margin.

It is not a wall, or a cliff, or an ocean. It is a fog as white as fresh paper that rolls in from the edges of the world and simply stops being anything in particular. Sounds go flat inside it. Colors drain away. Walk far enough in and even your footprints stop appearing behind you. Everyone who has gone deep into the Blank Margin and come back says the same thing: it felt like being an unwritten sentence.

For centuries the Margin stayed where it was. Marginalians farmed right up to its edge and thought no more about it than you would think about the horizon.

Since the shards began falling, it has started to move. Not quickly. A few steps a season. But the Deckle Rangers have noticed trees at the edge of the Wilds turning pale and papery, and a Rimefold village had to move its sheep last winter because the fog reached their pasture.

The Inkbinders have a theory they don't like to say out loud. Every lost chapter, every page in the Archive that fades because an Echo is loose, makes the world a little less written. And a world that is less written has more room for blank.

Devin has built a device to measure the Margin's edge. Collin has volunteered, several times, to walk in and find out what's on the other side. Bekah has, several times, said absolutely not.

MARGINALIA · THE REALM

The Folio Council

How Marginalia is governed

Seven orders, one queen, and a round table with a lot of arguing.

Queen Clarise rules Marginalia, but she doesn't rule it alone. Every important decision goes before the Folio Council, which meets in the round chamber at Spinehold on the first day of every month and, since the arrivals began, on most other days too.

THE FOLIO COUNCIL, CONTINUED

The Council has nine seats. One is the Queen's. Seven belong to the great orders: the Queen's Guardsmen, the Bulwark, the Order of the Lamp, the Longroad Lancers, the Deckle Rangers, the Bridgecrew and the Inkbinders. The ninth belongs to the Merchants' Guild, currently held by kindly old Elbert Rudrem of Dogear Crossing, who brings biscuits.

Before the arrivals, the Council was friendly and a little dull. Now it is the most argued-over table in the realm, because the arrivals have split it neatly into camps.

The welcomers, led by Elbert and the Order of the Lamp, say the newcomers are guests in trouble and must be helped. The wary, led by the Queen herself with Captain Isguard and the Inkbinders, say they must be helped carefully, registered, watched and sent home as soon as possible. The Bridgecrew, cheerfully, say the arrivals are the best thing for trade in a hundred years and should stay as long as they like. And there is a fourth voice, never quite spoken at the table but heard in the streets outside: the Closed Book, who want every stranger gone by any means.

Queen Clarise's great skill is keeping all of them at the same table. The Travelers attend as invited guests. Bekah takes the minutes. Collin once fell asleep in them. Devin once fixed the chamber's chandelier during a two-hour debate about bridge tolls, and the Bridgecrew have liked him ever since.

MARGINALIA · THE REALM

The Queen's Writ

The law of welcome and warning

Three promises every arrival must keep, and one the realm keeps in return.

Six weeks after the first arrival, when it became clear that the strangers were not going to stop coming, Queen Clarise issued the Writ of Welcome and Warning. It is read aloud in every town square and pinned to the door of every inn, and every arrival hears it within a day of landing.

It is short, because the Queen believes laws should be. Any person who arrives in Marginalia from outside it may remain under the Queen's peace on three conditions.

First, they register at the Archive of Lost Histories, so that their name, their home and their chapter are known.

Second, they do not bring their wars here. Whatever quarrel they carried from their own century, they leave it at the border of the realm. No arrival may raise an army against another, or against any Marginalian, while they are the Queen's guests.

Third, they help. Every guest lends a hand to the town that shelters them, in whatever way they are able.

And in return, says the last line of the Writ, the realm of Marginalia promises to shelter them, to feed them, to treat them with courtesy, and to do everything in its power to send them home.

Most arrivals have kept the Writ faithfully. Some keep it very creatively; Blackbeard insists that plundering Echoes is a form of helping. Only once has the Queen used the power the Writ gives her to name someone an enemy of the realm. That story is recorded elsewhere in the Archive, and it is not a happy one.

MARGINALIA · THE REALM

The Closed Book

The ones who want the strangers gone

A slogan painted on walls at night: Close the Book.

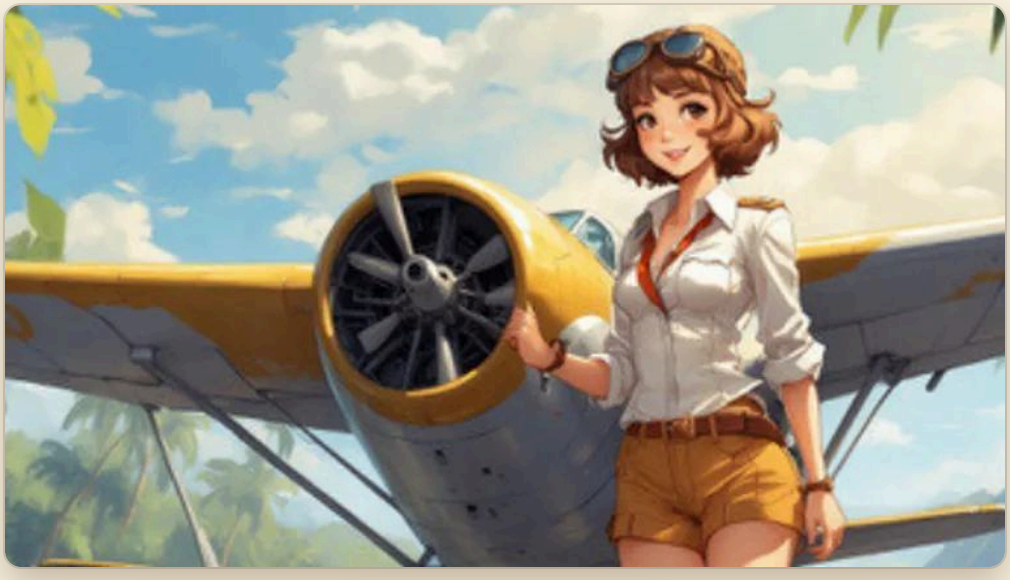
It started as graffiti. Three words, painted in the dark on the side of the Dogear Crossing granary: CLOSE THE BOOK.

Now it is a movement. Nobody knows how many Marginalians belong to the Closed Book, because they don't hold meetings in public or sign their names. But their message is simple, and to a lot of frightened people, it sounds reasonable. The strangers bring Echoes. The Echoes bring battles. The battles bring rifts, and the rifts bring the Blank. Send the strangers back, all of them, now, whether or not their shards are mended, and seal every crack behind them.

Not every Closed Book sympathizer is a villain. Plenty of them are farmers whose fields were trampled in an Echo fight, or shopkeepers whose windows were blown out by a shard storm, or frost-born parents worried about rimecrawlers. Bertha Bute agrees with at least half of what they say, and says so loudly, while cooking breakfast for forty arrivals every morning.

But some of the Closed Book are more than frightened. Someone has been paying for things: forged papers, sabotaged bridges, and, the Travelers are almost sure, a contract taken by the Hired Assassin of Errata Row.

Captain Isguard has been ordered to find out who leads the Closed Book. So far, every trail has led to a locked door and a painted slogan. Bekah suspects the leader sits closer to the Folio Council than anyone would like.



Amelia, Test Pilot

Courageous aviator in skirt form, proving new aircraft designs might fly if you're brave enough not to calculate the odds.

MARGINALIA · THE FOLIO AND THE WRIT

Peoples and Factions

Who lives in the margins, and where they stand on the invasion

Five peoples. humans, elves, goblins, the frost-born (pale, white-haired, curling horns, patient, famous cooks and singers) and the Wildkin (horned, blue-skinned forest folk).

Queen Clarise rules from Spinehold with the **Folio Council**: nine seats (the Queen, the seven orders and the Merchants' Guild), meeting in the round chamber.

The Queen's Writ of Welcome and Warning. Any arrival may stay under the Queen's peace if they (1) register at the Archive, (2) do not bring their wars here, and (3) help the town that shelters them. In return the realm promises shelter, food, courtesy and every effort to send them home. The Queen has named exactly one person an enemy of the realm (see The State Enemy, in Part Five).

Where everyone stands

Welcomers (the Open Door): Alise Wellington, Alex Wellington, Elbert Rudrem, Jane, Nib Sparkwhistle, Bella Bute, the Order of the Lamp.

The wary (the Queen's middle): Queen Clarise, Captain Isguard, Calvin Pennywevvy, the Inkbinders, Elfie Layloft, the Rangers. Help them, register them, watch them, send them home.

Profiteers: Poppy Albright (betting book, Poppy's Ladder), Drack Balistar (sells shard dust as crystals), the Bridgecrew (tolls; Blackbeard's unofficial crew).

Hostile: the Closed Book, a secret movement ("CLOSE THE BOOK" painted on walls) that wants every stranger sent back at once, mended or not. Mostly frightened people; some are paying for sabotage and an assassin's contract. Leader unknown, possibly close to the Council. Bertha Bute agrees with half of what they say and feeds forty arrivals every morning anyway.

Friends and grudges

- Washington and Isguard: Sunday walks on the walls of Bindwell; mutual, unspoken admiration.
- Tesla and Nib: teacher and apprentice. Nib calls Edison "the other one."
- Sacagawea and Elfie: closest friends; guides with opinions about Lewis's maps.
- Blackbeard and the Bridgecrew: his unofficial crew. Blackbeard and Bartholomew Roberts: courteous rivals. Blackbeard and the Doctor: the free medicine chest.
- Bertha Bute and Harriet Tubman: fast friends since the night Bertha fed her soup by the fire.
- Henry John's and Frederick Douglass: weekly book talks in the Archive.
- Hamilton and Burr: never in the same room (Isguard enforces it). Washington will not speak to Arnold.
- Bekah and Calvin: co-authors of the Archive, arguing about commas. Bekah and Jane: truth versus legend, which led to Jane's "True Verses."
- Devin and Drack, Devin and Nib (shard-meter rivalry), Devin and the Bridgecrew (the chandelier).
- Collin and Alex Wellington: big brother and hero-worshipper, which terrifies Alise.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Alise Wellington

Hostess of the Folded Corner

ON THE ARRIVALS: WELCOMING

Alise Wellington is twenty-six, runs the busiest tavern in Marginalia, and has not had a full night's sleep since spring.

She took over the Folded Corner three years ago, when her parents retired to a cottage by the sea and left her the keys, the recipe book and her younger brother Alex. She wears the tavern's black-and-gold livery and white gloves every single day, keeps a deck of cards in her apron pocket out of habit, and knows the name of every regular, their usual drink and what they are secretly worried about.

She was standing in the card parlor the night Nikola Tesla fell through the roof. Everyone else screamed. Alise fetched a blanket, a towel and a cup of tea, in that order, and asked him if he was hurt. That has been her policy for every arrival since. Frightened generals, confused poets, a pirate crew, a man who claimed to be a lumberjack and was forty feet tall: all of them got the blanket, the towel and the tea.

This makes Alise the heart of the welcoming side of Marginalia, and it costs her. The Closed Book has painted slogans on her walls. Bertha Bute grumbles at her daily. Captain Isguard reminds her regularly that she can't feed half of history on her own. She worries constantly, about money, about Alex, about the Echoes, about the Blank. You can see it in her face when she thinks nobody is looking.

But she keeps opening the door. When Bekah once asked her why, Alise thought about it and said: "Because if I fell into someone else's world, I would want somebody to have the kettle on."

She and Bekah have become close friends. Alise is the only person in Marginalia who can make Devin stop working and eat something.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Alex Wellington

Pot-boy, waiter and future adventurer

ON THE ARRIVALS: WELCOMING (STARSTRUCK)

Alex Wellington is fifteen, the younger brother of Alise, and the hardest-working waiter in Marginalia, mostly because he is also the only waiter at the Folded Corner.

He wears the tavern livery with a little brass name badge he polishes every morning, and he can carry four pints, two plates of pie and a pot of tea across a crowded taproom without spilling a drop. He knows everyone's order. He knows which card table has the best game. He knows, at any given moment, exactly where in the building Blackbeard is, because his sister asked him to.

Alex is the most excited person in Marginalia about the arrivals, and he makes no secret of it. He has heard Amelia Earhart describe the Atlantic at night. He has watched Tesla sketch a motor on a napkin. He once served Neil Armstrong a cup of cocoa and was so overwhelmed he forgot to charge him. Alex keeps a scrapbook of every signature he has collected, and it is already three volumes thick.

What he wants more than anything is to go on an adventure himself. Collin Roberts has become something between a big brother and a hero to him, which worries Alise a great deal, because Collin's idea of a safe outing is stepping into an unexplored rift to see what's inside.

Collin has promised Alise he will never take Alex anywhere dangerous. Alex has promised Alise he will never ask. Both of them have their fingers crossed, and everyone knows it.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Calvin Pennywevvy

Registrar of Arrivals

ON THE ARRIVALS: WARY BUT KIND

Calvin Pennywevvy is a young elf clerk with ink on his fingers, spectacles on his nose and more paperwork than any person in history, marginal or otherwise.

Before the arrivals, Calvin was the junior assistant bookkeeper at the Archive of Lost Histories, in charge of counting the coins in the donation box and making sure the reading-room candles were properly accounted for. He loved the job. He loved columns that added up. He had a special abacus for Tuesdays.

Then the Queen's Writ decreed that every arrival must be registered at the Archive, and somebody had to do it. Calvin, being the only person in the building who owned a spare quill, was appointed Registrar of Arrivals on the spot. He has not seen the bottom of his inbox since.

Calvin is wary of the arrivals, but not unkindly. He simply finds them exhausting. They have too many names (Benjamin Franklin gave him eleven occupations). They have confusing dates. They argue about spelling. And the Book of Arrivals must be exactly right, because every entry in it is linked to a living page in the Archive.

He does make mistakes. Famously, when a Marginalian knight named Henry Johns was granted his knighthood, Calvin wrote the patent as Henry John's, apostrophe and all, and because it was sealed by the Queen, the apostrophe is now legally part of Henry's name.

Bekah Kent is the best thing that has ever happened to Calvin's working life. She arrived, looked at his towering stacks of forms, and started helping without being asked. She taught him that a record can be a story. He taught her the Archive's filing system, which takes about six years to learn properly. They argue about commas like old friends.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Queen Clarise

Queen of Marginalia

ON THE ARRIVALS: WARY, SECRETLY FASCINATED

Queen Clarise of Marginalia is fifty-four years old, silver-haired and steady, and her subjects love her in the comfortable way people love a sturdy old bridge: they don't think about it much, but they would be lost without it.

She came to the throne young, after her mother's sudden death, and spent twenty-two years building a quiet, prosperous, rather sensible kingdom. She is famous for solving problems without drama. When two villages fought over an apple tree, she planted a second tree. When the Bridgecrew threatened to strike, she invited their captain to dinner and asked what was really wrong. She carries a scepter with a great blue stone that has been passed down since the founding of Spinehold, and she has never once raised it in anger.

The arrivals are the greatest crisis of her reign, and she knows it. Her position is careful and firm: the strangers are guests in trouble, and Marginalia will help them, but they are guests, and they are going home. She wrote the Writ of Welcome and Warning herself, in one evening, and it has held the realm together ever since.

Queen Clarise is wary rather than welcoming, and she has reason. Every week brings new Echoes, new rifts, new complaints at the Council table. She must protect her own people first. But she has also sat with Martin Luther King Jr. in the gardens at Spinehold, discussed government with Washington, and laughed until she cried at one of Franklin's stories. She finds the arrivals more interesting than she would ever admit in public.

QUEEN CLARISE, CONTINUED

She trusts the Travelers, cautiously. She respects that they came to fix what they broke. And in private, she has told Bekah that she will be a little sad when all the strangers finally go home.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Isguard

Captain of the Queen's Guardsmen

ON THE ARRIVALS: WARY, FAIR

Captain Isguard has one name, one lion-crested shield, one magnificent mustache and one opinion about the arrivals: wherever they go, wars follow.

He has commanded the Queen's Guardsmen for fifteen years. He is broad, blunt, loyal to the bone and deeply, professionally suspicious of anything he has not personally inspected. He stands at the Queen's right hand in every audience, and he has read every word of the Writ of Welcome and Warning more times than the Queen has.

To Isguard, the arrivals are a security problem wearing fancy hats. He respects many of them as individuals. He simply does not trust what follows them: the Echoes, the rifts, the pirate crews, the old grudges carried across centuries. He has seen what happens when two arrivals who were enemies in their own time end up in the same tavern, and he has had to break it up personally.

He has also, much to his own annoyance, come to deeply admire George Washington. The two of them discovered on their first meeting that they have exactly the same opinions about supply lines, discipline and the importance of a good pair of boots, and they now take a long walk along the walls of Bindwell every Sunday to discuss them. Isguard would never call Washington a friend. He would, however, fight anyone who insulted him.

Isguard is the Travelers' sternest critic and, if they are honest, one of their most reliable allies. He does not trust Collin at all. He trusts Devin with anything mechanical. And he has told Bekah, gruffly, that her records are the first paperwork he has ever read for pleasure.

He is currently hunting the leader of the Closed Book, and he does not intend to stop.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Poppy Albright

Dealer at the Folded Corner

ON THE ARRIVALS: PROFITEER WITH A HEART

Poppy Albright deals cards at the Folded Corner, and she is very, very good at it.

She has short red hair, a quick smile, a dealer's waistcoat with a brass badge and hands that move faster than your eye. She has run the card parlor at the Corner for six years. She can shuffle one-handed, count a deck by weight, and tell you whether you are bluffing by the way you hold your tea.

Poppy was sitting at her own dealing table when Nikola Tesla fell through the ceiling and landed on it. She has never forgiven him for the chips he scattered, and she has never stopped telling the story.

Of all the people in Dogear Crossing, Poppy has done the best out of the arrivals, and she is cheerfully honest about it. When the first Echo battles began, she opened a betting book on them. When the Readers began sparring with their chapter cards, she set up a ranked ladder in the back parlor, with a chalkboard of standings, and started taking a small cut of the prize pool. The Ranked ladder in Marginalia is still called Poppy's

POPPY ALBRIGHT, CONTINUED

Ladder, and she is proud of it.

Captain Isguard thinks she is a menace. Alise Wellington thinks she is invaluable. Blackbeard thinks she is the most sensible person in this world and has tried to recruit her three times.

Poppy doesn't take sides in the Council's arguments. She takes bets on them. But when the Closed Book painted a slogan on the Corner's wall, she was the one who stood outside all night with a lantern and a heavy card-table leg to make sure they didn't come back. Profit is profit, she says, but the Corner is family.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Bella Bute

Maid of the Folded Corner

ON THE ARRIVALS: WELCOMING

Bella Bute is nineteen, curly-haired, sunny-tempered and the maid of the Folded Corner, where she keeps every room, rail and window spotless with the help of a feather duster that sparkles.

The sparkle is real. Bella has a small, unschooled knack for house magic, the kind that is common in Marginalia and rarely talked about: a flick of her duster and the dust simply decides to leave. The Inkbinders once offered to train her properly. She said no thank you, she liked her job.

Bella is the younger sister of Bertha Bute, the Corner's cook and housekeeper, by almost twenty years. Their mother died when Bella was small, and Bertha raised her, which explains a great deal about both of them.

Where Bertha sees mud on the floor, Bella sees stars. She is completely, joyfully starstruck by the arrivals. She has read everything in the Archive about Abigail Adams. She once cleaned Amelia Earhart's flying goggles so carefully that Earhart gave her a spare pair. She is secretly writing a novel about a maid who falls in love with a dashing pirate, and she has sworn Jane the bard to secrecy about which pirate.

Bella is also braver than she looks. During the first Echo attack on Dogear Crossing, she herded a dozen frightened guests into the wine cellar and held the door shut with a mop and a sparkle until the Guardsmen arrived. Bertha has never said she was proud. Bertha did, however, make her a whole cake that week, which in the Bute family means the same thing.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Bertha Bute

Cook and housekeeper of the Folded Corner

ON THE ARRIVALS: HOSTILE IN WORD, GENEROUS IN DEED

Bertha Bute runs the kitchen and scullery of the Folded Corner. She cooks, she scrubs, she keeps the pantry, and she swings a mop the way the Bulwark swing their hammers. Nothing in that building gets past her, including, on one occasion, Blackbeard.

She is forty, broad, flour-dusted, fiercely capable and the elder sister of Bella Bute, whom she raised almost single-handed. She has worked at the Folded Corner since she was twelve and has served three generations of Wellingtons. She regards Alise, privately, as a daughter and, publicly, as someone who does not understand how much butter costs.

BERTHA BUTE, CONTINUED

Bertha does not like the arrivals. She will tell you so. They track mud from five different centuries onto her clean floors. They eat everything. They ask for dishes nobody in Marginalia has ever heard of (Franklin wanted something called a dumpling; George Washington Carver wanted peanuts in everything). They bring Echoes, and Echoes break windows. She has some sympathy for the Closed Book, and she doesn't care who hears it.

And yet. Every morning, before dawn, Bertha Bute cooks breakfast for forty arrivals, and every one of them gets a full plate. She has quietly learned to make cornbread for the frontier folk and chowder for the Bostonians. When Harriet Tubman arrived cold and soaked from the Inkwash, it was Bertha who sat her by the kitchen fire and fed her soup until she was warm, without saying a word.

Bekah once asked Bertha why she did all that for people she didn't like. Bertha said she didn't have to like somebody to feed them, and then told Bekah to wipe her boots.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Jane

Bard of the Folded Corner

ON THE ARRIVALS: WELCOMING

Jane plays the lute by the great fireplace of the Folded Corner most nights, and when she sings, the whole room goes quiet. She has golden hair, a red rose-trimmed dress and a voice that makes grown knights weep into their ale. Her music glows. Literally: when Jane plays well, soft rose-colored light curls off the strings, a kind of heartsong magic that only a few Marginalian bards possess.

Jane is the most enthusiastic welcomer in Dogear Crossing. For a songwriter, the arrivals are a dream: pirates, presidents, pilots, poets, all with incredible stories and most of them happy to tell them over a drink. She has already written ballads about Tesla's fall through the roof, Blackbeard's arrival in the fog and Washington's first audience with the Queen. They are all enormous hits.

And that is the problem Bekah is worried about. Echoes are made from legend rather than truth. The louder and bigger a hero's legend grows, the stronger and stranger their Echo becomes. And nothing makes a legend grow like a catchy song. Bekah suspects, and the Inkbinders agree, that Jane's ballad "Blackbeard's Burning Beard" is at least partly responsible for how ferocious the Echo of Blackbeard turned out to be.

The two of them have had long, friendly, complicated talks about it. Jane believes a good story needs a little embroidery. Bekah believes people deserve to be remembered as they really were. They have agreed on a compromise: Jane now adds a verse to each ballad called the True Verse, based on Bekah's notes, about what really happened.

Audiences say the True Verses are the most moving part.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Elbert Rudrem

Apothecary and head of the Merchants' Guild

ON THE ARRIVALS: WELCOMING (LEADER OF THE WELCOMERS)

Elbert Rudrem is seventy-one years old, keeps an apothecary shop on the market square of Dogear Crossing, and is the kindest man in Marginalia. Almost everyone agrees on this, including people who agree on nothing else.

His shop smells of lavender and pepper and old paper. Dried herbs hang from the rafters, jars of remedies line the walls, and a faded anatomy chart has been pinned behind the counter for forty years. He wears a green robe, grinds his own powders with a stone mortar and gives credit to anyone who needs it, which is why he has never been rich and never minded.

Elbert also sits on the Folio Council as head of the Merchants' Guild, a job he got because every other merchant trusted him to be fair. He brings biscuits to every meeting.

He is the leading voice of the welcomers. From the very first week, Elbert argued that the arrivals should be treated as guests and neighbors. He extended shop credit to every stranger who registered at the Archive. He organized the Dogear Crossing clothing drive, which is why half the arrivals in town wear Marginalian wool coats over their historical outfits. He learned from George Washington Carver how to make a peanut salve, and from the Doctor's field notes how to set a proper splint.

Elbert believes the arrivals have as much to teach Marginalia as Marginalia has to give them, and he says so at every Council meeting. Captain Isguard thinks he is naive. Queen Clarise thinks he is the realm's conscience. Bekah thinks he is the grandfather everyone deserves.

Somebody has been sending Elbert anonymous letters, lately, warning him to stop helping strangers. He hasn't told anyone except Alise. He hasn't stopped either.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Nib Sparkwhistle

Goblin inventor of the Cogwarrens

ON THE ARRIVALS: WELCOMING

Nib Sparkwhistle is a goblin, an inventor and the proud builder of the Gemdrop Cannon, a brass-and-copper contraption about as long as he is tall that fires polished crystals at tremendous speed. Nobody asked him to build it. Nobody has been able to stop him using it.

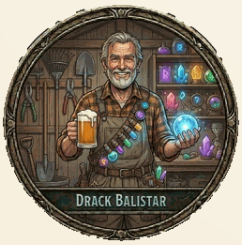
Nib lives and works in the Cogwarrens, the goblin workshop quarter under the streets of Dogear Crossing, a warren of forges and spinning gears where the ceilings are low and the ideas are enormous. Goblins in Marginalia are tinkerers by tradition, and Nib is the most restless tinkerer of his generation. He wears flying goggles, a leather cap and a belt of tools, and he has at least one burn mark on every piece of clothing he owns.

The arrivals are the best thing that has ever happened to Nib. When he heard that a man who invented alternating current had fallen through the roof of the Folded Corner, he ran all the way there, knocked over three tables and asked Nikola Tesla to be his teacher. Tesla, amused, said yes. Nib has followed him around ever since, carrying his notebooks and asking questions faster than Tesla can answer them.

Nib is a welcomer through and through, though mostly because he wants to take apart everything the arrivals brought with them. He dismantled a telegraph key in the Folded Corner on the night the Travelers arrived. He has a standing rivalry with Devin over who can build a better shard-meter. He calls Thomas Edison "the other one," which Edison does not appreciate.

NIB SPARKWHISTLE, CONTINUED

His Gemdrop Cannon was the first Marginalian weapon ever fired at an Echo, during the fight at the Echo of Menlo Park. It missed. The second shot didn't.



THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Drack Balistar

Brewer, tinker and dealer in oddments

ON THE ARRIVALS: PROFITEER, KINDLY

Drack Balistar runs Balistar's Brewery and Oddments on the bridge road of Dogear Crossing, a long low workshop that smells of hops and hot metal, with a copper still in the back, tools hung on every wall and shelves full of glowing jars.

He is sixty-eight, silver-haired, twinkly-eyed and the owner of the finest beard in Dogear Crossing now that Blackbeard is spending most of his time in Errata. He brews the Folded Corner's house ale. He repairs anything with a hinge. And he sells, as his sign says, "remedies, curiosities, gemstones and whatnot," which covers a great deal of ground.

Since the arrivals, Drack's business has boomed, because Drack worked out faster than anyone else that shard dust is valuable. Every time a rift closes, it leaves glittering purple dust behind. Drack sends apprentices to sweep it up, washes it, sorts it and sells it by the crystal: to Nib for his cannon, to the Inkbinders for their ink and, above all, to Readers, who spend it by the handful to power their chapter cards. Those crystals you spend every turn in battle? There is a decent chance Drack sold them.

He is a profiteer, and he'll say so with a wink. He also sells a tonic called Balistar's Shard-Proof Elixir that he swears protects against rift sickness. The Doctor has tested it and says it is mostly ginger.

But Drack is no villain. He sells to the Travelers at cost. He gave his last barrel of ale to the Longroad Lancers on the night of the Frontier Storm. And he and Devin spend long evenings in his workshop taking apart things that glow, the old tinker and the young one, happier than either of them will admit.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Henry John's

Knight of the Bulwark

ON THE ARRIVALS: WAS HOSTILE; NOW A FRIEND

Sir Henry John's is a Knight of the Bulwark, the heavy armored order of Marginalia, and he is exactly what a knight should be: brave, courteous, immovable in a fight and endlessly patient outside one.

He grew up the son of a bookbinder in Bindwell and spent his childhood in the stacks of the Archive, which is why, under the steel and gold plate, he is a quiet scholar who can quote poetry in four languages. He joined the Bulwark at seventeen. He carries a war hammer that weighs as much as a small child and uses it, according to the Bulwark's motto, "to hold, not to break."

His name really was Henry Johns. When the Queen knighted him, Calvin Pennywevvy wrote the patent with an apostrophe, the Queen sealed it, and by law that is now his name. Henry has never asked for it to be corrected. He says it would embarrass Calvin, and a knight does not embarrass a clerk over punctuation.

HENRY JOHN'S, CONTINUED

At first Henry was wary of the arrivals, even hostile. The Bulwark exist to protect Marginalia, and Marginalia was being invaded. In the first weeks he challenged Blackbeard to a duel of honor for insulting the Queen. Blackbeard accepted, cheated immediately, and lost anyway.

What changed Henry's mind was the Echo of the Raven. When that Echo tore through the Archive, scattering pages everywhere, it was Henry who held the great doors shut with his own shoulders while the Travelers fought, and it was Edgar Allan Poe, pale and shaking, who stood next to him and read the true lines of his own poem back at the Echo until it broke apart. Henry has been a friend to the arrivals ever since.

He and Frederick Douglass meet weekly in the Archive to talk about books. Henry has never been happier.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

The Doctor

Field physician, name unknown

ON THE ARRIVALS: NEUTRAL HEALER; KNOWS MORE THAN THEY SAY

Nobody knows the Doctor's name. Ask, and the Doctor smiles and says that names are for people with time to spare.

The Doctor wears a deep blue hood and robe trimmed with gold, carries a battered leather satchel full of bandages and tinctures, and always, for reasons never explained, has a rolled scroll in one hand. The Doctor is not a member of the Order of the Lamp, Marginalia's order of healers, though the Lamp treat the Doctor with enormous respect and share their supplies without being asked.

What the Doctor does is simple. Wherever people are hurt, the Doctor turns up. After the first Echo battles, when Dogear Crossing's field was full of wounded Guardsmen, the Doctor was already there, pitching tents and setting bones before anyone had sent for help. After every shard storm since, the same.

The Doctor treats everyone. Marginalian and arrival, Guardsman and pirate, friend and occasionally foe. The Doctor has sat up all night with a feverish Bridgecrew sailor and bandaged a Closed Book vandal who fell off the Corner's roof, and asked no questions of either.

The Doctor's favorite story, told rarely, is about Blackbeard. In his own century, the Doctor explains, Blackbeard once blockaded an entire city to demand a chest of medicine for his sick crew. When his crew fell ill in Errata Harbor with rift fever, Blackbeard came to the Doctor's tent ready to threaten, bargain and plunder. The Doctor simply handed him a full chest of medicine and said, "Take it. It's free here." Blackbeard stood there for a full minute with nothing to say, which Collin claims is the only time in history that has happened.

Bekah suspects the Doctor knows far more about shards than anyone admits. That scroll has never been opened in public.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Elfie Layloft

Deckle Ranger and stablemaster

ON THE ARRIVALS: WARY; FRIENDS WITH SACAGAWEA, EARHART, BOONE

Elfie Layloft is a Wildkin: blue-skinned, black-haired, with a pair of great curling horns and a grin that shows she knows something you don't. She is a Deckle Ranger, sworn to watch over the great forest, and she also keeps the stables of the Folded Corner, because, she says, horses are better company than most rangers.

She wears leaf-and-leather armor she stitched herself, carries a longbow on the trail and a bridle in town, and can track a deer across bare rock. She was born in a Wildkin village deep in the Deckle Wilds and came to Dogear Crossing at sixteen to learn about the world outside the trees. She never quite went home.

Elfie is wary of the arrivals, for a ranger's reasons. They don't know the Wilds. They wander into rifts. They chop down trees without asking (she and Paul Bunyan have had words). And explorers, she has noticed, have a habit of planting flags on things that already belong to somebody.

But she has made real friends among them. Sacagawea became her closest friend within a week: two guides who both knew what it means to lead strangers through someone else's country, and who both had opinions about Captain Lewis's map-making. Daniel Boone won Elfie's respect by getting lost in the Wilds on purpose and enjoying it. And Amelia Earhart, who loves anything fast, spent a whole afternoon at the stables learning to ride Elfie's grey mare, Thistle, at a flat gallop.

Elfie is the one who first noticed the trees at the edge of the Wilds turning pale and papery near the Blank Margin. She rides out to check them every week, and she has stopped joking about it.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

The Hired Assassin

A blade for hire on Errata Row

ON THE ARRIVALS: HOSTILE (FOR HIRE), WAVERING

There is an assassin on Errata Row. Everybody in the harbor knows it, and nobody knows anything else.

They wear black, hooded and masked, with only a pair of cold eyes showing. Their arms are covered in green tattoos that glow faintly in the dark, like ink that hasn't dried, and they carry a knife whose blade shines the same poisonous green. They are seen at night, on rooftops and in alleys, and never twice in the same place. The Bridgecrew call them the Greenhand.

In Errata, an assassin for hire is not unheard of. Marginalia is a peaceful realm, but even peaceful realms have debts and grudges. The Greenhand has a reputation for a strict code: no children, no innocents, and never an inhabitant of Marginalia.

That last rule is what worries the Travelers. Because the Greenhand has taken a new contract, and the target is not an inhabitant. The target is an arrival.

Nobody knows which one. Captain Isguard's Guardsmen found a scrap of the contract in a burned-out warehouse: a line of numbers, a seal they didn't recognize and three painted words, Close the Book. Since then there have been near misses. A falling beam at the Archive that just missed Benjamin Franklin. A cut saddle girth at Elfie's stables. A green-stained knife left, deliberately, on the Travelers' pillow at the Folded Corner.

And yet, twice now, when the Greenhand could have struck, they didn't. Once, when Collin Roberts walked into an Errata alley at the wrong moment, the assassin stood over him in the dark, looked at him for a long time, and simply vanished.

THE HIRED ASSASSIN, CONTINUED

Bekah thinks the Greenhand is starting to have doubts. Isguard thinks Bekah is being dangerously optimistic. Both of them might be right.

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

Sengrid Asimov

Royal cook of Spinehold

ON THE ARRIVALS: WELCOMING (FOR THE RECIPES), WORRIED FOR HOME

Sengrid Asimov is frost-born, from the village of Hoarlight in the Rimefold: pale as new snow, with long white braids and a pair of curling horns. And, to the endless amusement of everyone who meets her, she cooks with fire. Big fire. Roaring, leaping, pan-flipping fire, in the royal kitchens of Spinehold, where she has been head cook for eleven years.

She came south at eighteen with a satchel of frost-born recipes and a burning ambition to learn every cuisine in the world. Queen Clarise tasted her snow-pepper stew at a harvest fair and hired her on the spot.

To Sengrid, the arrivals are a gift of flavors. She has learned Boston chowder, Virginia ham, Creole gumbo and a New England pot roast. Theodore Roosevelt taught her to cook over a campfire. George Washington Carver gave her three hundred ideas for peanuts. She is now working with Benjamin Franklin on something he calls a proper American breakfast, and the Spinehold kitchen has never been happier or louder.

But Sengrid carries a worry from home. Her letters from Hoarlight have grown shorter and more frightened. More rifts in the passes. More rimecrawlers every winter. The fog of the Blank Margin creeping into the high pastures. And her mother's last letter mentioned the Mysterious Man, seen on the ridge above the village, standing very still, looking down.

Sengrid is the only person at Spinehold who has seen the Man in the Snow with her own eyes, as a little girl. She told Bekah about it one night by the kitchen fire. He walked out of a blizzard, she said, and every rimecrawler in the valley froze solid. He looked at her. And he said one word she has never forgotten: "Soon."

THE PEOPLE OF MARGINALIA

The Mysterious Man

The figure in the snow

ON THE ARRIVALS: UNKNOWN

Nobody knows who he is.

He is seen in the Rimefold, always alone, always in snow: a tall, grey-bearded figure in a ragged dark hood and cloak, carrying a sword that seems to be made of blue ice. Where he has walked, the rimecrawlers, the frost-and-shard creatures of the north, lie frozen and still. Where he is walking toward, a rift usually opens within the day.

The frost-born call him many things. The Man in the Snow. The Old Warden. Winter's Guest. The oldest songs of Hoarlight mention a figure like him, which would make him far older than any Marginalian ought to be. Sometimes, behind him in the blizzard, travelers glimpse an enormous pale shape in the clouds: wings, perhaps, or a long curling neck. Most people say it is a trick of the snow. The frost-born don't.

He has never spoken to the Travelers. He has been seen by them exactly once. During the long winter of the Founding chapter, when the Echo of the Long Winter pinned Washington's army in the foothills, Collin went up the ridge alone to scout. He came back white-faced and

THE MYSTERIOUS MAN, CONTINUED

said he had seen a man standing on the ice above the camp, watching the battle, sword drawn, not moving. When Collin called out, the man turned and walked into the snow. His footprints stopped after twelve steps.

Is he a Marginalian? An arrival from some other age? Something that came before shards? Is he fighting the rifts, or waiting for them? Devin thinks the ice sword might be made of shard crystal. Bekah has noticed his appearances are growing more frequent. And the Inkbinders, when asked, change the subject.

The Archive has a page for him. It is almost completely blank.

Chief Powhatan

Powerful Algonquian leader whose diplomatic balancing act between 30 tribes and strange pale newcomers shaped early American history.

Buffalo Bill

Army scout turned showman who transformed Western reality into theatrical mythology one dazzling performance at a time.

THE SEVEN ORDERS

The Bulwark

Order of the Shield (Tank crest)

ON THE ARRIVALS: WERE HOSTILE; NOW ALLIES AFTER THE ECHOES SHOWED WHO THE REAL ENEMY WAS

The Bulwark are Marginalia's heavy knights: the order that stands in front. Their crest shows a knight in full plate with a flanged mace and a tower shield, wreathed in fire, because the Bulwark stand in the fire so nobody else has to.

Their motto is "to hold, not to break." A Bulwark knight's job in battle is not to charge, or chase, or win glory, but to plant their feet and refuse to move. They guard bridges, gates and the helpless. Marginalians have a saying for someone reliable: "as steady as a Bulwark."

The order is based in a squat fortress-chapel below Bindwell called the Anvil, and its knights train from the age of fifteen, carrying stones up the steepest stairways of the capital until their legs stop complaining. Sir Henry John's is its most famous knight.

The Bulwark were among the arrivals' fiercest critics in the early days. Protecting Marginalia was their sworn purpose, and the realm was being flooded with strangers who carried swords. That changed with the Echoes. When the first Echoes attacked, the Bulwark discovered that the arrivals were not the enemy: the Echoes were. And they discovered something else. Many of history's heroes understood exactly what the Bulwark stood for. Rosa Parks, who would not move. George Washington Carver, who held to his work through every door that was shut on him. Chips, the war dog who stood his ground.

Today the Bulwark and the arrivals train together. In the card game, every character with Guard carries a little of the Bulwark's spirit: the ones who block and do not fall.

THE SEVEN ORDERS

The Order of the Lamp

The healers (Healer crest)

ON THE ARRIVALS: FIRST TO WELCOME, NO DEBATE

The Order of the Lamp are the healers of Marginalia. Their crest shows a hooded healer, winged in white, holding a lamp that pours gold light through her hands. Every Lamp house keeps a light burning in its window all night, every night, so that anyone who is hurt or lost can find it.

The Lamp run hospitals, orphanages and soup kitchens in every town of the realm. Their healers train for seven years in herb-lore, surgery and a gentle kind of light magic that eases pain and speeds mending. They take a vow to treat anyone who comes to their door, without asking where they came from. That vow made them the first order to welcome the arrivals, without hesitation or debate.

From the first week, Lamp healers were treating frostbitten soldiers from Valley Forge, feverish sailors from the Golden Age of Piracy and at least one very confused astronaut. They have learned an enormous amount from the arrivals: germ theory, vaccination, antiseptic surgery, which the Lamp's elders called "the most important gift any stranger has ever brought us."

The Lamp work closely with the Doctor, whom they regard with a mixture of respect and mild exasperation, since the Doctor never fills in the forms. They sit with Elbert Rudrem at the head of the welcomers on the Folio Council.

Their current worry is rift sickness, a lingering weakness that affects anyone who spends too long near an open rift. They have no cure yet. Devin and the Lamp's elders are working on one together.

THE SEVEN ORDERS

The Longroad Lancers

The mounted order (Cavalry crest)

ON THE ARRIVALS: PRACTICAL: RESCUE WHO NEEDS IT, HORSE FOR WHO CAN RIDE

The Longroad Lancers are Marginalia's cavalry, and much more besides. Their crest shows an armored rider in blue, lance lowered, charging at full gallop, and that is exactly how most Marginalians picture them: arriving at speed, just in time.

The order was founded to guard the Longroad, the great highway that runs from Errata Harbor all the way to the foot of the Rimefold. Over the centuries they became the realm's messengers, scouts and rescuers too. A Lancer post stands at every major crossroads, with fresh horses always saddled. When something goes wrong anywhere in Marginalia, a Lancer usually brings the news, and more Lancers usually follow.

The arrivals have given the Lancers a great deal of work and some wonderful new friends. Paul Revere joined their dispatch rides within a week of arriving and was so good at it that the Lancers gave him an honorary lance. The Rough Riders spent a long, happy month drilling with them. Theodore Roosevelt calls their commander "a splendid fellow" at every opportunity.

The Lancers are practical about the arrivals, neither welcomers nor doubters: people who need rescuing get rescued, and people who can ride get a horse. In the card game, the spirit of the Lancers lives in every character with Swift, ready to charge the moment they arrive.

They get their horses, by long tradition, from the stables of the Folded Corner, where Elfie Layloft has strong opinions about how they are treated.

THE SEVEN ORDERS

The Deckle Rangers

Wardens of the Wilds (Archer crest)

ON THE ARRIVALS: WARY; RESPECT THOSE WHO RESPECT THE FOREST

The Deckle Rangers watch over the great forest of the Deckle Wilds. Their crest shows an archer in green drawing a bow, the arrow glowing with green fire, framed in leaves.

Rangers are a quiet, independent order. They work alone or in pairs, spend months in the forest at a time and come to town mostly to trade, resupply and complain about the noise. Their arrows are tipped with a green glow the Wildkin taught them to make, which lights the way in the dark and can scorch a rimecrawler at fifty paces.

Rangers have always had two jobs. The first is to keep travelers safe in the Wilds. The second, older and more secret, is to watch the edge: the place where the forest meets the Blank Margin. Rangers mark the line every season with carved posts, and they were the first in Marginalia to notice that the posts were being swallowed.

The Rangers are wary of the arrivals. Explorers get lost, start fires, cut trees and wander into rifts. But the order has learned to respect those who respect the forest. Sacagawea has been made an honorary Ranger. Daniel Boone was offered the same honor and said he'd rather keep wandering, which impressed them even more. In the card game, the Rangers' spirit shines through every character with Explore: the ones who find a path where no one else can follow.

Elfie Layloft is a Ranger, and one of the order's best.

THE SEVEN ORDERS

The Bridgecrew

Keepers of the crossings (Bridgecrew crest)

ON THE ARRIVALS: DELIGHTED: MORE TRAFFIC, MORE TOLLS, AND BLACKBEARD

Every order in Marginalia has a noble crest with a golden crown. The Bridgecrew have a skull and crossbones, a lantern and a bearded, grinning dockhand with a sledgehammer over his shoulder. That tells you most of what you need to know.

The Bridgecrew are the oldest working order in the realm. They build and repair every bridge over the Inkwash, run the ferries, crew the barges and keep the docks of Errata Harbor from falling into the sea. In exchange, by ancient charter, they collect a toll on every crossing. They are rough, loud, loyal, hard-drinking and brilliant engineers, and they would all tell you they're the only order that actually does any work.

The arrivals have been wonderful for the Bridgecrew. More traffic means more tolls. More strangers means more ferries. And some of the arrivals are, frankly, their kind of people. When Blackbeard sailed out of the fog into Errata Harbor, the Bridgecrew took one look at him and threw a party that lasted three days. They have been his unofficial crew ever since.

On the Folio Council, the Bridgecrew are the loudest voice for letting the arrivals stay as long as they like. That makes them unpopular with the Closed Book, and there have been two attacks on Bridgecrew bridges in the past month. The Bridgecrew rebuilt both within a day, doubled the toll and hung a sign on each: Try Again.

Their captain, a huge woman named Mags Holloway, and Devin Roberts have become good friends since he fixed the Council chamber's chandelier.

THE SEVEN ORDERS

The Inkbinders

Mages of the Archive (Mages crest)

ON THE ARRIVALS: WARY, PROUD, SECRETIVE

The Inkbinders are the mages of Marginalia. Their crest shows a robed mage in deep blue, one hand holding a staff tipped with blue crystal and the other cupping a curl of blue flame.

Inkbinder magic is written. A mage draws a rune in special ink, drawn from springs along the Inkwash, and the rune does what it says: light, warmth, a locked door, a mended wall. The greater the mage, the more complicated the writing. The order's masters can write a whole spell-page in a single breath.

The Inkbinders tend the Archive of Lost Histories. They have done so for as long as anyone remembers, and they consider it the most important duty in the realm. They are scholarly, proud, secretive and extremely wary of the arrivals, because the arrivals are cracking their Archive. Every Echo that breaks loose fades another page on their shelves.

The Inkbinders were also the first to understand what the shards really were. They studied the purple dust left behind by closing rifts and discovered that it could be mixed into their ink. Working with Devin Roberts, whom they treated at first as an irritating child and now treat as an irritating colleague, they pressed that ink onto cards. Those cards, each holding a borrowed page of a hero's story, are the chapter cards every Reader plays with.

The order's Grand Binder has never been seen outside the Archive's lower stacks. The Inkbinders refuse to discuss the Mysterious Man. And some of them, Bekah has noticed, go very quiet whenever anyone mentions the Closed Book.

THE SEVEN ORDERS

The Queen's Guardsmen

The realm's guard (Guardsmen crest)

ON THE ARRIVALS: WARY BY TRAINING, FAIR IN PRACTICE

The Queen's Guardsmen keep the peace in Marginalia. Their crest shows a guardsman in blue and silver with a spear and a round shield, standing in front of the towers of Bindwell. You will find them at every town gate, on every market day, and in the back of every audience at Spinehold.

They are the realm's everyday soldiers: part watchmen, part constables, part defenders. Most of their work, before the arrivals, was finding lost goats and settling arguments in taverns. They are proud, well drilled and personally commanded by Captain Isguard, who knows every one of his five hundred Guardsmen by name.

The arrivals have turned the Guardsmen's quiet lives upside down. They register strangers at the town gates, escort them to the Archive, break up duels between people who were enemies centuries ago, and stand in the front line whenever an Echo attacks. They have learned a great deal, not always happily. The Continental Army taught them to drill in winter. The Rough Riders taught them to charge uphill. Blackbeard taught them never, ever to play cards with Blackbeard.

Guardsmen are wary, by training and temperament. But they are also fair. It is the Guardsmen who stand between the arrivals and the Closed Book when tempers run high, and they have kept that line every single time.

MARGINALIA · THE WILD THINGS

Creatures and Companions

The animals, pets and stranger things of the realm

Ink the Raven: lives in the Archive's rafters; once hated Edgar Allan Poe, now rides his shoulder.

Comet the Fox: a Deckle Wilds fox with a shooting-star tail; follows Readers because they smell of shard dust.

Brass the Clockwork Owl: built by Nib in the Cogwarrens, wound by Tesla.

Pip the Harbor Cat: the cat of Errata, naps on Bridgecrew toll-booths, rival of Alexander.

Morrow the Time Moth: a moth from the edges of rifts, drawn to endings.

Alexander, George's Cat: came through sitting on Washington's boot. Everyone's cat.

Rimecrawlers: glassy many-legged creatures of frost and shard light from northern rifts.

Thistle: Elfie's grey mare. **Babe:** Paul Bunyan's blue ox.

PART THREE

The Travelers

Devin, Collin and Bekah, the DevBerri founders, with their cohorts: the team that followed the shards in to fix what they broke.

Devin Roberts 39
Collin Roberts 41
Rebekah "Bekah" Kent 43
Brody Vinson 45
Andy Varnes 47
Jared Nelson 49
Josh 51
Phillip 53

THE TRAVELERS · 1 OF 8

Devin Roberts

Technology Visionary

GOLD COBALT

> *The builder. He opened the Shard on Attempt Forty-Seven, and he intends to be the one who closes every crack it made.*

As a Leader

Build, test, try again. Every Item he plays leaves a Tinker behind, and the workshop never sleeps.

Once per turn, when you play an Item, Build 1 Tinker Token.

★ Attempt Forty-Seven 4

Look at the top 3 cards of your deck and take one. Build 1 Tinker Token.

Signatures: The Workshop and Alexander Graham Bell, and Devin Roberts's own promo.

"That means we understand it. And if we understand it, we can fix it."

THE TRAVELERS · GOLD AND COBALT

Devin Roberts

Technology Visionary

The builder. He opened the Shard on Attempt Forty-Seven, and he intends to be the one who closes every crack it made.

If it has a hinge, a wire or a glow, Devin Roberts has probably taken it apart. The co-founder of DevBerri has been building things since he was old enough to hold a screwdriver: radios from kits, robots from spare parts, entire software worlds from a laptop at the kitchen table. His friends describe him as relentlessly curious and incurably optimistic. His brother Collin describes him as "the guy who reads the manual after he's already built the thing, just to see if they did it right."

Devin is the one who built the cradle of copper coils on Attempt Forty-Seven. He is the one who fed the crystal that slow careful current, and he is the one who first understood what the floating sliver above the workbench really was. "I think we just built a window," he said. Bekah wrote it down. He still wishes he had thought of something more dramatic.

When the cracks appeared, Devin took it harder than anyone. He had built the thing. He had pushed the experiments. Bekah and Collin have both told him, many times, that all three of them chose to watch history and all three of them share the blame. Devin nods, and agrees, and then stays up until four in the morning trying to fix it anyway.

In Marginalia, that stubbornness has turned out to be exactly what the realm needed.

He arrived with a backpack full of tools and a phone that no longer had any signal, and within a week he had set up a workshop in the attic of the Folded Corner. Within a month, the goblins of the Cogwarrens had adopted him. He and Nib Sparkwhistle have an ongoing, extremely competitive project to build the best shard-meter in the realm (Devin's is more accurate; Nib's is louder). He and old Drack Balistar spend evenings taking apart glowing things and arguing about brewing temperatures. The Bridgecrew have liked him ever since he fixed the Folio Council's chandelier in the middle of a two-hour debate.

His greatest achievement in Marginalia is the chapter cards. Working with the proud and suspicious mages of the Inkbinders, who at first treated him like an annoying child, he discovered that the purple dust left behind by closing rifts could be refined, mixed into the Inkbinders' ink and pressed onto cards. Each card holds a borrowed page of a hero's story. A Reader holding them can call on that hero's courage without pulling a single extra person out of their century. The glowing crystals Readers spend every turn are Devin's refined shard dust. Every battle you have ever fought in Marginalia runs on something he figured out on a tavern table at three in the morning.

The Inkbinders now treat him as an annoying colleague, which Devin considers a huge promotion. Brody keeps the whole card project on a schedule pinned above Devin's workbench, which Devin ignores, and which somehow still gets met.

He has a special bond with the inventors among the arrivals. Nikola Tesla treats him like a gifted, slightly reckless nephew. Thomas Edison keeps trying to hire him. Benjamin Franklin has challenged him to a kite-flying contest during the next thunderstorm, and Bekah has vetoed it. Devin once spent an entire night with the Wright brothers redesigning a Marginalian windmill, and Orville still sends him sketches.

But the thing Devin cares about most is the Mender: a device, still unfinished, that he believes can seal a cracked shard permanently. Right now, the only way to mend a crack is for a Reader to defeat the Echo that came out of it, one battle at a time. If the Mender works, the cracks could be sealed before any more Echoes escape. Maybe the Blank Margin could even be pushed back. Maybe everyone could go home sooner.

He has been working on it for months. It has exploded twice. The Inkbinders say it can't be done. Queen Clarise has asked him, gently, to test it farther from the palace.

Devin keeps going. Not because he is sure it will work, but because he believes, the way he has always believed, that every problem is just a machine nobody has finished building yet.

"We broke it," he says. "That means we understand it. And if we understand it, we can fix it."

Bekah writes that down, too.

THE TRAVELERS · 2 OF 8

Collin Roberts

Future of Innovation

EMERALD GARNET

> *The adventurer. First through every door, and never once sorry about it.*

As a Leader

First through every door. Explorers and raiders hit the table running.

Once per turn, when you play a character, it gets Swift this turn.
Once per turn, when a character of yours hits an enemy Leader, Recover 1.

★ First Through the Door 2

A character of yours gets +2/+1 and Explore this turn. Draw a card.

Signatures: Corps of Discovery and Christopher Columbus, and Collin Roberts's own promo.

"I think they were more surprised than I was."

THE TRAVELERS · EMERALD AND GARNET

Collin Roberts

Future Of Innovation

The adventurer. First through every door, and never once sorry about it.

Collin Roberts has never met a door he didn't want to walk through.

Devin's brother and DevBerri's third founder is the one who always looks forward. While Devin asks how something works and Bekah asks what it means, Collin asks what's next. What's around the corner, what's over the hill, what the world will look like in fifty years and how to get there faster. People who work with him say he has a gift for seeing tomorrow before anyone else has finished having breakfast today. He found the purple rock in the first place. Of course he did.

Collin held the fire extinguisher on Attempt Forty-Seven, "because somebody had to." He was the first to say out loud what they were looking at through the Shard: "Is that Kitty Hawk?" And on the night the Shard stopped showing history and showed the Folded Corner instead, Collin was the one who took one look at a goblin taking apart Tesla's notebook and stepped straight through without waiting for anybody. Bekah has not entirely forgiven him for that. Devin has, mostly.

In Marginalia, Collin is the explorer. When a new rift opens, he wants to see inside it. When a new arrival falls out of the sky, he wants to be the first to shake their hand. He has walked more of the realm than either of the other Travelers: the Longroad all the way to the Rimefold, the Deckle Wilds with Elfie Layloft, the alleys of Errata Harbor at hours when sensible people are asleep. He is the one who first scouted the Rift Run's deeper floors. He is the only person who has ever seen the Mysterious Man up close and lived to describe it, and he came back from that ridge very quiet for once.

He is also, everyone agrees, the most fun person in Marginalia to spend an afternoon with.

The arrivals love him. Amelia Earhart recognized a kindred spirit instantly, and the two of them talk for hours about flying, about the future, about what it takes to go first. Neil Armstrong, who never says more than he needs to, told Collin once that he had "the right kind of nerve," and Collin has not stopped smiling about it. Theodore Roosevelt has taken him hunting, canoeing and boxing, all in one week. Lewis and Clark have given him a copy of their map, with the parts that keep moving marked in red.

The Marginalians have mixed feelings. Alex Wellington worships him, which terrifies Alise. Captain Isguard does not trust him at all, and says so every time Collin goes anywhere near a restricted area. The Bridgecrew think he is hilarious. Poppy Albright has a standing bet with Collin about which of them will be the first to beat Blackbeard at cards. Neither of them has won yet. Andy has photographed every attempt, for the record.

What most people miss, because he makes it look easy, is how seriously Collin takes the reason they came. He goes first because he would rather walk into danger himself than send anyone else. He scouts rifts so that Readers know what they are facing. He walked into an alley in Errata Harbor, alone, to look for the Hired Assassin's trail, and he came out alive because, he says, "I think they were more surprised than I was."

Collin believes in the future, in every sense. He believes the cracks will be mended. He believes every hero will get home. He believes Marginalia will come out of all this stronger, and the Travelers will be able to visit their friends here someday, properly, through the front door. And he believes that one day, far in the future, some kid will pick up a strange purple rock, and the story will start again, and this time they will know the rules.

"All four of them," he says, and grins. "Including the snacks."

THE TRAVELERS · 3 OF 8

Rebekah "Bekah" Kent

Storyteller

COBALT QUARTZ

> *The chronicler. A thing that isn't written down didn't really happen, so she writes everything down.*

As a Leader

If it isn't written down, it didn't happen. Every story she tells sends a hero back into the fight for a One-Two Punch.

You start with 1 extra Life card.
Your Events cost 2 less.
One-Two Punch: once per turn, when you play an Event, refresh a character of yours. It gets +1/+0 this turn.

★ Write It Down 3

Return the last Event card put into your trash to your hand. Draw a card.

Signatures: The Constitution and Sign Your Name, and Rebekah Kent's own promo.

"We didn't know, but we did it. So we're going to help fix it."

THE TRAVELERS · COBALT AND QUARTZ

Rebekah "Bekah" Kent

Storyteller

The chronicler. A thing that isn't written down didn't really happen, so she writes everything down.

Rebekah Kent, Bekah to everyone who knows her, carries a notebook everywhere. Not a phone, not a tablet: an actual paper notebook, with a pen clipped to it, and usually a spare pen behind her ear. "A thing that isn't written down," she likes to say, "didn't really happen."

The third founder of DevBerri is its storyteller. She is the one who turns ideas into words and words into worlds, who knows that a story is not a list of events but a reason to care about them. If Devin builds the machine and Collin finds the door, Bekah is the one who explains to everybody else why it matters.

She recorded every single attempt in the DevBerri lab, from Attempt One, "nothing," to Attempt Forty-Seven, the ring of a crystal bell. She wrote the rules and pinned them to the lab wall: watch, don't touch, come home. On their trips through the Shard, while the brothers stared and cheered, Bekah wrote down everything: the way Wilbur Wright ran beside the wing, the silence on the street in Montgomery, the smell of the frozen Delaware. History, she said, was made of people, and people deserved to be remembered properly.

She was also the first to see the cracks. She held the Shard up to a lamp on the eleventh trip and found a line as fine as a hair. It is the thing she thinks about most, even now. She noticed, and they kept going anyway.

When the Travelers stood before Queen Clarise in the hall at Spinehold, it was Bekah who told the whole truth. She didn't make excuses. "We did this," she said. "We didn't know, but we did it. So we're going to help fix it." Queen Clarise has told her since that it was that sentence, and nothing else, that made her trust the three of them.

In Marginalia, Bekah has found her calling. She practically lives in the Archive of Lost Histories, working beside the Registrar Calvin Pennywevvy, whose towering stacks of forms she started sorting on her very first morning without being asked. Together they record every arrival. And Bekah has changed the way the Archive keeps its records. For centuries the Inkbinders kept lists: names, dates, places. Bekah writes stories. Who each person was, what they loved, what they were afraid of, what they did that mattered. She believes that is why the Archive's pages hold together better now, why a restored chapter comes back brighter than before. The Inkbinders pretend not to believe her. They have quietly started doing it too.

Every entry you are reading in this Archive, Reader, passed across her desk.

Bekah is also the one who found you. When Devin built the chapter cards and they realized the cards needed someone to play them, someone who knew the true history and could tell it apart from the Echo's legend, it was Bekah who named the role and went looking for the right person. "Every story needs a reader," she said.

Her closest friends in Marginalia are Alise Wellington, who keeps her fed, and Calvin, with whom she argues about commas. Brody helped her and Calvin build the Archive's new index of arrivals, and Andy's photographs now sit beside many of her entries, so readers can see the faces as well as the stories. She has long, friendly, complicated debates with Jane the bard about truth and legend, which led to Jane's famous True Verses. She has sat in the gardens of Spinehold with Martin Luther King Jr. talking about how words change the world, and with Emily Dickinson, who said very little and meant all of it. Harriet Beecher Stowe gave her advice on writing she has taped inside her notebook's cover.

The heroes trust Bekah in a particular way, because they know she will tell their story truthfully. Frederick Douglass, who fought his whole life to tell his own story in his own words, read her entry about him and said only, "Yes. That is right." She keeps that moment close.

And every night, before she sleeps in the attic of the Folded Corner, Bekah writes one line in a separate notebook she shows nobody. Collin thinks it's a diary. Devin thinks it's a list of everyone still waiting to go home.

He's right. And every night, she crosses off a name.

THE TRAVELERS · 4 OF 8

Brody Vinson

Successful Scaler

QUARTZ GOLD

> *The Successful Scaler. He turned a rescue mission across history into a project built to grow, with a checklist for every hero.*

As a Leader

Every setback is a lesson and the chart only goes up. Go wide, then grow every turn.

You start with 1 extra Life card.
End of your turn: if you control 2 or more characters, one of them gets +1/+1.

★ Scale for Sale 4

Build 2 Steel Golem Tokens. Your tokens get +1/+1.

Signatures: Andrew Carnegie and St. Augustine, and Brody Vinson's own promo.

"Devin builds the thing. Bekah tells the story. Andy tells everyone else. Somebody has to make sure it all happens on Tuesday."

THE TRAVELERS · QUARTZ AND GOLD

Brody Vinson

Successful Scaler

The Successful Scaler. He turned a rescue mission across history into a project built to grow, with a checklist for every hero.

Every expedition needs somebody who knows what day it is. For DevBerri, that has always been Brody Vinson.

Brody is the business mind of the team and a close cohort of its three founders. Back home he runs his own company, Scale for Sale, which helps small businesses grow into big ones, and he is known, fairly, as the Successful Scaler. At DevBerri he is the one who runs the projects, sets the deadlines, balances the budget and, somehow, keeps Devin, Collin and Bekah all pointed in the same direction at once. He studied business, and it shows. He can turn a whiteboard full of wild ideas into a plan with dates on it before anyone has finished their coffee. He wears a sharp purple jacket to meetings, keeps a tablet full of charts that all seem to go up, and has a view of the city from his desk that he insists helps him think.

He also has a lifelong love of collecting. Since he was a kid, Brody has collected creatures and cards: sorting them, cataloguing them, learning every one, trading for the last missing piece of a set. Ask him about a collection and he will tell you not just what is in it, but where every piece belongs and why it matters. It turned out to be exactly the skill Marginalia needed.

On Attempt Forty-Seven, Brody had the test plan on a clipboard. When the Shard opened onto Kitty Hawk, his clipboard had no step for that, so he wrote one in. When the Travelers started watching history, Brody turned Bekah's three rules into a proper project plan, with a checklist for every trip. And when the Shard showed them the Folded Corner and Collin stepped through without waiting, Brody was the one who packed a bag, a first-aid kit and a plan, and followed an hour later.

In Marginalia, Brody runs the expedition. The Travelers' mission to mend every crack and send every hero home is, as he likes to put it, the biggest project he has ever scaled: it started with five people in an attic and one Reader, and it keeps growing, with more arrivals, more Readers and more allies every week. He runs it the way he runs every business at Scale for Sale: start small, measure everything, grow on purpose. There is a board on the wall of the Folded Corner's attic with every known arrival, every open crack and every Echo still loose, and it is always up to date. He handed Queen Clarise a single neat page at their first audience: what they knew, what they needed and a plan. She read it twice. She still keeps it.

His collector's heart has made him Calvin Pennywevvy's favorite person in the realm after Bekah. Together with Calvin and Bekah, Brody built the Archive's new index of arrivals: every hero catalogued by era, set and chapter, cross-referenced so that any Reader can find any page. Calvin says it is the most beautiful filing system he has ever seen and has asked, twice, whether Brody would consider becoming an Inkbinder. Brody said he would think about it, which Calvin took as a yes.

He also keeps the Readers' collections in order. It was Brody who suggested sorting chapter cards into sets, who worked out which heroes' pages belonged together in the Archive's scene albums, and who first noticed that the Strange Purple Rock kept turning up in the Quartz set. When a Reader finally completes a set, Brody is usually the first to congratulate them, and he means it. He knows exactly how good that feels.

The Marginalians like him enormously. Elbert Rudrem, who runs the Merchants' Guild, says Brody is the only arrival who understands ledgers. The Bridgecrew respect anyone who pays tolls on time, and Brody has never been late once. Drack Balistar tried to sell him shard dust at a markup and came away having agreed to a fair price, a bulk discount and a delivery schedule, without being entirely sure how.

Brody is not the loudest of the Travelers, or the first through the door. He is the reason the door is still there when everybody needs to come back through it. "Collin finds the way," he says. "Devin builds the thing. Bekah tells the story. Andy tells everyone else. Somebody has to make sure it all happens on Tuesday."

And every evening, after the board is updated, Brody moves one more card from the column marked Waiting to the column marked Home. He has never missed a day.

THE TRAVELERS · 5 OF 8

Andy Varnes

Brand Maverick

GARNET COBALT

> *The marketer and the photographer. He made friends with a whole realm, and took its picture.*

As a Leader

One flash and the whole room looks his way. Rest their best, then walk right past.

You start with 1 fewer Life card.
Your Free Spirits get +1/+0.
Once per turn, pay 3 crystals: rest an enemy character.

★ Front Page 4

Rest all enemy characters. Draw a card.

Signatures: P.T. Barnum and The Circus, and Andy Varnes's own promo.

"I fix the part where everyone's scared of the machine."

THE TRAVELERS · GARNET AND COBALT

Andy Varnes

The Voice of DevBerri

The marketer and the photographer. He made friends with a whole realm, and took its picture.

Andy Varnes can talk to anyone. It is, as far as his friends can tell, a genuine superpower.

A close cohort of DevBerri's three founders, Andy is the marketing and business-management mind of the team. He is the one who makes sure the world actually hears about what DevBerri builds: the pitches, the launches, the partnerships, the stories that make people care. He has a gift for figuring out what someone wants, what they fear and what they have in common with the person across the table, and he uses it to bring people together. He also, always, has a camera. His studio back home is painted a deep, dramatic red, lit like a film set and covered in prints, and he will happily spend an hour getting one shot exactly right.

On Attempt Forty-Seven, Andy was filming, just in case something happened. Something did. When the Travelers started watching history, Andy photographed every rule card, every notebook and every sketch in the lab, because one day, he said, people would want to see where it all began. And when Bekah's note came back through the Shard saying everyone was safe in a place called Marginalia, he grabbed his camera and followed.

The first thing he photographed in Marginalia was the crooked sign of the Folded Corner. The second was Blackbeard, who posed.

In Marginalia, Andy handles what Brody calls public relations and what Andy calls making friends. It is a much bigger job than it sounds. To the people of Marginalia, the Travelers were strangers who had admitted to causing the whole invasion. Somebody had to walk into rooms full of angry farmers, suspicious Guardsmen and proud Inkbinders, and make them want to listen. That was Andy.

He got the Travelers their first audience with Queen Clarise, charming his way past three secretaries and a very suspicious Captain Isguard in a single afternoon. He has since become one of the Queen's favorite visitors, because he tells her plainly what her people are saying in the taverns, which her advisors rarely do. He sits with the Bridgecrew on the docks and the Rangers at their posts. When the Closed Book painted slogans on the Folded Corner's wall, Andy did not paint over them. He went to the people who were afraid and asked them why, and then he made sure the Folio Council heard the answer.

Isguard still does not entirely trust him. Isguard also, Andy has noticed, now asks his opinion before every public announcement.

And Andy takes pictures. Of everything. The market square of Dogear Crossing at dawn. The Archive's domes in the snow. Jane singing by the fire, rose light curling off her lute. Tesla and Nib on the roof beside the Little Tower. Washington in his frost-born cloak on the ice. Marginalians had never seen photographs before, and at first they were suspicious of them too. Then Andy held an exhibition in Elbert Rudrem's shop, and half of Dogear Crossing queued around the square to see themselves. Alise Wellington cried at a picture of the Folded Corner full of people from every century, all laughing at the same joke.

Many of Bekah's entries in this Archive now have one of Andy's photographs beside them, so that readers can see the faces as well as the stories. He believes that is how you make people care about each other: you let them see each other clearly.

Jane the bard calls him the only person in Marginalia who is better at getting a crowd's attention than she is. Poppy Albright has tried to hire him to promote her card ladder. Andy said yes, on the condition that she stop taking bets on the Travelers.

"Devin fixes the machine," Andy says. "I fix the part where everyone's scared of the machine." Then he raises his camera, because the light is just right.

THE TRAVELERS · 6 OF 8

Jared Nelson

Lost on Mars

EMERALD GOLD

> *An astronaut from a future that has not happened yet. He knows what the purple rock really is, because he found the rest of it.*

As a Leader

The mineral stores moments like a battery. Explorers power the ramp, Vehicles carry it home.

Your Pilots and Adventurers get +0/+1.
Start of your turn: if you control a character with Explore, gain 1 crystal this turn.

★ Radio Home 3

Add 1 crystal to your pool. Look at the top 3 cards of your deck and take one.

Signatures: Colony Vessel and Apollo 11, and Jared Nelson's own promo.

THE TRAVELERS · EMERALD AND GOLD

Jared Nelson

Lost on Mars

An astronaut from a future that has not happened yet. He knows what the purple rock really is, because he found the rest of it.

Nobody at DevBerri expected the first call for help to come from Mars.

Jared Nelson is an astronaut and field geologist on a survey crew that, as far as anyone can tell, has not been born yet. His home is a cluster of white domes on a red plain, a rover with a bad left wheel, and a scanner that paints the ground in green light. His job is to walk the canyons and read the rocks. Somewhere in the side of one of those canyons, he found a vein of warm purple crystal that hummed when his radio was on and made his compass spin.

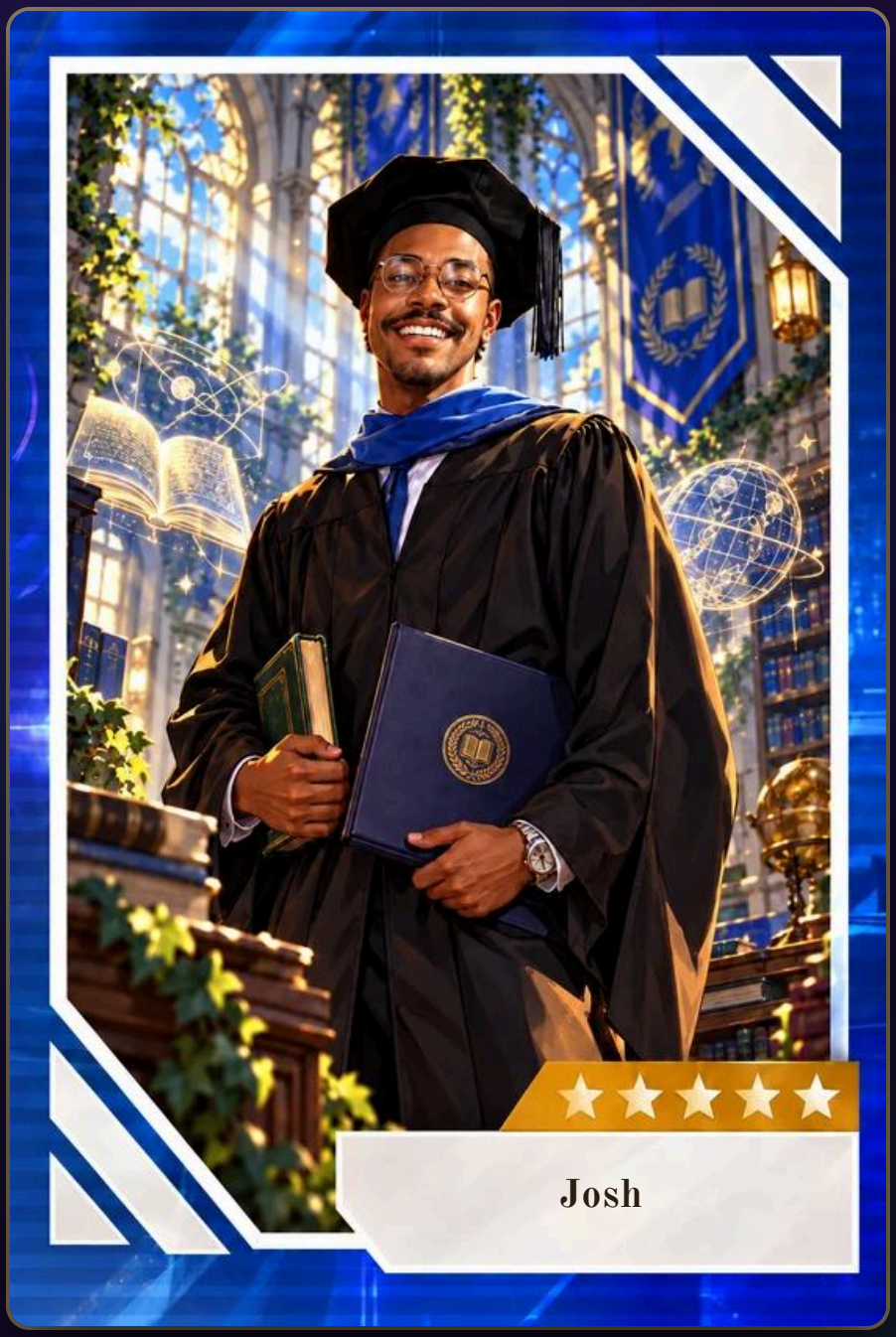
He took samples. He logged everything. And he learned, the hard way, that the crystal does not like being pushed. It remembers things. It opens things.

When Attempt Forty-Seven went wrong and the cracks began to spread, one of them ran further than anyone thought possible: forward, out of the attic, up through the years, and into a canyon on Mars. For a few minutes the Shard showed the Travelers a man in a green and white suit, crouched over a glowing map, and he could hear them. He was the first person the Shard ever let talk back.

Jared did not waste the minutes. He told them what the rock was: not a stone from Earth at all, but a splinter of the vein he was standing on, a mineral that stores moments the way a battery stores charge. He told them why it rang like a bell. He told them, very calmly, that the cracks were not going to close on their own. Then the window flickered, and he was gone.

The Travelers call him Lost on Mars, because that is where he was the last time anyone saw him. Collin keeps a photograph of the glowing canyon on the attic wall. Devin rebuilt the coil cradle twice using the numbers Jared read off his scanner. Every few weeks the Shard flickers green for a heartbeat, and Bekah writes the date down, just in case it is him.

In Marginalia, his notes are the closest thing the Archive has to a science of shards. Calvin Pennywevvy has copied them into three different books. “He is the reason we know what we are dealing with,” Brody says. “He is also the reason we check the radio every night.”



THE TRAVELERS · 7 OF 8

Josh

Recovery Specialist

COBALT EMERALD

> *The kinesiologist who noticed what the shards do to people, and the occupational therapist who helps the heroes they pulled away get back on their feet.*

As a Leader

Nobody stays down in the Mending Room. Sturdy characters, and fallen ones come back to try again.

Your characters that cost 2 or less get +0/+1.
Once per turn, pay 2 crystals: return the last character card put into your trash to your hand.

★ The Mending Room 3

Recover 1. Refresh your characters. They get +0/+2 this turn.

Signatures: Harriet Tubman and Squanto, and Josh's own promo.

THE TRAVELERS · COBALT AND EMERALD

Josh

Recovery Specialist

The kinesiologist who noticed what the shards do to people, and the occupational therapist who helps the heroes they pulled away get back on their feet.

Every crack in history dropped shards. Josh was the first to notice what they did to the people standing near them.

Josh studied the human body for a living: a bachelor's degree in exercise science and kinesiology, the science of how people move, and a master's in occupational therapy, the craft of helping people get back to the everyday things they need to do after something knocks them down. He came to DevBerri through Bekah, who needed someone to explain why everybody in the attic felt strange after Attempts One to Forty-Six.

He brought a stopwatch, a clipboard and a set of balance tests. Near the purple crystal, reaction times slowed by a fraction of a second. Hands carried a faint tremor, always in the same rhythm, the rhythm of the hum. People standing close to it swayed toward it, very slightly, the way a body leans into a wind nobody else can feel. Josh measured all of it, and he worked out something nobody else had: the pull was not only in the rock. It was in whoever held a piece of it.

That was how the shards were found. When the cracks began to spread, Josh built a test from his notes: find the people in history who suddenly moved like that, who stopped mid-step and leaned toward nothing, and you have found a loose shard. His first list had eleven names on it. The Travelers found a shard beside every one.

In Marginalia, Josh does the work he trained for. The heroes pulled out of their centuries arrive frightened and out of place, and many cannot manage the simplest things: a door with no latch they recognise, a meal they have never seen, a morning with no sun they know. Josh helps them relearn daily life, one small task at a time. Tesla learned to sleep again. Earhart learned to stand on ground that does not move. Washington, after one long afternoon, learned to let someone else carry his bag. The Inkbinders call Josh's room at the Folded Corner the Mending Room, and there is always someone waiting outside it.

He still wears his graduation gown to important meetings, because, he says, he earned both of them. He keeps a stopwatch in the pocket.

"Collin finds the way," Bekah says. "Josh makes sure everyone who comes back through it can still walk."

THE TRAVELERS · 8 OF 8

Phillip

Rules Lawyer

QUARTZ GARNET

The project's litigator and the voice of reason. He wrote the rules of the expedition, and he reads the fine print of time itself.

As a Leader

Objection! He read the fine print on time itself. Tricks cost more, and every duel goes his way.

Your opponents' Events cost 1 more.
Your characters with Guard get +1/+0.

★ Objection! 3

Your strongest character duels an enemy character. Your opponent discards a random card.

Signatures: Duel and Aaron Burr, and Phillip's own promo.

THE TRAVELERS · QUARTZ AND GARNET

Phillip

Rules Lawyer

The project's litigator and the voice of reason. He wrote the rules of the expedition, and he reads the fine print of time itself.

Every group of dreamers needs one person who asks, politely, whether this is allowed.

Phillip is DevBerri's litigator, a lawyer who argues for a living and a rules lawyer who does it for fun. At the office he writes contracts. On weekends he runs tabletop campaigns with dice, maps and a small army of painted miniatures, and his players know that if a rule is unclear, Phillip already has the page number. He wears a purple suit with a patterned tie and has never been seen without at least three rulebooks within reach.

He was the voice of reason on Attempt Forty-Seven, and he was the one who said, before the current went on, that someone should write down what happens if it works. Nobody listened. When it worked, Phillip wrote it down anyway. Bekah's three rules on the index card were her idea. The eleven pages of clarifications stapled behind it were his.

In Marginalia, Phillip speaks for the Travelers before the Folio Council, where arguments are long and precedent is everything. He has argued, successfully, that the arrivals are guests and not invaders, that a Reader who restores a page has a right to read it, and that Echoes, being copies, cannot sign treaties. The Inkbinders admire him enormously. Captain Isguard finds him exhausting and has asked him for advice four times.

He also wrote the rules of the Convention, the great table where many Readers play at once, and made sure every one of them could be played with paper cards on a kitchen table. "If a rule only works on a screen," he says, "it is not a rule. It is a suggestion."

When the others want to charge through the next crack, Phillip is the one who raises a hand and says, calmly, "Objection." He is usually right. They usually go anyway. He usually brings the first-aid kit Brody forgot.

PART FOUR

The Heroes

History's heroes, as the Archive recorded them on arrival: five colours, six Leaders and the people who fell in beside them.

Gold: Inventors & Industry 56

Cobalt: Thinkers & Dreamers 65

Emerald: Frontier & Explorers 76

Garnet: Rebels, Pirates & War 85

Quartz: Founders & Revolution 95

GOLD

Inventors & Industry

Nikola Tesla

He fell through the roof of the Folded Corner and asked if anyone had a voltmeter.

Inventions and tokens. Go wide with Tinkers, then overload the board.

Their Echo: Echo of the Inventor, the heart of The Spark.

★ **Wardenclyffe Tower (4).** Build 2 Tinker Tokens. Your Inventors get +1/+0 this turn.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Thomas Edison · Alexander Graham Bell · George Washington Carver · Orville Wright · Wilbur Wright · Andrew Carnegie · John Henry · George Westinghouse

SIGNATURE CARDS OF THE GOLD LEADER

GOLD · LEADER · COMMAND: WARDENCLYFFE TOWER

Nikola Tesla

The first arrival

Nikola Tesla found his shard on the floor of his own laboratory.

It was a winter evening in New York, in the busy years when his alternating current was beginning to light the world and his notebooks could not keep up with his ideas. He had sent his assistants home. He was alone with his coils, as he liked to be, and the room hummed with the quiet electrical music he often said he could hear better than most people heard voices.

Then he heard a note he had never heard before.

"And my tower was always meant to help everybody. Perhaps this is the tower."

It came from the floor, beneath a workbench: a chip of purple crystal no bigger than a thumbnail, vibrating at a frequency so pure it made the hair on his arms stand up. Tesla did what Tesla always did with a new phenomenon. He picked it up to measure it.

The laboratory folded away like a closing book.

He fell, and he fell for what felt like a long time, through a grey space full of whispering pages, and then he fell through a roof. Specifically, through the roof of the card parlor of the Folded Corner, in the town of Dogear Crossing, in a world called Marginalia, where he landed flat on his back on Poppy Albright's dealing table in a shower of slate, splinters and poker chips.

There was a long silence. Twenty Marginalians stared at him. Tesla sat up, brushed the dust from his black suit, straightened his collar, and asked politely, in his careful accented English, whether anyone had a voltmeter.

Nobody did. Nobody knew what one was. But a young woman in black-and-gold livery pushed through the crowd, put a blanket around his shoulders and a cup of tea in his hands, and asked if he was hurt. That was Alise Wellington, and that was the beginning of everything.

Tesla was the first arrival in Marginalia, and for eleven days he was the only one. They were, he later told Bekah, some of the most extraordinary days of his life.

He had arrived in a world that ran on candles, water wheels and Inkbinder runes, and it was full of energy nobody had tried to measure. The Inkwash hummed. The rune-lamps of the Archive flickered at frequencies he could hear. The ground under Dogear Crossing had a slow, deep pulse he could feel through the soles of his shoes. He filled a notebook in three days. He filled a second in two. Nib Sparkwhistle, a goblin inventor from the Cogwarrens under the town, ran all the way to the Folded Corner, knocked over three tables and begged to become his apprentice. Tesla, who had never had much patience for assistants, found he liked the goblin's questions, and said yes.

On the twelfth day, a second stranger fell out of the sky. Then a third. By the end of the month there were dozens,

NIKOLA TESLA, CONTINUED

and Tesla was the one they brought them to, because he had been there longest and because he could explain, in patient and precise language, that no, this was not a dream, and yes, they were in another world, and no, he did not yet know how to get home.

He wanted to. He was desperate to. He had work unfinished: a tower on Long Island that he believed could send energy through the air to anyone who needed it, freely, across the whole world. He talked about it constantly, sketching it on napkins at the Folded Corner until Alise started keeping a special stack of napkins just for him. Wardenclyffe, he called it. A gift to everybody.

When the Travelers arrived and explained the shards, Tesla was the first arrival to understand them. He had held one. He had measured it, briefly. He knew in his fingertips that it was a kind of resonance, a vibration in time itself. And he was the first to ask the question that mattered: "If it can be cracked by a frequency, can it be mended by one?"

That question became the chapter cards. It was Tesla's resonance theory, Devin's engineering and the Inkbinders' ink that made the first card glow.

It was also Tesla who faced the first Echo.

Every shard that cracks releases an Echo, and the crack in Tesla's shard released the most dangerous kind: not a copy of Tesla the man, but of Tesla the legend. The mad scientist. The wizard of lightning. The genius who could do anything and was bitter at the world that did not deserve him. The Echo of the Inventor seized an old mill outside Dogear Crossing, filled it with crackling coils and armies of clockwork tinkers, and began pulling pieces of every workshop in history into it: Menlo Park, Pittsburgh, Colorado Springs, all at once.

Tesla walked out to the mill with the Travelers and the first Reader, and looked at the thing that wore his face.

"That is not me," he said quietly. "That is what they say about me."

He did not fight the Echo himself. He stood behind the Reader, as a Leader does, and lent his strength through the cards: his patience, his precision, his real genius, which was never about lightning bolts and always about careful work. Tinker by tinker, circuit by circuit, the Echo's workshop came apart. When it finally broke, it dissolved into ink and purple dust, and in the Archive on the Spine, the fading page of Nikola Tesla's chapter darkened again, whole and clear.

Tesla could have gone home then. His shard was mended. He chose not to, yet.

"There are others still waiting," he said. "And my tower was always meant to help everybody. Perhaps this is the tower."

Now he leads the inventors of Marginalia, standing behind every Reader who fights with Gold. His Command, Wardenclyffe Tower, raises his old dream in a single turn: a spire of humming copper that pours energy to every Inventor on the field. It is, he says, not quite what he pictured on Long Island. But it works. And it helps. That is enough.

He still has not found a voltmeter in Marginalia. Devin built him one. Tesla says it is almost adequate, and uses it every day.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Nikola Tesla (1856 to 1943) was born in Smiljan, in today's Croatia, and arrived in New York in 1884 with very little money. His alternating-current induction motor, patented in 1888 and licensed to George Westinghouse, became the basis of modern power grids. AC lit the 1893 Chicago World's Fair and powered the Niagara Falls plant. His Wardenclyffe Tower on Long Island, meant for wireless communication and power, was never finished and was demolished in 1917. He died in a New York hotel room in January 1943.

MASTERY · TESLA

Lord of Lightning

Tesla mastery

What Tesla and Nib built on the roof of the Folded Corner.

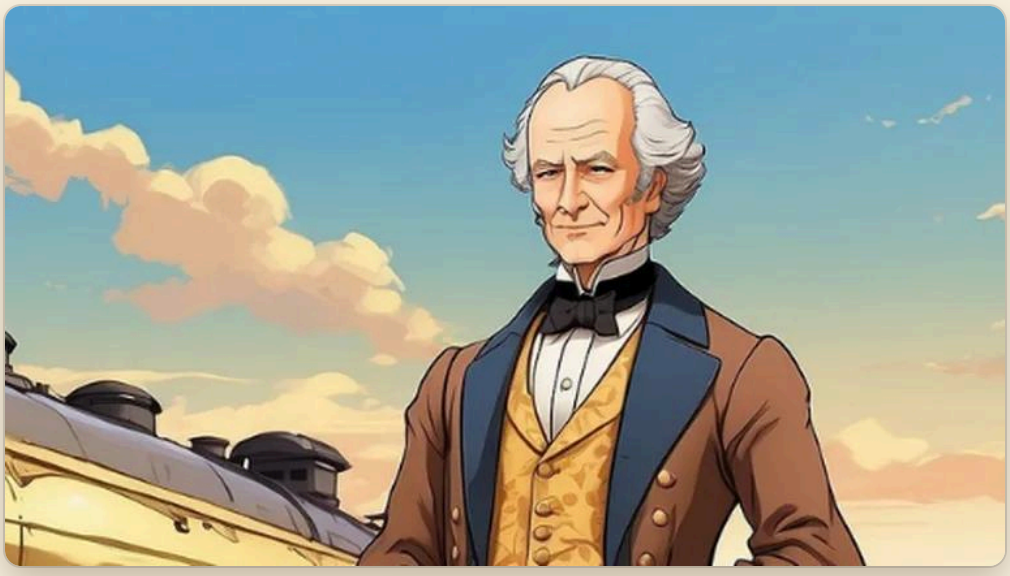
Nib Sparkwhistle calls it the Little Tower. Alise Wellington calls it the reason the tavern's lamps never go out. Captain Isguard calls it a fire hazard and has filed three complaints.

It stands on the roof of the Folded Corner, right beside the round window where Tesla fell through: a slim spire of copper coils about twice the height of a man, humming softly day and night. Tesla and Nib built it together over one long summer, from Drack Balistar's scrap copper, Devin's refined shard dust and a great deal of arguing.

It is a small, working version of Wardenclyffe. It draws a gentle current from the deep pulse under Dogear Crossing and sends it, through the air, to every lamp in the Folded Corner and half the houses on the market square. No wires. No charge. Tesla insisted on that part.

The Marginalians who used to be afraid of the man who fell through the roof now come to watch the Little Tower glow on summer evenings. Children dare each other to touch the fence around it. Jane has written a song about it that, for once, Bekah says is entirely accurate.

Tesla stands on the roof some nights, watching the lights of the town, and does not say anything for a long time. Nib, beside him, for once, doesn't either.



Cornelius Vanderbilt

Shipping tycoon who turned water into wealth and competitors into footnotes.

GOLD · ARRIVAL

Thomas Edison

The other one

He arrived with a lightbulb in his pocket and an argument already underway.

Thomas Edison arrived in Marginalia three weeks after Tesla, and the first thing he asked was whether Tesla was there. When told yes, he sighed deeply and asked where the nearest workshop was.

The two of them had worked together once, briefly, in New York, and it had ended badly. Now they were the only two electrical men in an entire world, and Dogear Crossing had to watch them rediscover their rivalry in public. Edison set up a workshop in an empty granary across the square from the Folded Corner. He filled it with assistants within a week (Marginalians, mostly, who had never been paid so regularly in their lives) and began inventing at a pace that frightened the Inkbinders.

Edison is brilliant, tireless and a born businessman, and to the Marginalians he is the most modern thing they have ever met. He electrified the granary. He built a phonograph that plays Jane's songs back. He put up a lightbulb on the market square and charged a copper to stand under it.

Nib Sparkwhistle calls him "the other one." Edison pretends not to hear. Devin, who has been asked to take a job at the granary six times, has become an expert at changing the subject.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Thomas Edison (1847 to 1931) opened his Menlo Park laboratory in New Jersey in 1876 and became one of history's most productive inventors, with 1,093 U.S. patents. He invented the phonograph in 1877 and developed a practical, long-lasting incandescent lightbulb in 1879. In the "War of the Currents" his direct current lost out to the alternating current backed by Westinghouse and Tesla.

GOLD · ARRIVAL

Alexander Graham Bell

The first voice on the wire

He strung a wire from the Archive to the Folded Corner and said, "Calvin, come here."

Alexander Graham Bell was pulled into Marginalia with a coil of wire over one shoulder, and he considered it the most useful thing he could have been holding.

Marginalia had no quick way to send a message. You wrote a letter, or you gave it to a Longroad Lancer and waited. Bell was appalled. Within a month of arriving, he had strung a telephone line from Calvin Pennywevvy's desk in the Archive to the bar of the Folded Corner, a full day's ride, with the help of the Bridgecrew and every goblin in the Cogwarrens.

The first message ever sent on it was, "Calvin, come here. I want to see you." Calvin, who didn't know it was a joke, got on a horse.

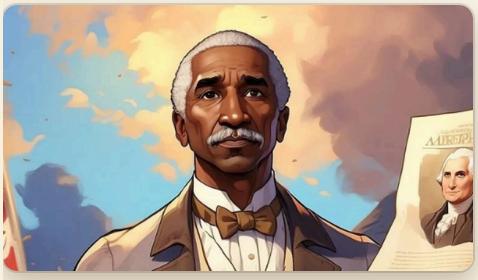
The line has changed Marginalia. When a rift opens, the news can now reach the Guardsmen in minutes. When an arrival lands in Dogear Crossing, the Registrar knows before they have finished their tea. The Lancers were worried the telephone would put them out of work. Bell spent an evening explaining to them that someone still had to ride out and help.

Bell also spends two afternoons a week at the Order of the Lamp's school, teaching deaf Marginalian children, and he considers it the best work he does here.

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL, CONTINUED

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Alexander Graham Bell (1847 to 1922) was granted a U.S. patent for the telephone on March 7, 1876. Three days later he made the first successful call to his assistant: "Mr. Watson, come here. I want to see you." Bell also spent much of his life teaching deaf students, work he considered his most important.



GOLD · ARRIVAL

George Washington Carver

Peanuts in everything

He found Marginalia's soil tired, and made it sing.

George Washington Carver arrived in a field. He knelt down before he even stood up, took a handful of soil, smelled it and frowned.

The farms around Dogear Crossing had been growing the same grain for generations, and the soil was tired. Carver spent his first month walking every field in the district, talking to farmers, digging little holes and writing in a notebook. Then he gave a talk in the market square, and the farmers, who had come mostly to see the stranger, went home arguing about crop rotation.

A year later, the harvest was the best in living memory.

Carver is gentle, patient and endlessly curious, and he treats everything that grows as a mystery worth solving. He has found forty uses for the Inkwash reed. He taught Elbert Rudrem a peanut salve for sore joints. He gave Sengrid Asimov three hundred ideas for peanuts, and Bertha Bute several more than she wanted.

Carver also has the quality, rare in any world, of never holding a grudge. He was born into slavery and faced closed doors his whole life, and he met every one of them with more work, done better. The Bulwark knights have adopted his card as a sort of emblem: the one who holds.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

George Washington Carver (c. 1864 to 1943) was born into slavery in Missouri and became a pioneering agricultural scientist at the Tuskegee Institute from 1896. He taught Southern farmers to rotate crops like peanuts and sweet potatoes to restore soil worn out by cotton, and developed hundreds of uses for those crops. Contrary to popular belief, he did not invent peanut butter.

GOLD · ARRIVAL

Orville Wright

Twelve seconds over the sand

The first man to fly, and the first to fall into Marginalia from a sand dune.

Of all the arrivals, Orville Wright has the strangest feeling about the Travelers, because they were there. Not that he saw them. But Bekah has told him about standing on the dunes at Kitty Hawk, cheering unseen, watching his twelve seconds in the air. Orville finds it both touching and slightly unnerving to know he had an audience.

His shard was waiting in the sand where the Travelers had stood. He found it a few days after the first flight, walking the dunes alone to think about wing warping,

ORVILLE WRIGHT, CONTINUED

and picked it up because it glinted.

In Marginalia, Orville is quieter than his brother, shy in company and fierce in the workshop. He has become fast friends with Amelia Earhart, who treats him with a kind of joyful reverence that embarrasses him deeply. He is helping Devin and the goblins build gliders for the Dogear Crossing Flying School. He considers the Marginalian winds, which blow very steadily down the Spine, the finest flying weather he has ever seen.

He still doesn't like to be called the first man to fly. "We flew," he says. "Wilbur and I. It was always both of us."

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

On December 17, 1903, near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, Orville Wright made the first powered, controlled airplane flight: 12 seconds and about 120 feet. He and his brother Wilbur, bicycle makers from Dayton, Ohio, made four flights that day. Wilbur's last covered 852 feet in 59 seconds.

GOLD · ARRIVAL

Wilbur Wright

The one who ran beside the wing

Bekah wrote down the way he ran beside the wing. He was surprised anyone noticed.

Bekah's notes on the first flight have a line that Wilbur Wright has read many times. It says: "The older brother ran alongside, holding the wingtip steady, then let go, and stood watching with his hands still half raised, as if he could hold it up from the ground."

Wilbur arrived in Marginalia two weeks after his brother, through a shard that fell into their bicycle shop in Dayton. He came looking for Orville. He found him within a day, in the Cogwarrens, covered in goblin grease, arguing happily about propellers.

In Marginalia, Wilbur is the planner and the talker of the pair: the one who writes the letters, gives the lectures and negotiates with the Bridgecrew for canvas. He and Orville are rarely apart for long. The card game remembers that. Each brother is at his best when the other is on the field.

Wilbur is also, quietly, one of Bekah's favorite people in Marginalia. He is thoughtful, dry and precise, and he writes the best letters of any arrival. When she showed him her line about him running beside the wing, he read it twice and said, "I didn't know anyone saw that." Then, after a moment: "Thank you for writing it down."

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Wilbur Wright (1867 to 1912) was the older of the Wright brothers. At Kitty Hawk on December 17, 1903, he ran beside the wing to steady the Flyer on Orville's first flight, then piloted the longest flight of the day. His public flights in France in 1908 made the brothers world famous. He died of typhoid fever in 1912.

GOLD · ARRIVAL

Andrew Carnegie

Steel, and libraries

A steel king who fell in love with the Archive.

Andrew Carnegie arrived in Marginalia and did two things within a week. He found the best iron ore in the Rimefold foothills, and he found the Archive of Lost Histories.

The first made him very interested. The second made him cry.

Carnegie had spent the last part of his life giving away his fortune, much of it to build free public libraries, because as a poor immigrant boy in Pittsburgh he had been allowed to borrow books from a local colonel's private library, and it had changed his life. The Archive, a library that holds every lost chapter of history, open to anyone who walks up the hill, was everything he believed in, built long before he was born.

He has offered to fund its restoration. The Inkbinders, suspicious of rich strangers, have so far politely declined. Carnegie keeps asking.

In the meantime, he builds. His foundry outside Bindwell makes the steel golems Readers summon to the battlefield, great guardians of iron and shard dust. The Bridgecrew call him the Iron Laird. Captain Isguard, who distrusts him, has read up on the Homestead strike and asked him about it directly. Carnegie didn't have a good answer. Bekah wrote that down, too.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Andrew Carnegie (1835 to 1919) emigrated from Scotland as a boy, started work as a bobbin boy at 13 and built one of the largest steel companies in the world. The bloody Homestead Strike at one of his mills in 1892 is a lasting stain on his record. After selling his company in 1901 he gave away most of his fortune, funding more than 2,500 public libraries around the world.

GOLD · ARRIVAL

John Henry

The steel-driving man

A legend who arrived as a person, and is still both.

John Henry is a different kind of arrival, and the Inkbinders are still arguing about him.

Most arrivals are real people who picked up a shard. John Henry is a legend, a song sung by railroad crews and passed down for more than a century. When a shard cracked in the tunnels of the 1870s, it caught something between the real man, whoever he was, and the story. What came through was a tall, broad, quiet man with a nine-pound hammer on his shoulder and no memory of anything except the work.

Bekah worried at first that he might be an Echo. He isn't. Echoes are hollow and loud. John Henry is warm, slow to speak and stubbornly kind. He works with the Bridgecrew on the stone bridges of the Inkwash, and he can drive a spike into granite with one swing.

Devin once asked him, carefully, whether he remembered racing the steam drill. John Henry thought about it for a long time. "I remember that I would not let a machine tell me what I was worth," he said. "I reckon that's the part that matters."

The Bridgecrew sing his song every night. He sings along.

JOHN HENRY, CONTINUED

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

John Henry is a hero of American folklore, a Black railroad worker who raced a steam-powered drill with a hammer and won, then died with his hammer in his hand. The legend is usually set in the 1870s during railroad tunnel building in West Virginia or Virginia. Historians think it may be based on a real worker, though who he was is still debated.

GOLD · ARRIVAL

George Westinghouse

The man who backed the current

He believed in Tesla when it mattered. He is still trying to make peace with Edison.

George Westinghouse arrived in Marginalia in the middle of an argument, which is to say, in the middle of Dogear Crossing's market square, between Tesla and Edison.

He had been pulled in from the height of the War of the Currents, and the first thing he saw was his two great rivals, in their fifties, shouting at each other about whether the Folded Corner's new lamps should run on direct or alternating current. Westinghouse stood between them, said, very calmly, "Gentlemen, we have an audience," and they both stopped.

He has been the peacemaker ever since. Westinghouse is a solid, practical, generous engineer, as good at running a company as at inventing, and famous in his own century for treating his workers well. In Marginalia he has taken charge of the realm's first proper power line, from the Little Tower on the Folded Corner's roof to the Archive, and he runs it with the calm of a railway timetable.

He and Tesla are old friends. He and Edison are working on it.

In the card game, Westinghouse slows your rival down, so their characters arrive rested. Poppy Albright says it's because he makes everyone sit down and discuss things properly first.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

George Westinghouse (1846 to 1914) invented the railway air brake in 1869 and founded the Westinghouse Electric Company. He licensed Nikola Tesla's alternating-current patents in 1888, won the contract to light the 1893 Chicago World's Fair and built the AC power plant at Niagara Falls.

COBALT

Thinkers & Dreamers

Martin Luther King Jr.

He came through with a speech half-written in his pocket, and found a realm that needed to hear it.

Resolve and unity. Characters that survive pressure grow stronger together.

Their Echo: Echo of the Dreamer, the heart of The Dream.

★ **The March (3).** Your characters get +1/+1. If you control 4+ characters, recover 1 Life.

Neil Armstrong

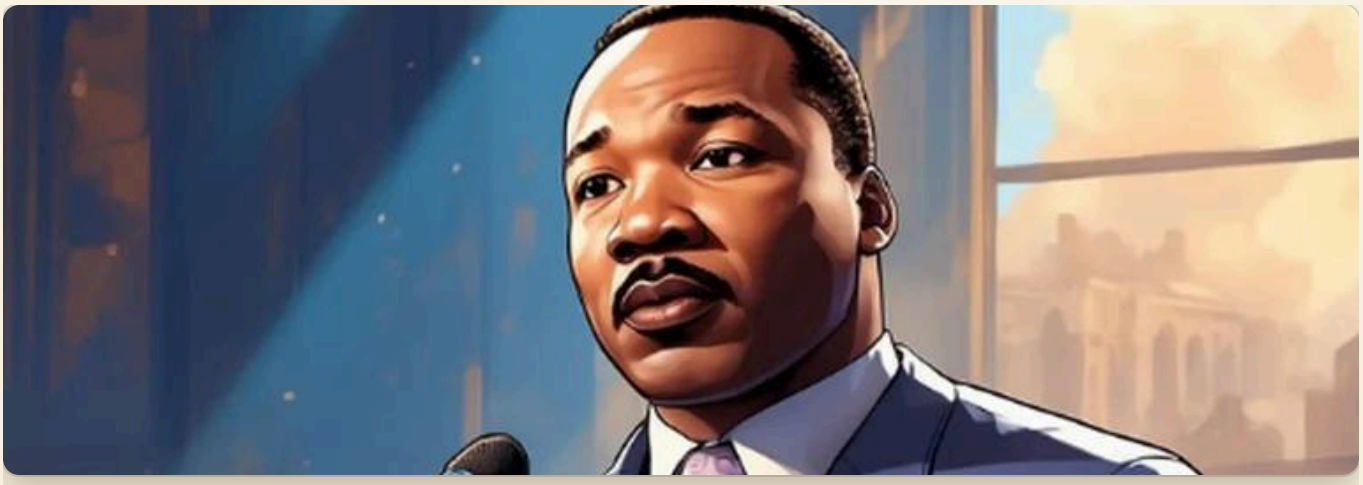
A glint in the grey dust of the Sea of Tranquility, and a landing nobody else could have made.

Planning and card flow. Dig for the right piece, then the Leader lands the blow.

★ **Giant Leap (2).** Look at the top 3 cards of your deck and take one. Your Leader gets +2 power and Double Chapter this turn.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Alexander Hamilton · Edgar Allan Poe · Emily Dickinson · P.T. Barnum · Rosa Parks · Harriet Tubman · Frederick Douglass · Robert Frost



COBALT · LEADER · COMMAND: THE MARCH

Martin Luther King Jr.

The dreamer in the gardens

The night before the March on Washington, in August 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. sat up late in a hotel room with a speech that was not finished.

He had drafts and notes and the advice of a dozen friends. Tomorrow he would stand on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in front of a quarter of a million people, and he wanted the words to be right. He went out to the window for some air, and on the sill, catching the lamplight, was a small stone that glowed a soft violet, like the sky just before dawn.

He picked it up, because it was beautiful. And the room, the city and the night all turned sideways.

"Forgive me, ma'am. I seem to have lost my way."

He arrived in Marginalia standing in a garden. It was the royal garden of Spinehold, early morning, with dew on the grass and bells ringing across Bindwell below, and the first person he saw was a woman in blue and gold with a silver crown, who had come out to walk alone before a difficult day. Queen Clarise looked at the tall stranger in his dark suit, holding a glowing stone and a sheaf of papers, and he looked at her, and after a moment he said, very courteously, "Forgive me, ma'am. I seem to have lost my way."

She invited him to walk with her. They walked for two hours.

This was early in the arrivals, and Marginalia was frightened. Echoes had begun appearing. The Closed Book had started painting slogans on walls. Some towns were barring their gates against strangers, and some strangers, pulled out of wars and rebellions, were quarrelling with each other and with their hosts. The Queen's Writ of Welcome and Warning had just been issued, and not everyone believed it would hold.

Dr. King listened to all of it. He asked questions: who was afraid, and of what, and why. He learned about the Folio Council and the seven orders, the welcomers and the wary, the Wildkin in the forest and the frost-born in the north. And then he did what he had always done. He went to the people.

He visited Dogear Crossing and sat in the Folded Corner with Marginalians who wanted the strangers gone, and he did not argue with them. He listened to Bertha Bute complain for forty minutes about mud on her floors, and at the end he thanked her, sincerely, for feeding his fellow travelers anyway. He walked into Errata Harbor, where the Guardsmen and the Bridgecrew were close to open fighting, and talked with both sides until they sat down together. He spoke in the market square at Bindwell about how two peoples can share one home without either one having to disappear, and the crowd that came to jeer stayed to listen.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., CONTINUED

He never once told Marginalians they had to love the arrivals. He told them that they could, and that it would make them stronger, and then he showed them what that looked like.

It was not all peaceful. The Echo of the Dreamer, born when his shard cracked, was the strangest and most unsettling Echo the Travelers had yet faced: a vast, booming voice that filled the Archive's great hall with a crowd of shadows, speaking beautiful words with nothing true behind them. It did not want to heal anything. It wanted an audience. It wanted every voice in the room to become its voice.

Dr. King faced it standing beside the Reader, and he did not raise his voice.

"A dream," he said, "is not a speech. It is a promise to work." And he lent the Reader his real strength, which was never only eloquence but endurance, patience and the steady refusal to let anyone be left behind. The Reader's characters held together. They did not break when they were pushed. They grew stronger the more of them stood side by side. And the Echo's borrowed words ran out.

When it broke, his page in the Archive shone again, and Bekah, who had been watching from the gallery, found she was crying.

He has chosen to stay a while. There are still towns in Marginalia that bar their gates, still Closed Book slogans on the walls, still frightened people on both sides. "I have been in places like this before," he told the Queen. "It's the most important work there is."

He leads the thinkers and dreamers of Cobalt now. His Command, The March, gathers every character on the field and makes them stronger together. It works best with a crowd. He says that's the point.

He still carries his speech in his pocket. He has added a few lines, he says, from things he learned in Marginalia. When he goes home, he will be back in that hotel room on the night before the march, at the very moment he left, and in the morning he will stand in front of a quarter of a million people.

He already knows the words are right.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Martin Luther King Jr. (1929 to 1968) was a Baptist minister who led the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 and 1956 and helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. He was jailed in Birmingham in 1963, where he wrote his famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail." On August 28, 1963, he gave his "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington. In 1964, at 35, he received the Nobel Peace Prize. He was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968.

MASTERY · DR. KING

Keeper of the Dream

Dr. King mastery

The day the gates of Harrowgate opened.

Harrowgate was the last town in Marginalia to keep its gates barred against the arrivals. It sits in the hills south of Bindwell, a proud old wool town, and when the Closed Book's slogans first appeared, Harrowgate's council voted to shut the gates and turn every stranger away.

For three months, the gates stayed closed. Arrivals who wandered toward Harrowgate were turned back at the walls. Twice, Guardsmen had to stop a crowd from throwing stones.

Dr. King went to Harrowgate on foot. He did not bring soldiers. He brought a few friends, Marginalian and arrival: Elbert Rudrem, Frederick Douglass, Sir Henry John's in his plain clothes, Bella Bute, who insisted. They stood outside the closed gates and asked to speak with the town council. They were refused. They came back the next day, and the next.

On the ninth day, a Harrowgate farmer came out alone with a basket of bread, because it was cold and they had been standing there a long time. Dr. King thanked her and asked her name. They talked for an hour. The next day she

KEEPER OF THE DREAM, CONTINUED

came back with her husband. The day after that, with her neighbors.

On the twentieth day the gates opened, from the inside.

There is no statue of that day in Harrowgate. There is a bench outside the gate, where anyone may sit and talk, and a small plaque that says only: Here, we listened.

Washington, First President

Reluctant ruler who established presidential precedents while refusing a crown and battling terrible teeth.

James Madison, Constitution Lead

Scholarly architect of democracy whose brilliant mind designed a government system while barely standing five feet tall.

COBALT · LEADER · COMMAND: GIANT LEAP

Neil Armstrong

The quiet one from the Moon

Neil Armstrong was the last person anyone expected to pick up a strange stone. He was a test pilot and an engineer: careful, methodical, famously calm, a man who read every checklist twice. On the Moon, every movement had been planned, and every second counted.

But this was after the moonwalk. Back inside the lunar module Eagle, in the quiet hours before they would lift off and rejoin Michael Collins in orbit, Armstrong noticed something stuck in the grey dust on the edge of his boot. A tiny violet glint. It had not come from the Moon. He was sure of that. Nothing on the Moon was that color.

The engineer in him wanted a sample. He peeled it off his boot.

"I was the one who got to take the step. There were four hundred thousand people behind it."

The cabin flickered, and Eagle, and the Moon, and the whole wide black sky folded away.

Armstrong arrived in Marginalia the way nobody else ever has: slowly. He came drifting down out of a clear night sky over Bindwell like a feather, as if he had brought a little of the Moon's gentle gravity with him, still wearing the lower half of his spacesuit. He landed on the copper dome of the Archive's old observatory, rolled once, caught himself on the edge of a skylight and hung there, considering his position, until two very startled Inkbinders opened the window and helped him inside.

"Thank you," he said. "Where am I?" And then, before they could answer, because he could see the night sky through the skylight: "Those aren't my stars."

They weren't. Marginalia's constellations are its own.

Of all the arrivals, Armstrong adapted the fastest and complained the least. He had trained his entire life for situations where something went badly wrong far from home and nobody could help, and the answer was always the same: stay calm, work the problem, one step at a time. He registered at the Archive without fuss. He thanked Calvin Pennywevvy for his paperwork, which nobody else had ever done, and Calvin talks about it still. Within a week he had spent every night in the observatory with the Inkbinders' star-charts, mapping Marginalia's sky. Within a month he had noticed something nobody in Marginalia had: one of the stars was moving.

It was not a star. It was a rift, far above the world, slowly opening.

Armstrong is not a man who makes speeches, but he made a short one to the Folio Council. He explained, in plain, patient language, what he had seen and what it might mean. Then he asked for three things: a team, a workshop and Devin Roberts.

NEIL ARMSTRONG, CONTINUED

That is how the Moonshot began. Not the storm that Readers fight, that came later, but a project. Armstrong, Devin, Nib Sparkwhistle and a small team of Inkbinders set out to understand the high rift. They built instruments. They measured. They made careful, patient plans. And when the rift finally spat out a shard storm, a spinning twist of launch towers, countdowns and roaring engines, Armstrong was the one who worked out that the storm could be scrubbed, like a launch, if it was hit at the right moment. That discovery is why Readers know to strike the Moonshot's Leader before the count reaches zero.

Collin Roberts adores him. Armstrong, who rarely says more than he needs to, once told Collin he had "the right kind of nerve," and Collin has not stopped smiling about it since. Alex Wellington, who served him a cup of cocoa on his first night in Dogear Crossing, was so overwhelmed that he forgot to charge him. Armstrong came back the next day to pay.

His Echo was the quietest the Travelers ever faced: a silent, silver shape that stood in the observatory looking up, planting flag after flag after flag on nothing, trying to be the first to everything forever. Armstrong looked at it for a long while.

"I was never the first," he said at last. "I was the one who got to take the step. There were four hundred thousand people behind it."

He leads the explorers of the Cobalt sky now. As a Leader he plans more than he fights: digging for the right card, putting the right piece in place, and then striking once, precisely, at exactly the right moment. His Command, Giant Leap, lets a Reader study the top of their deck, choose the one card they need, and then land a blow worth two.

He still keeps the violet stone in a sample bag in his pocket. Devin has asked to study it. Armstrong said yes, of course, but asked to have it back afterwards. When he goes home, he'll step back into Eagle at the exact moment he left, with the Moon outside the window, and he would like, he says, to have something to remember Marginalia by.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Neil Armstrong (1930 to 2012) was a Navy pilot in the Korean War, a test pilot of the rocket-powered X-15 and commander of Gemini 8, where he saved the mission during a dangerous spin in 1966. On July 20, 1969, he and Buzz Aldrin landed Apollo 11's lunar module Eagle in the Sea of Tranquility, and Armstrong became the first person to walk on the Moon. He later taught aerospace engineering and was famously modest about his achievements.

MASTERY · ARMSTRONG

Moonwalker

Armstrong mastery

A map of the stars that no one in Marginalia had ever drawn.

Before Neil Armstrong arrived, Marginalians had never really mapped their own sky. They had names for the brightest stars and songs about the constellations, but the Inkbinders' star-charts were old, beautiful and mostly wrong.

Armstrong spent a year of nights in the Archive's observatory fixing them. He did it the way he did everything: methodically, patiently, one careful measurement at a time. He taught three young Inkbinders to use a sextant. He taught Alex Wellington to find north without a compass. He built, with Devin and Nib, the largest telescope in the realm, and he let every child in Bindwell look through it at least once.

The map he made hangs in the great hall of the Archive now: every star in Marginalia's sky, with its Marginalian name beside the number Armstrong gave it. At the very top, marked in careful red ink, is the high rift that he found, the one that spawns the Moonshot storms. Beside it, in his small neat handwriting, is a note: Still watching.

At the very bottom, in a corner, is a tiny pencil sketch of the Earth's Moon as it looks from Tranquility Base. He says he put it there so that nobody in Marginalia would ever wonder where the Moonwalker was from.

COBALT · ARRIVAL

Alexander Hamilton

The one who never stopped writing

He arrived with ink on his fingers and left Calvin a forty-page memo.

Alexander Hamilton arrived in Marginalia on a Tuesday, registered at the Archive on Wednesday and delivered a forty-page memo on the reform of Marginalian finances to Calvin Pennywevvy on Thursday. Calvin has read it four times. He says it is the most exciting thing he has ever been given.

Hamilton is quick, restless, brilliant, argumentative and absolutely unable to leave a problem alone. Marginalia's treasury, run for centuries on the principle that the Queen was sensible and nobody asked many questions, has given him an enormous amount to do. He has proposed a national bank, a system of bridge bonds and a new coin. The Bridgecrew hate all of it. The Merchants' Guild is intrigued. The Queen has asked him, politely, to write shorter memos.

He has also found an old friend. Hamilton served as George Washington's aide during the Revolution, and when they met again at Spinehold, Washington shook his hand for a long time. Hamilton has become, unofficially, the general's secretary once more.

There are two Hamilton cards in the game, a young hopeful and an advisor, and Bekah thinks that's right. He is both, all the time.

He and Aaron Burr are not permitted in the same room. Captain Isguard enforces this personally.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Alexander Hamilton (1755 or 1757 to 1804) was born in the West Indies, came to New York as a young man and served as George Washington's aide during the Revolution. He wrote 51 of the 85 Federalist essays supporting the Constitution and became the first Secretary of the Treasury. He died after a duel with Aaron Burr in July 1804.

COBALT · ARRIVAL

Edgar Allan Poe

The poet and the Raven

He broke his own Echo by reading the true lines back at it.

Edgar Allan Poe arrived in Marginalia on a stormy night, which he found entirely appropriate, and was at first extremely suspicious of it. A world that exists in the margins of history, a library of lost chapters, a queen, a raven circling the tower? He assumed he had finally written himself into one of his own stories.

The raven turned out to be Ink, a clever black bird who lives in the Archive's rafters. Poe and Ink took an instant and deep dislike to one another, then an instant and deep liking. Ink sits on his shoulder now whenever he visits the Archive.

Poe's Echo, the Echo of the Raven, was the first Echo to attack the Archive itself: a whirlwind of black feathers and torn pages that screamed one word, over and over, and blew the stacks apart. Sir Henry John's held the great doors shut with his shoulders. And Poe, pale, shaking and very brave, walked into the storm with a copy of his poem and read the true lines back at it until the Echo came apart into ink.

It was the moment Sir Henry decided the arrivals were friends.

Poe is gloomy, witty, sensitive and more fun than he would like anyone to know. He is secretly delighted that the Archive has a Raven Room.

EDGAR ALLAN POE, CONTINUED

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Edgar Allan Poe (1809 to 1849) was an American poet, short-story writer and critic. His poem "The Raven," published in January 1845, made him famous, though he earned very little from it. His 1841 story "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" is often called the first modern detective story.

COBALT · ARRIVAL

Emily Dickinson

The poet in the garden

She says very little, and she means all of it.

Emily Dickinson arrived in the royal gardens of Spinehold, sat down on a bench among the roses and did not get up for most of a day. The gardeners left her alone. At sunset, Queen Clarise came out to see who the visitor was, sat down on the other end of the bench, and the two women watched the light fade over Bindwell without saying anything. It was, the Queen said afterwards, one of the best conversations she has ever had.

Emily lives in the garden cottage now. She rarely visits the town. She rarely speaks at all, and when she does, it is short and strange and exactly right, like her poems.

She writes constantly, on scraps of paper, envelopes and the backs of Calvin's forms. Bekah visits her every week, and they sit together writing in silence. Bekah says it is the most peaceful hour in her week.

In her own lifetime, almost nobody read Emily's poems. In Marginalia, word has spread, and people leave notes on the garden gate: a line they loved, a question, a pressed flower. She reads every one. Sometimes, the next morning, there is an answer tucked into the gate.

Emily says Marginalia is the first place she has ever lived that feels like it was written in the right size.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Emily Dickinson (1830 to 1886) lived almost all her life in Amherst, Massachusetts, and wrote nearly 1,800 poems. Only about ten were published during her lifetime, mostly without her name. After her death, her sister Lavinia found the poems, and she came to be recognized as one of America's greatest poets.

COBALT · ARRIVAL

P.T. Barnum

Ringmaster of the Margins

Within a week he had sold tickets to the arrival of the next arrival.

P. T. Barnum arrived in Marginalia and, within a week, was selling tickets to it.

He saw at once what nobody else had: that a world full of astonishing strangers from history was the greatest show on earth, or off it. He set up a striped tent on the edge of Dogear Crossing and began charging admission to see "LIVING LEGENDS OF THE AGES." The first week he had Paul Bunyan, a juggling Bridgecrew sailor and a goblin cannon demonstration by Nib Sparkwhistle. The crowds were enormous.

P.T. BARNUM, CONTINUED

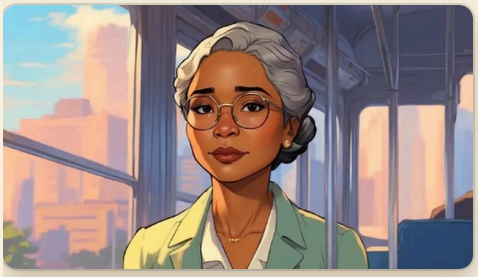
The Queen was not pleased. Isguard was furious. And Bekah had a long, serious talk with Barnum about the difference between showing people and showing people off. Barnum, to his credit, listened. He knows his own history better than he lets on.

Now the tent is different. Every performer is paid, and every one of them chose to be there. Arrivals come to tell their own stories on the stage, in their own words, and Marginalians come to listen. Frederick Douglass has spoken there to a full house. Jane sings there on Saturdays.

Barnum is still a showman to the tips of his fingers. But he says Marginalia is the first place he's found where the truth draws a bigger crowd than the humbug.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

P.T. Barnum (1810 to 1891) was a showman who ran the popular American Museum in New York from 1841 and later co-founded the circus that became "Barnum & Bailey." He was a master of publicity and spectacle. Some of his early shows exploited and mistreated people, which historians rightly criticize. He later served in the Connecticut legislature and as mayor of Bridgeport.



COBALT · ARRIVAL

Rosa Parks

The one who would not move

The Bulwark knights asked her to teach them how to stand. She told them it isn't about standing.

The Travelers had watched the bus in Montgomery pull away. It is the moment Bekah finds hardest to write about, and she has tried many times.

Rosa Parks found her shard the following spring, on the seat of the same bus, and arrived in Marginalia sitting very upright on a bench in the market square of Dogear Crossing, holding her purse.

She is quiet, dignified, precise and absolutely immovable when she has decided something is right. The Marginalians did not know her history, but they recognized her character at once. The Knights of the Bulwark, whose motto is "to hold, not to break," invited her to their fortress to speak. The knights expected a lecture on courage. Instead she told them, calmly, about years of careful work before that December evening: meetings, organizing, records of injustice kept in neat handwriting, a community that had prepared together.

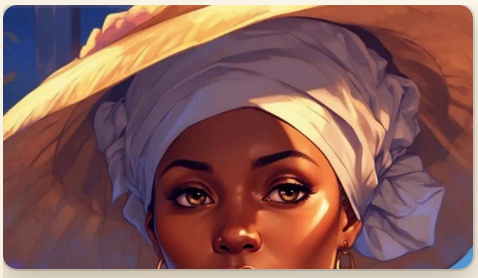
"People think I was just tired," she told them. "I wasn't tired. I was ready. So were a lot of other people."

The Bulwark have that written above the door of their training hall now.

In the card game, Rosa Parks carries Protest, Guard and Resolve. Bekah says it's the only card in the set whose rules text is also a biography.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a seamstress and secretary of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP, was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, city bus to a white passenger. Her arrest sparked the 381-day Montgomery Bus Boycott, which ended after the Supreme Court ruled bus segregation unconstitutional. She later said the only tired she was, was tired of giving in.



COBALT · ARRIVAL

Harriet Tubman

Conductor

She arrived in the Inkwash, and she brought everyone out of the first rift.

Harriet Tubman arrived in the Inkwash. The river was high and cold that night, and she came up out of the dark water two miles below Dogear Crossing, climbed out on her own and walked to the nearest light, which was the kitchen door of the Folded Corner. Bertha Bute opened it, took one look, sat her by the fire and fed her soup until she was warm. Neither of them said a word. They have been fast friends ever since.

A week later, the first big rift opened in the fields east of town, and a dozen Marginalian farmers were trapped inside it, lost in the shifting tangle of eras. The Guardsmen couldn't find a way through. Harriet Tubman went in alone at night, with a lantern, and came back at dawn with every one of them. Nobody knows how she did it. She says she has always been good at finding the way out of places people aren't supposed to leave.

She has done it four more times since. Collin Roberts, who has scouted more rifts than anyone, asked her to teach him. She agreed, on one condition: he had to learn to keep quiet. He is still working on it.

Among the Marginalians she is simply called the Conductor. Nobody in the realm has ever been left behind while she was nearby.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Harriet Tubman (c. 1822 to 1913) escaped slavery in Maryland in 1849 and returned about thirteen times to guide roughly seventy people to freedom on the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War she served as a Union scout and spy, and in 1863 helped lead the Combahee River Raid, which freed more than 700 enslaved people.

COBALT · ARRIVAL

Frederick Douglass

The voice in the Archive

He read the Archive's page about himself, and asked for a pen.

When Frederick Douglass was registered at the Archive of Lost Histories, Calvin Pennywevvy showed him the living page for his chapter, as the Archive does for every arrival. Douglass read it carefully. It was the old Inkbinder style: a list of dates and facts, correct in every detail, and entirely without him in it.

He handed it back and asked for a pen.

He spent the next three days in the Archive, writing. When he finished, the page had changed. It was his story, in his own words. The Inkbinders were astonished. No one had ever rewritten their own page before. Bekah Kent, who had just started writing the Archive's records as stories, read it and realized she had been right all along.

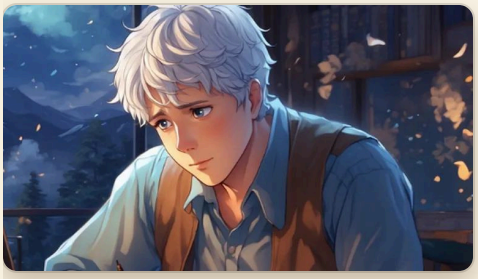
Douglass fought his whole life to tell his own story, and to insist on the right of others to tell theirs. In Marginalia he has found an Archive full of people who were never allowed to. He spends most days in the lower stacks with Sir Henry John's, the scholar-knight, reading lost chapters aloud and arguing about them. He speaks at Barnum's tent to full crowds.

When he read Bekah's entry about him, the one you are reading now, he said only, "Yes. That is right." She keeps that moment close.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS, CONTINUED

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Frederick Douglass (c. 1818 to 1895) escaped slavery in 1838 and became one of the most powerful speakers and writers in American history. His autobiography, "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass," was published in 1845. On July 5, 1852, in Rochester, New York, he delivered the speech "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" He later advised President Lincoln and served as U.S. Marshal and minister to Haiti.



COBALT · ARRIVAL

Robert Frost

Two roads in a yellow wood

He found a fork in a path in the Deckle Wilds, and stood there a long time.

Robert Frost arrived at a fork in a path in the Deckle Wilds, which he has said was either a coincidence or a very poor joke.

He stood there for a long time. Then he took the one less traveled by, because of course he did, and it led him, after a day and a night, to Elfie Layloft's ranger post at the edge of the forest. She asked him if he was lost. He said he wasn't sure yet, and she liked him immediately.

Frost is a New England farmer at heart as much as a poet: dry, wry, stubborn and kind in a gruff sort of way. He has taken up a small farm on the edge of the Wilds, near the Rangers' post, where he mends walls, keeps a few apple trees and writes poems about the forest. The Rangers bring him news of the Blank Margin. He writes that down too.

In the card game, Frost searches your deck for a Location, and that seems right. He has always known that where you stand matters.

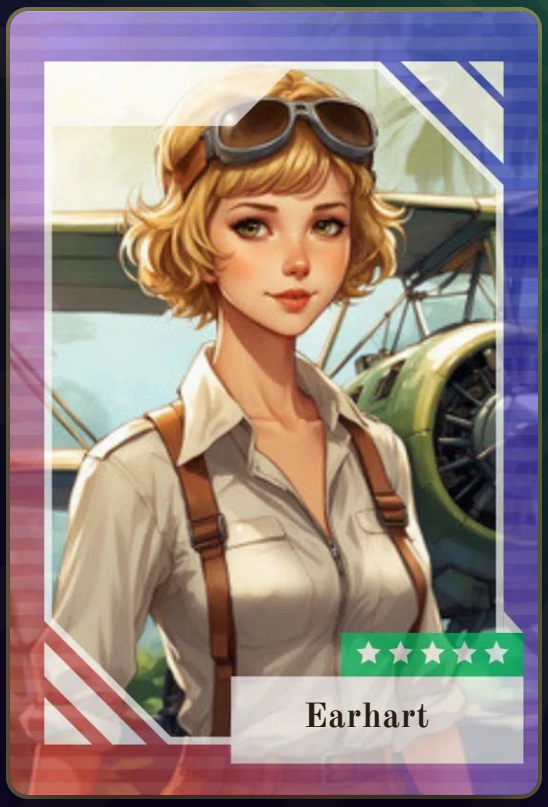
He has told Bekah he likes Marginalia very much but doesn't intend to stay forever. "I have promises to keep," he said. She knew the rest of the line, and didn't say it.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Robert Frost (1874 to 1963) was one of America's most popular poets, known for works like "The Road Not Taken" and "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." He won four Pulitzer Prizes. In 1961 he recited "The Gift Outright" at President John F. Kennedy's inauguration.

EMERALD

Frontier & Explorers



Amelia Earhart

Ice on the wings, a cracked altimeter, and a purple light in the dark over the ocean.

Evasion and tempo. Explorers fly over blockers and strike twice when it counts.

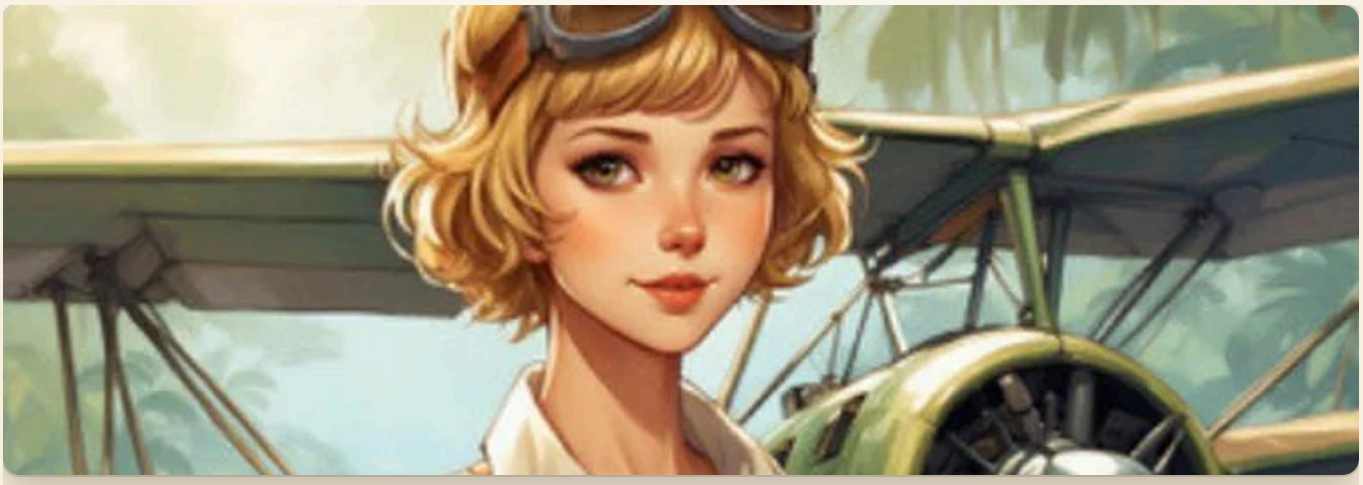
Their Echo: Echo of the Aviator, the heart of The Frontier.

★ **Across the Atlantic (3).** Refresh all your characters with Explore. They get +1/+0 this turn.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Theodore Roosevelt · Meriwether Lewis · William Clark · Sacagawea · Daniel Boone · Paul Bunyan & Babe · Alexander, George's Cat · Davy Crockett · Tisquantum (Squanto)

SIGNATURE CARDS OF THE EMERALD LEADER



EMERALD · LEADER · COMMAND: ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

Amelia Earhart

Across the Atlantic, and farther

The night of May 20, 1932, was not going well for Amelia Earhart, and she was loving every minute of it.

She was somewhere over the middle of the Atlantic, alone, in a small red Lockheed Vega, trying to become the first woman to fly across the ocean by herself. Her altimeter had failed, so she didn't know exactly how high she was. Ice was forming on her wings, dragging the little plane toward the black water. Flames were licking out of a cracked exhaust manifold. She was cold and tired and a very long way from anywhere.

She climbed, to get above the weather. She dove, to shake off the ice. She held the course.

And then something rattled across the cockpit floor. A small purple stone, glowing, rolling back and forth with every bump of the plane as if it had dropped out of the sky. Earhart had no idea where it had come from. She reached down to stop it rolling into the controls.

The Vega flew out of the storm and into a sky she had never seen.

It was dawn, but the wrong dawn: a soft gold light over a green country she didn't recognize, with a dark river winding through it and white mountains to the north. Her engine coughed. Her fuel was nearly gone. And far below she could see a crossroads town with a stone bridge and a lopsided clock tower.

She landed the Vega in a sheep pasture outside Dogear Crossing, bumped to a stop about ten feet from a very surprised flock, climbed out, pulled off her leather helmet and looked around.

The first person to reach her was Elfie Layloft, the horned Wildkin ranger from the Folded Corner stables, riding at a full gallop on a grey mare. Elfie reined in, stared at the smoking red machine, then at Earhart, and said, "Did you ride that thing here?"

"I did," said Earhart. "Did you ride that one?"

They were friends within the hour.

Earhart has always said that the best thing about flying is that nobody can tell you where you're allowed to go. In Marginalia, she found a whole world where nobody had ever flown at all, and she wanted to see every inch of it. She fixed the Vega with help from Devin and the goblins of the Cogwarrens, and she flew it everywhere. Over the Deckle Wilds, where the trails rearrange themselves and only the view from above makes sense of them. Over the Rimefold, dodging snow squalls. Along the whole length of the Inkwash to the sea. She mapped more of Marginalia in a month than its own cartographers had in a century, and she gave every map to the Longroad Lancers for free.

She also, very deliberately, taught. Every girl in Dogear Crossing who wanted to see the Vega got to sit in the pilot's seat. She gave lessons to Alex Wellington, and to three young Lancers, and to Bella Bute, who was terrified and wouldn't stop grinning. "The most effective way to do it," she told Bekah, "is to do it." Bekah wrote it on the wall of the attic.

The Echo of the Aviator was the hardest thing Earhart has ever faced, and she has faced a great deal. It did not come from her shard, the one that fell in 1932. It came from a crack much farther along her path, from a shard

AMELIA EARHART, CONTINUED

that lay somewhere over the Pacific, in 1937, on the flight from which she never came back. The Echo was a silver plane that never landed, circling the sky above the Deckle Wilds, flying a route that had no end, looking for an island that was never there.

Earhart knew what it was. The Travelers didn't tell her; she simply understood. She stood beside the Reader on the edge of the Wilds and watched it circle, and for a long time she didn't say anything.

Then she said, "Well. Let's bring her down gently."

The Reader flew over every blocker the Echo threw at them, with Earhart's strength in every Explorer card: fast, fearless, impossible to pin down. When the Echo finally broke, it didn't crash. It landed, softly, in a meadow, and dissolved into ink and gold light. And in the Archive, the page of Amelia Earhart's chapter came back whole.

She has chosen to stay a while. She has more maps to make.

She leads the explorers of Emerald now. Her Command, Across the Atlantic, stands every Explorer back up and sends them flying again. It is, she says, the feeling of climbing out of the storm into clear air.

When she does go home, she'll be back over the Atlantic, in the cold and the ice, at the exact moment she left. She will land in a pasture near Derry, Northern Ireland, and a farmhand will ask her if she has come far.

"From America," she'll say. And she'll smile, because that's only half of it.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Amelia Earhart (1897 to 1937) was a pioneering aviator and a tireless advocate for women in aviation. On May 20 and 21, 1932, she became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic, flying a red Lockheed Vega from Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, to a pasture near Derry, Northern Ireland, despite ice, a broken altimeter and a fuel leak. In July 1937, attempting to fly around the world, she and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the Pacific near Howland Island. Their fate remains unknown.

MASTERY · EARHART

Sky Pathfinder

Earhart mastery

The first flying school in Marginalia has twelve students and one very nervous sheep farmer.

The Dogear Crossing Flying School opened on a spring morning in a sheep pasture outside town: the same pasture where Amelia Earhart first landed her red Vega. The sheep farmer, a patient man named Hobb, was paid in flying lessons. He has not yet taken one.

There are twelve students. Alex Wellington was the first to sign up, and the first to solo, and he talked about nothing else for a month. Three are young Longroad Lancers who want to scout from the air. Two are goblins from the Cogwarrens who are mostly there to take the engine apart. One is a Wildkin ranger Elfie Layloft recommended. And one, to everyone's astonishment, is Bella Bute, who was terrified the whole first week and has not stopped grinning since.

There is only one plane, so the school also builds gliders out of Inkwash reeds and Bridgecrew canvas. They are surprisingly good. Devin says they might be better than anything in his century, which Earhart insists is Devin being polite.

Earhart teaches every lesson herself, and she teaches it the way she learned it: by doing. "Anyone can be afraid," she tells her students on the first day. "The trick is to be afraid and fly anyway."

Bekah painted that on the school's wooden sign. It's the first thing students see when they walk into the field.

EMERALD · ARRIVAL

Theodore Roosevelt

A splendid adventure

He organized a fire brigade within an hour of arriving, and called the whole invasion "bully."

Within an hour of arriving in Dogear Crossing, Theodore Roosevelt had organized the town's first volunteer fire brigade, introduced himself to thirty-seven people by name, climbed the clock tower to "get the lay of the land" and declared the entire situation "perfectly bully."

Roosevelt is energy in human form. He boxes. He rows. He hikes up the Rimefold for fun. He has read, at last count, a third of the Archive's natural history section and has corrected the Inkbinders' classification of the Marginalian elk. He took Collin Roberts hunting, canoeing and boxing in a single week, and Collin still talks about it with a haunted look.

But he is not only noise. Roosevelt loved the wild places of his own country and fought to protect them, and he has fallen deeply in love with the Deckle Wilds. When he learned that the Blank Margin was eating the edge of the forest, he went white with anger, rode out to see it with Elfie Layloft and came back with a plan. He is now lobbying the Folio Council to declare the whole western Wilds a protected reserve, and he is very, very good at lobbying.

In the card game, every Adventurer on your side gets stronger when Roosevelt is on the field. That is exactly what it's like to be around him.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Theodore Roosevelt (1858 to 1919) led the "Rough Riders" volunteer cavalry at San Juan Hill in 1898 and became the 26th President of the United States in 1901. He protected about 230 million acres of public land, including national forests, parks and monuments, and won the 1906 Nobel Peace Prize for helping end the Russo-Japanese War.

EMERALD · ARRIVAL

Meriwether Lewis

Captain of Discovery

He came to map the Inkwash, and the map keeps moving.

Meriwether Lewis arrived at the top of a mountain pass in the Rimefold, looked down at a whole unmapped world, and said, according to Clark, "Oh, good."

The two captains had been pulled through together, from a snowy pass in the Bitterroot Mountains in 1805, along with their journals, their instruments and a very indignant mule. Within a week they had presented themselves to Queen Clarise and asked for permission to map her realm. She gave it gladly, having discovered that nobody had ever made an accurate map of Marginalia.

Lewis is the scientist of the pair: precise, observant and obsessed with detail. He has filled six journals with Marginalian plants and animals, including the rimecrawler, which he described in careful detail from a safe distance and then from a much less safe distance. He paddled the Inkwash from source to sea in three weeks, with Clark and Sacagawea, and has written the definitive account of it.

He has one great frustration. The Deckle Wilds move. A trail he mapped on Monday is somewhere else on Friday. He has begun marking the moving parts of his map in red ink, and there is a great deal of red.

In the card game, Lewis draws you a card every time he charges. Clark says that's because he never stops taking notes.

MERIWETHER LEWIS, CONTINUED

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED
Meriwether Lewis (1774 to 1809) led the Corps of Discovery with William Clark from 1804 to 1806, exploring the lands of the Louisiana Purchase and reaching the Pacific Ocean. On August 12, 1805, he crossed the Continental Divide at Lemhi Pass. He kept detailed journals of the plants, animals and peoples the expedition encountered.

EMERALD · ARRIVAL

William Clark

The mapmaker

Officially a lieutenant. Always a captain.

The card calls William Clark a lieutenant. Clark would like it known that this is technically correct and that it annoys him.

The Army only gave him a lieutenant's commission for the expedition, despite Lewis's promise that they would lead as equals. Lewis never once treated him as anything but a co-captain, and the men of the Corps called him Captain Clark all the way to the Pacific. In Marginalia, the Folio Council, having heard the story, granted him the rank of captain by royal decree. Calvin Pennywevvy wrote the patent. There is no apostrophe.

Clark is the practical one of the pair: the mapmaker, the boatman, the one who kept the party fed and moving. His maps of Marginalia are the best ever drawn, even with the moving parts. The Longroad Lancers carry copies. Amelia Earhart, flying overhead, checks his work and says it's uncanny.

In the card game, Clark is at his best when Lewis is on the field beside him. They were never better apart.

Clark has also spent many evenings with Bekah talking about York, the enslaved man who made the whole journey with him, and whose contributions history nearly forgot. Clark didn't always talk about York easily. In Marginalia, he has started to.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED
William Clark (1770 to 1838) co-led the Corps of Discovery with Meriwether Lewis and drew many of its remarkable maps. The Army commissioned him only as a second lieutenant, but Lewis treated him as a full co-captain throughout. York, a man enslaved by Clark, also made the journey and contributed greatly to it.

EMERALD · ARRIVAL

Sacagawea

The guide

The Wildkin trusted her before they trusted anyone else from history.

Sacagawea arrived with Lewis and Clark, her son asleep in a cradleboard on her back, and it was very quickly clear to everyone in Marginalia who the most important member of that party was.

SACAGAWEA, CONTINUED

The Wildkin of the Deckle Wilds do not trust outsiders. They have watched Marginalian lumber crews, hunters and settlers push into their forest for generations. When the two captains announced they wanted to map the Wilds, the Wildkin council refused to see them. Sacagawea went instead, alone, with her son. She came back three days later with permission, guides and a gift of dried berries.

She has never said exactly what she told the Wildkin. Elfie Layloft, who was there, says only that Sacagawea talked to them as one people to another, about what it means to have strangers arrive in your country with maps. "She understood," Elfie says. "Better than anyone."

Sacagawea and Elfie have become the closest of friends: two guides, two people who know every trail, and two people with strong opinions about Captain Lewis's map-making. The Deckle Rangers have made her an honorary member.

In the card game, Sacagawea gives every other Adventurer Explore. It is the most accurate card in the set, Clark says. Without her, none of them would have found the way.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Sacagawea (c. 1788 to 1812 or later) was a Lemhi Shoshone woman who traveled with the Lewis and Clark Expedition from 1805 as an interpreter, carrying her infant son, Jean Baptiste. Her knowledge, her presence as a woman with a child, and her reunion with her brother Cameahwait, a Shoshone chief, helped the expedition obtain horses and cross the Rockies.

EMERALD · ARRIVAL

Daniel Boone

Happily lost

He was lost in the Deckle Wilds for four days and called it the best four days of his life.

Daniel Boone arrived in a clearing deep in the Deckle Wilds and immediately set off to explore. He was not seen again for four days. A search party of Rangers finally found him beside a campfire, roasting a fish, in perfect good humor.

"I've never been lost in my life," he told them. "But I'll admit I was a mite bewildered for a few days there."

He called it the best four days of his life. The Rangers, who had assumed he would be terrified, were so impressed that they offered to make him an honorary member of their order. Boone thanked them kindly and said he'd rather keep wandering. That impressed them even more.

Boone is easygoing, soft-spoken and utterly at home in the forest, any forest. He moves through the Wilds as if the shifting trails were an old friend playing a game with him. He has found three rifts before they opened, just by noticing the birds had gone quiet. He has also, Elfie reports, never once cut down a tree he didn't need.

In the card game, Boone is small, quick and slips past blockers. Just like in the Wilds, nobody can quite catch him.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Daniel Boone (1734 to 1820) was a frontiersman who in 1775 blazed the Wilderness Road through the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky and founded the settlement of Boonesborough. His adventures, partly exaggerated by early biographers, made him one of the first folk heroes of the American frontier.

EMERALD · ARRIVAL

Paul Bunyan & Babe

The biggest arrival

He had to sleep in the market square. Babe slept in the river.

Like John Henry, Paul Bunyan is a legend who came through as a person, and he is very large.

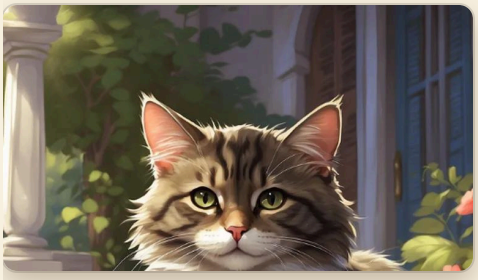
He arrived on the edge of the Deckle Wilds with an axe the size of a rowing boat, a laugh that shook birds out of trees and a blue ox named Babe who, when she lay down in the Inkwash to cool off, backed the river up for a mile. Nobody in Dogear Crossing had a building big enough to house him, so he slept in the market square, curled around the clock tower. The town has gotten used to it.

Paul is cheerful, generous and, to the Marginalians, a walking disaster. In his first week he felled a quarter-mile of the Wilds to build a cabin, which led to a very tense meeting with the Wildkin council, Elfie Layloft, Sacagawea and, for some reason, Theodore Roosevelt. He apologized sincerely. He now plants ten trees for every one he cuts, and Babe hauls stone for the Bridgecrew.

The Inkbinders are fascinated by him. He is a story that became a person, just as Echoes are, and yet he is nothing like an Echo: he is warm, and kind, and nobody's copy. Bekah thinks it's because his story was always told with love.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Paul Bunyan is a giant lumberjack of American folklore, usually accompanied by Babe the Blue Ox. His tall tales were told in logging camps and were spread widely from 1916 onward through advertising pamphlets written by William B. Laughead for the Red River Lumber Company.



EMERALD · ARRIVAL

Alexander, George's Cat

Nobody's cat, really

He came through with Washington and has been everyone's cat since.

When George Washington picked up his shard from the Delaware ice, a small grey cat was sitting on his boot. The cat came too.

Nobody knows whose cat he was. Washington says he had never seen it before in his life. The cat, however, clearly believes he belongs to the general, follows him on inspections, sleeps on his maps and sits on the arm of the chair during audiences at Spinehold with an expression of enormous dignity. The Queen's Guardsmen named him Alexander, after Hamilton, because he was small, bold and never stopped talking.

Alexander is an explorer. He has been found on the roof of the Archive, in the wine cellar of the Folded Corner and, on one occasion, in the hold of the Queen Anne's Revenge, where Blackbeard fed him sardines and tried to recruit him. He has an ongoing and complicated rivalry with Pip, the harbor cat of Errata, which appears to involve a lot of staring.

Washington pretends to be indifferent to him. Bekah has seen the general, when he thought nobody was looking, give Alexander the best piece of his supper.

In the card game, when Alexander is defeated, you draw a card. He always lands on his feet.

ALEXANDER, GEORGE'S CAT, CONTINUED

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED
There is no record of George Washington owning a cat named Alexander. Washington did keep many animals at Mount Vernon, especially foxhounds, which he bred and named with names like Sweet Lips, Vulcan and Tipsy.

EMERALD · ARRIVAL

Davy Crockett

King of the wild frontier

He wrestled something in the Wilds. He won't say what.

Davy Crockett arrived in the Deckle Wilds with a long rifle, a coonskin cap and a story ready before anyone asked. By the end of his first night at the Folded Corner, he had told the taproom that he'd once grinned a bear to death, ridden a lightning bolt, and that he could wade the Mississippi and carry a steamboat on his back. Poppy Albright took bets on which of them were true. She is still waiting to pay out.

Crockett is loud, likeable and very funny. He also has a quiet streak that surprises people. Late at night, he'll tell you that he lost his seat in Congress for voting against the law that drove the Cherokee from their homes, and that he'd do it again. The Wildkin, who had heard him boasting and wanted nothing to do with him, changed their minds when Sacagawea told them that story.

Crockett has been into the deep Wilds more times than anyone except Boone, and he came back from one trip with torn clothes, a black eye and a grin, saying he'd wrestled something in there. He won't say what. Elfie Layloft has noticed a very large, very sulky bear-thing avoiding his part of the forest.

In the card game, he hits hardest when he charges. Crockett says that's the only way to do anything.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED
Davy Crockett (1786 to 1836) was a frontiersman and a congressman from Tennessee, famous in his own lifetime for tall tales, many of which he told himself. He opposed the Indian Removal Act of 1830 in Congress, a stand that helped cost him his seat. He died defending the Alamo in Texas on March 6, 1836.

EMERALD · ARRIVAL

Tisquantum (Squanto)

The one who knew what it was to be taken

He understood the arrivals' fear better than anyone, because it had happened to him before.

Most arrivals are frightened when they first land in Marginalia. They have been taken from their homes, their families and their centuries, without warning or choice, and dropped among strangers.

Tisquantum was not frightened. He was grieving, and he was patient, because this had happened to him before.

He was taken from his home once already, in 1614, kidnapped by an English captain and carried across the ocean to be sold. He made his way back across the world,

TISQUANTUM (SQUANTO), CONTINUED

after years, only to find his whole village gone to sickness. Then, with every reason to hate strangers, he chose to help the ones who had settled on his people's land survive their first winter.

In Marginalia, Tisquantum has become the person new arrivals are brought to on their worst days. The ones who cannot stop shaking. The ones who want to go home right now. He sits with them, and he tells them, quietly, that he knows. Then he helps them find something useful to do with their hands, because that is what helped him.

He also speaks for the Marginalians, especially the Wildkin, when the arrivals forget whose country this is. On the Folio Council, Elbert Rudrem calls him the wisest guest the realm has ever had.

In the card game, he Recovers a Life when he arrives. That is exactly what he does.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Tisquantum, known as Squanto, was a Patuxet man who was kidnapped in 1614 by the English captain Thomas Hunt and sold into slavery in Spain. He made his way to England and returned home in 1619, only to find that his people had died in an epidemic. In 1621 he helped the Plymouth colonists survive by teaching them to plant corn and acting as an interpreter. He died in 1622.

Amelia, Test Pilot

Courageous aviator in skirt form, proving new aircraft designs might fly if you're brave enough not to calculate the odds.

GARNET

Rebels, Pirates & War

Edward Teach, "Blackbeard"

A forty-gun ship sailed out of a rift into Errata Harbor, and the harbor master took early retirement.

Plunder and pressure. Strip their hand and sink their small crew.

Their Echo: Echo of Blackbeard, the heart of The Rebellion.

★ **Broadside (5).** Deal 2 damage to every enemy character.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Benedict Arnold · Betsy Ross · Marilyn Monroe · Abraham Lincoln · Susan B. Anthony · Booker T. Washington · Ulysses S. Grant · Bartholomew Roberts · Aaron Burr

SIGNATURE CARDS OF THE GARNET LEADER

GARNET · LEADER · COMMAND: BROADSIDE

Edward Teach, "Blackbeard"

The pirate in the fog

Nobody has ever made an entrance like Blackbeard.

Errata Harbor was quiet that morning, wrapped in the thick grey fog that rolls in from the sea most days in autumn. Fishing boats were coming in. The Bridgecrew were hauling nets. Then the fog lit up purple from the inside, there was a noise like the sky tearing a sheet, and a forty-gun ship came sailing out of nothing into the middle of the harbor, black sails full, smoke pouring from her gunports, with a black flag at the masthead.

On her quarterdeck stood the biggest man anyone in Errata had ever seen, dressed in a long black coat with pistols strapped across his chest, and his enormous black beard was braided with ribbons and full of lit, smoking fuses. He looked around the harbor, at the fishing boats and the Bridgecrew and the crowds on the docks, and he roared, in a voice that rattled windows on Errata Row:

"Lass, every pirate knows how it ends. It's the middle that's worth the trouble."

"WHICH OF YOU IS IN CHARGE, AND WHERE IS THE RUM?"

The harbor master retired that afternoon.

Blackbeard had found his shard in May 1718, during the most audacious operation of his career: the blockade of Charleston, South Carolina. His fleet had sealed the harbor. He was holding hostages, and waiting for the town to send him what he'd demanded, not gold, but a chest of medicine for his sick crew. While he waited, pacing his deck, a glowing purple stone came up in a net, tangled with seaweed. It looked valuable. Blackbeard took everything that looked valuable.

It took him, and the Queen Anne's Revenge, and most of his crew along with it.

For the people of Marginalia, Blackbeard was proof of everything the Closed Book had been saying: history's strangers brought their wars with them. For the Bridgecrew, the rough, cheerful order who keep Marginalia's bridges and docks, he was the most exciting thing that had ever happened. They threw a party that lasted three days. They've been his unofficial crew ever since.

Blackbeard, it turned out, was more complicated than his legend. He was frightening, yes. That was the point. In his own century he had carefully built his fearsome image so that ships would surrender without a fight, because a fight was bad for business. He was clever, theatrical, and a good deal more interested in profit than in bloodshed.

He was also, very quickly, in trouble. His crew caught rift fever in Errata Harbor, the same way they'd been sick in Charleston, and Blackbeard came to the tent of the mysterious field healer called the Doctor, ready to threaten

EDWARD TEACH, "BLACKBEARD", CONTINUED

and bargain. The Doctor simply handed him a full chest of medicine and said, "Take it. It's free here." Collin Roberts says it's the only time in history Blackbeard had nothing to say. It lasted a full minute.

Something shifted in him after that. He didn't become a good man, exactly. But he signed the Queen's Writ, in a very large and flourishing hand. He stopped plundering Marginalians and started plundering Echoes instead, arguing to the Folio Council that robbing a monster was a form of "helping" and that the Writ required him to help. The Queen, after a long pause, agreed. He brought his loot back to Errata and the Bridgecrew rebuilt half the waterfront with it.

His Echo, when his shard cracked, was the most ferocious the Travelers had yet fought. It was a Blackbeard made entirely of legend: taller, louder, crueler, its beard a burning bonfire, commanding a ghostly ship that had never run aground. Bekah is fairly sure Jane the bard's hit song "Blackbeard's Burning Beard" made it worse.

The real Blackbeard stood on the dock and watched the Reader take it apart. He laughed the whole time.

"Look at him," he said. "All that fire and no sense. I'd never have lasted a week like that." And when the Reader's final attack broke the Echo into ink and smoke, he raised his tankard to it.

He leads the rebels and pirates of Garnet now. As a Leader he fights the way he really fought: pressure, plunder and nerve, stripping a rival's hand bare, sinking their small crew before it can grow. His Command, Broadside, turns every gun on the field at once.

Blackbeard hasn't said whether he'll go home. The Travelers haven't pushed him. They know how his story ends, in November 1718, at Ocracoke Inlet. So does Bekah's notebook. What nobody knows is whether Blackbeard has guessed.

When Bekah once asked him if he wanted to know what happens to him, he looked at her for a long time. Then he said, "Lass, every pirate knows how it ends. It's the middle that's worth the trouble." And he went back to his rum.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Edward Teach, known as Blackbeard, was one of the most feared pirates of the early 1700s. In May 1718 he blockaded Charleston, South Carolina, with his flagship Queen Anne's Revenge and a small fleet, and released his hostages in exchange for a chest of medicine. Weeks later the Queen Anne's Revenge ran aground at Beaufort Inlet, North Carolina. He accepted a royal pardon but returned to piracy, and was killed on November 22, 1718, at Ocracoke Inlet in a battle with sailors led by Lieutenant Robert Maynard of the Royal Navy. The wreck of his flagship was found in 1996.

MASTERY · BLACKBEARD

Terror of the Seas

Blackbeard mastery

The night Blackbeard defended Errata Harbor for free.

The Echo storm hit Errata Harbor at midnight: three ghost ships out of a rift in the fog, crewed by pirate Echoes from every decade of the Golden Age, guns blazing, heading straight for the docks.

The Guardsmen were a day's march away. The Bridgecrew had boats but no guns. The whole waterfront of Errata Row, homes and workshops and the Bridgecrew hall, was about to be blown into the sea.

Blackbeard was, at the time, asleep in a hammock on the Queen Anne's Revenge. He woke to the first cannon shot, climbed on deck in his nightshirt with a cutlass in one hand and a lantern in the other, lit every fuse in his beard in a single sweep, and bellowed for his crew.

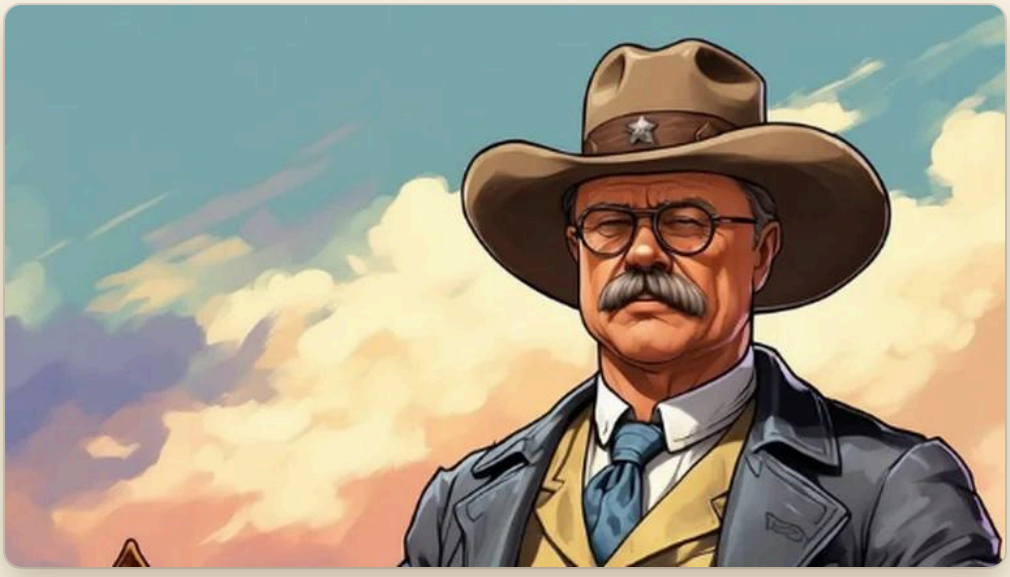
What happened next is sung in every tavern in Errata. The Queen Anne's Revenge sailed straight into the three Echo ships and fought all of them at once, all night, while the Bridgecrew rowed back and forth under the guns carrying powder and pulling people out of the water. By dawn the Echo ships were ink on the waves, and the waterfront was still standing.

TERROR OF THE SEAS, CONTINUED

The Bridgecrew offered him anything he wanted. The harbor council offered him a chest of gold. Blackbeard waved them all away.

"Put it on my tab," he said. Then he went back to bed.

Nobody in Errata has ever asked him to pay the tab. The Bridgecrew have painted his flag on their hall.



Teddy Roosevelt, Rough Rider

Asthmatic-turned-adventurer who charged up San Juan Hill, through the White House, and into conservation history.

Rebel, Two Sided Hound

Canine of conflicted loyalty, barking patriotically while secretly chewing the king's slippers under cover of darkness.

GARNET · ARRIVAL

Benedict Arnold

The Turncoat

A war hero and a traitor. In Marginalia, nobody is quite sure which one arrived.

Benedict Arnold arrived in Marginalia and asked, first thing, which year he had been taken from. Bekah told him. He went pale, sat down and said nothing for a while.

He had been pulled from 1779. He had not yet done it. But he knew he was already thinking about it.

Arnold is the most uncomfortable arrival in Marginalia, for himself as much as anyone. He was a genuine hero once: brave, brilliant, wounded at Saratoga leading a charge that helped win one of the most important battles of the Revolution. Then he betrayed his country for money and resentment, and history remembers only that.

George Washington, who trusted him and was betrayed by him, will not speak to him. Hamilton won't be in the same room. Captain Isguard watches him constantly.

And yet Arnold has kept the Queen's Writ, every word, for months. He works in Washington's encampment without being asked, and he fought hard and well in the Echo battles of the Rebellion. Bekah has talked with him many times. She thinks he is trying to find out whether he is really the man history says he will become.

In the card game, Arnold steals an enemy character. Some things, it seems, are hard to change.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Benedict Arnold (1741 to 1801) was one of the Continental Army's most daring generals and was badly wounded leading the attack at Saratoga in 1777. In 1780, bitter and in debt, he plotted to surrender the fort at West Point to the British. The plot was discovered when British Major John André was captured, and Arnold fled to become a British general. His name became an American word for traitor.

GARNET · ARRIVAL

Betsy Ross

The flag-maker of Dogear Crossing

She sewed a banner for every order in Marginalia, and none of them asked.

Betsy Ross arrived in Dogear Crossing with a needle in her hand and set up a shop within the week. It is on Thimble Lane, behind the Folded Corner, and it is always busy.

She is a practical, cheerful, hardworking craftswoman who has never had patience for fuss. When Marginalians asked her whether she had really sewn the first American flag for George Washington, she laughed and said the story was her grandson's, and that she'd made a great many flags, and they could believe what they liked. Bekah wrote that down, delighted.

In Marginalia, she has found plenty of flag-making to do. The seven orders all had banners, but most were centuries old and worn to rags. Betsy quietly began repairing them, one by one, without being asked, charging only for materials. The Bridgecrew's skull-and-lantern flag was the first. The Queen's own standard over Spinehold was the last, and the Queen came down to Thimble Lane in person to thank her.

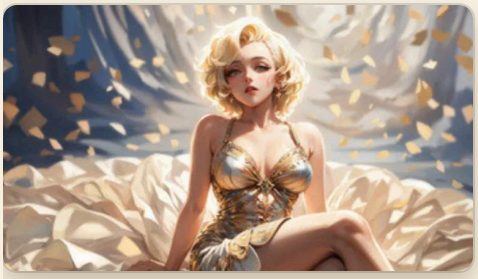
Betsy also sews the patches every Reader wears on their sleeve, a small book with a purple crystal on its cover.

In the card game, Betsy makes every other character a little stronger. That is what she does in town, too.

BETSY ROSS, CONTINUED

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Betsy Ross (1752 to 1836) was a Philadelphia upholsterer who, records show, made flags for the Pennsylvania navy during the Revolution. The famous story that she sewed the first Stars and Stripes for George Washington comes from her grandson, who told it in 1870. Historians have found no documents confirming it, but she remains an American icon.



GARNET · ARRIVAL

Marilyn Monroe

The brightest star in Bindwell

Every head turned when she arrived. She was more interested in the Archive.

Marilyn Monroe arrived in the middle of a Bindwell bell-festival, and the whole street stopped. People had never seen anyone like her, even in a world full of arrivals. She smiled, waved and asked very politely where the library was.

That surprised everyone, because in Marginalia, like in her own century, people assumed they knew who she was before she spoke. Marilyn was used to that. In her own life she was a voracious reader, a serious student of acting and a sharp businesswoman who started her own production company when film studios treated actresses like property. She was far more than the image, and she was tired of people only seeing the image.

The Archive, she discovered, did not care what she looked like. She spends long quiet hours in its reading rooms, and she and Emily Dickinson, of all people, have become friends: two women who were watched their whole lives and wanted, mostly, to be understood.

Jane the bard adores her. Marilyn sings with her on Saturdays at Barnum's tent, and the crowds are enormous.

In the card game, she can stop an entire field in its tracks. She has always been able to. What Bekah hopes the Archive remembers is everything else.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Marilyn Monroe (1926 to 1962), born Norma Jeane Mortenson, rose from a difficult childhood in Los Angeles foster homes to become one of the most famous film stars in history, in movies like "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" and "Some Like It Hot." In 1955 she founded her own production company, a rare step for an actress at the time. She died in August 1962.

GARNET · ARRIVAL

Abraham Lincoln

Honest Abe at the Folded Corner

He was arguing with a knight on the night the Travelers first looked through the Shard.

When the Travelers first looked through the Shard and saw the Folded Corner, the tall man in the stovepipe hat arguing with a knight was Abraham Lincoln. The knight was Sir Henry John's. The argument, it turned out, was about a joke, and Lincoln was winning.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, CONTINUED

Lincoln loves Marginalia's taverns. He always did love a good story, and the Folded Corner is full of them. He sits by the fireplace most evenings, long legs stretched out, trading tales with Bridgecrew sailors, Wildkin rangers and anyone else who stops by. He knows everybody's name. He never forgets a kindness.

But his days are serious. Lincoln sits in on the Folio Council whenever the Queen invites him, and she invites him often, because he understands better than anyone what it means for one country to be split nearly in half by fear. When the Closed Book's slogans appeared, it was Lincoln who reminded the Council that a house divided against itself cannot stand, and that the answer was not to throw half the family out of the house.

There are two Lincoln cards in the set, and Bekah has noticed that the Marginalians prefer the one called Honest Abe. The name travels well.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Abraham Lincoln (1809 to 1865), the 16th President of the United States, led the country through the Civil War. His Emancipation Proclamation took effect on January 1, 1863, and he pushed for the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery. He delivered the Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863. He was assassinated in April 1865, days after the war's main Confederate army surrendered.

GARNET · ARRIVAL

Susan B. Anthony

She voted anyway

She found out Marginalian women could not sit on the Bridgecrew council. That lasted a week.

Marginalia is, in many ways, a fair-minded realm. It has a queen. Women serve in every order, lead the Order of the Lamp and command half the Longroad Lancers' posts. Susan B. Anthony was delighted by all of it.

Then she discovered that, by an ancient charter, only men could vote in the elections of the Bridgecrew's harbor council in Errata.

She went to Errata the next morning. She stood outside the Bridgecrew hall on election day and politely asked for a ballot. When they refused, she wrote her own, walked in and put it in the box. The Bridgecrew, who had never seen anything like it, were so impressed that they held an emergency meeting, changed the charter and elected their current captain, Mags Holloway, the same afternoon.

Anthony is a relentless, principled, sharp-witted organizer who never lets anything go. She has read the whole Queen's Writ, found three small unfairnesses in it and petitioned the Queen to fix them. The Queen fixed two and is thinking about the third.

In the card game, she gives every Rebel extra resilience. Rebels, she says, need to learn to last.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Susan B. Anthony (1820 to 1906) spent more than fifty years campaigning for women's right to vote. In 1872 she was arrested for voting in the presidential election in Rochester, New York, and fined $100, which she refused to pay. She died in 1906; the Nineteenth Amendment, giving American women the right to vote, was ratified in 1920 and is often called the Susan B. Anthony Amendment.

GARNET · ARRIVAL

Booker T. Washington

The school on the hill

He saw a crowd of arrivals with nothing to do, and built a school.

Booker T. Washington arrived in Marginalia, looked around at the hundreds of arrivals crowding into Dogear Crossing with nothing to do and no way to earn their keep, and started a school.

It began in an empty barn behind the Longroad Lancers' post with twelve students, a borrowed blackboard and a very firm set of rules about punctuality. Within six months, it was the Dogear Crossing Institute, with its own building on the hill, built by its own students with bricks they made themselves, just as he had done at Tuskegee.

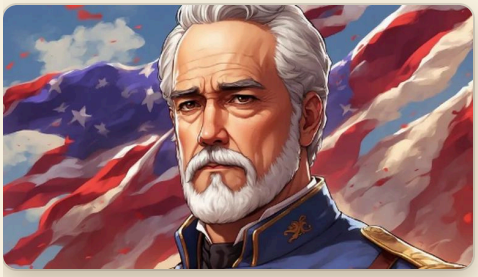
The Institute teaches arrivals the skills of Marginalia: Bridgecrew carpentry, Lamp nursing, Longroad riding, Rimefold cookery. And it teaches Marginalians the skills of the arrivals: engineering from the Cogwarrens' visitors, agriculture from George Washington Carver, who taught at Tuskegee under Booker T. in their own century and was delighted to do it again.

Queen Clarise has visited three times. Captain Isguard, who dislikes idle strangers above all things, considers the Institute the best idea anyone has had since the arrivals began.

Booker T. Washington believes that a person with a skill is never truly a stranger anywhere. In Marginalia, he is proving it one student at a time.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Booker T. Washington (1856 to 1915) was born into slavery in Virginia and became the first leader of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama in 1881, building it into a major school. His autobiography "Up from Slavery" was published in 1901. He was one of the most influential Black Americans of his time, though his approach to civil rights was debated by others such as W.E.B. Du Bois.



GARNET · ARRIVAL

Ulysses S. Grant

The general who wrote it all down

A plain man in a plain coat who wins sieges and hates speeches.

Ulysses S. Grant arrived in Marginalia in a muddy coat, with a cigar in his teeth, and was mistaken for a Bridgecrew dockhand for his first three days. He didn't mind. He dislikes fuss, speeches and ceremony, and would much rather get on with the job.

In the Echo battles of the Rebellion, the job was the Echo of the Siege: an endless zigzag of trenches from three different wars, cut across the fields east of Errata, full of Echo soldiers who never stopped digging. The Guardsmen had been stuck in front of it for weeks. Grant looked at it for an afternoon, asked a lot of questions about the supply roads, and then quietly helped the Reader plan the battle that ended it.

He says he learned from Vicksburg that sieges are won by patience and supply, not glory. The Guardsmen now study his methods. Captain Isguard, who distrusts most arrivals' military opinions, listens to Grant's.

Grant is also writing. He wrote his memoirs at the very end of his life, racing illness to finish them for his family, and he has started a Marginalian journal in the same plain, clear, honest style. Bekah considers him the best writer among the generals. He finds this very funny.

ULYSSES S. GRANT, CONTINUED

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Ulysses S. Grant (1822 to 1885) led the Union armies to victory in the Civil War, capturing Vicksburg in July 1863 and accepting Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox in April 1865. He served two terms as the 18th President. Near the end of his life, dying of cancer, he wrote his "Personal Memoirs," finishing them days before his death; they are considered among the finest military memoirs ever written.

GARNET · ARRIVAL

Bartholomew Roberts

Black Bart and his articles

The most successful pirate of the Golden Age, and he has rules.

If Blackbeard is the most famous pirate in Errata Harbor, Bartholomew Roberts is the most successful, and he would like you to know that he has the paperwork to prove it.

Roberts is an unusual pirate. He dresses in fine crimson clothes and a feathered hat. He drinks tea, not rum. He runs his crew by written articles: rules for sharing plunder, settling disputes and caring for injured sailors, signed by everyone aboard. He banned gambling on his ship, which has made him Poppy Albright's least favorite arrival.

In Errata, he has set up the most orderly operation on the waterfront. He hunts Echo ships, splits the spoils by the articles and pays the Bridgecrew's tolls on time, every time. The harbor council considers him a model citizen, which is a strange thing to say about a man who captured hundreds of ships.

He and Blackbeard have a tense, courteous relationship, like two chess players who admire each other's games and would each very much like to win. When the Echo of Nassau attacked the harbor, they fought side by side without a word, then argued for three hours about who had done more.

In the card game, Roberts draws you a card whenever he hits a Leader. He'd tell you it's all in the articles.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Bartholomew Roberts (1682 to 1722), called "Black Bart," was a Welsh pirate who captured hundreds of ships between 1719 and 1722, more than any other pirate of the Golden Age. He was known for strict written "articles" governing his crew, including a ban on gambling aboard. He was killed in battle with the Royal Navy ship HMS Swallow off the coast of Africa in February 1722.

GARNET · ARRIVAL

Aaron Burr

The duelist

He and Hamilton are not permitted in the same room.

Aaron Burr arrived in Marginalia, looked around, noticed that Alexander Hamilton was also there, and asked for a room at the opposite end of the realm.

He got one, in Errata Harbor, and he likes it there. Burr is charming, clever, ambitious and very hard to read, and Errata suits him: nobody asks too many questions. He is a

AARON BURR, CONTINUED

gifted lawyer, and within a month he was representing Bridgecrew sailors in disputes with the harbor council, and winning.

Burr and Hamilton were pulled from 1801, before the duel. They both know how it ends. Captain Isguard knows how it ends. By royal order, they are never to be in the same room, and Isguard enforces this personally, which has led to some very awkward Council meetings.

Bekah has spoken with each of them about the other. Hamilton talks about Burr with anger and something like fear. Burr talks about Hamilton with a strange, careful respect, and changes the subject quickly. She does not know if it means anything. She has written it down anyway.

In the card game, Burr duels an enemy character when he arrives. It is the only kind of duel he is allowed in Marginalia.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Aaron Burr (1756 to 1836) served as the third Vice President of the United States under Thomas Jefferson. On July 11, 1804, he shot Alexander Hamilton in a duel at Weehawken, New Jersey; Hamilton died the next day. Burr was later tried for treason over a plot in the western territories and was acquitted in 1807.

Andrew Jackson

Populist president whose face on the twenty-dollar bill would horrify him almost as much as his policies horrify modern historians.

QUARTZ

Founders & Revolution

George Washington

He picked a stone out of the Delaware ice on Christmas night, 1776, and asked to be returned to his men.

Endurance and command. Founders hold the line, then the army moves as one.

Their Echo: Echo of the General, the heart of The Founding.

★ Continental Army (2). Build 2 Steel Golem Tokens. Your characters get +1/+1.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Benjamin Franklin · Paul Revere · John Adams · Abigail Adams · Molly Pitcher · Marquis de Lafayette · Chips · John F. Kennedy · Thomas Paine

SIGNATURE CARDS OF THE QUARTZ LEADER

QUARTZ · LEADER · COMMAND: CONTINENTAL ARMY

George Washington

The general on the ice

The Travelers had watched this moment from the margin. That is the part Bekah finds hardest to think about.

Christmas night, 1776. The frozen bank of the Delaware River at McConkey's Ferry, sleet driving sideways, the ice grinding in the black water. The American Revolution was very close to collapse. Enlistments were running out. The army was cold, hungry and beaten, and George Washington had decided on a desperate gamble: cross the river in the dark and strike the Hessian garrison at Trenton at dawn.

The Travelers stood unseen on the bank and watched his soldiers load the boats. Devin wanted to give one of them his jacket. Bekah stopped him. Rule two.

"The men who crossed that river were cold, and hungry, and frightened,"

What none of them knew was that they were standing on a crack.

A few minutes after they left, Washington, walking the bank to check the boats, saw a violet light shining up through the ice at the water's edge. On a night that dark, a light meant a lantern, or a signal. He bent, broke the thin ice with the pommel of his sword and lifted out a glowing stone.

He did not fall. He was standing on the riverbank one moment and standing on a frozen riverbank the next: a different river, wider and darker, under different stars, at the foot of white mountains. The Inkwash, where it runs out of the Rimefold. A patrol of the Queen's Guardsmen found him an hour later, standing absolutely still in the snow, and the first thing he said to them was not a question. It was an order.

"I must be returned to my men at once."

They brought him to Spinehold. Queen Clarise received him in the great hall, and it was an audience nobody who saw it has forgotten. Washington was tall, grave, impeccably courteous and utterly determined. He did not rage. He did not plead. He explained, precisely, that nearly two and a half thousand soldiers were waiting on a riverbank for him, that the fate of his country might turn on the next few hours, and that he would be very much obliged if Her Majesty could arrange his immediate return.

The Queen had to tell him that nobody knew how.

It was Bekah who told him the rest: that in Marginalia, time does not move for the page he came from. That when he went home, he would return to the very second he left, on the bank of the Delaware, with his army still waiting. That the crossing would still happen. That the crack his shard had made would have to be mended first.

Washington listened to all of it without interrupting. Then he asked her one question: "Did we win?"

Bekah hesitated. Rule two had become, in her mind, something bigger: don't change what isn't yours to change. But he was looking at her,

GEORGE WASHINGTON, CONTINUED

and she thought he deserved the truth.

"Yes," she said. "You won."

He nodded, once, as if she had confirmed a supply report. "Then I shall be patient," he said, "and I shall be useful."

He has been both. Washington signed the Queen's Writ with great formality and has kept every word of it. He insisted on being received properly at Spinehold, three separate times, because protocol matters when two nations meet. He organized the other soldier-arrivals of every era into an orderly encampment at the foot of the Rimefold, where they drill, build and help the frost-born defend their villages against rimecrawlers. He found, somewhat to his surprise, a kindred spirit in Captain Isguard. The two of them walk the walls of Bindwell every Sunday discussing supply lines, discipline and boots.

The Echo of the General came from his crack on the Delaware, and it was relentless: a general who crossed the ice every night, forever, bringing a winter that never ended, pinning the whole encampment in snow. It was not the man. It was the monument: a marble figure who had never been cold or doubtful or afraid.

Washington watched the Reader fight it from the ridge, wrapped in his cloak, with Collin at his side. When the Echo finally broke and the snow stopped falling, he was quiet for a while.

"The men who crossed that river were cold, and hungry, and frightened," he said at last. "So was I. Anyone who makes a statue of that night should remember it."

He leads the founders of Quartz now. As a Leader he is endurance and command: Founders holding the line, and then the whole army moving as one. His Command, Continental Army, musters steel golems beside every soldier and strengthens every character on the field.

He could go home now. His shard is mended. He has not gone, yet, because the Queen asked him to help hold the north a little longer, and because, he says, a commander does not leave while there are still people in the field.

But every evening, at dusk, he walks down to the bank of the Inkwash and looks at the ice. He is ready. When it is time, he'll step back onto a frozen riverbank in 1776, with sleet in his face and his soldiers waiting, and he'll give the order to cross.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

George Washington (1732 to 1799) commanded the Continental Army through the American Revolution. On the night of December 25 to 26, 1776, he led about 2,400 soldiers across the icy Delaware River and surprised the Hessian garrison at Trenton the next morning, a victory that revived the Revolution. After the war he presided over the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and served as the first President of the United States from 1789 to 1797, stepping down voluntarily after two terms.

MASTERY · WASHINGTON

Father of the Archive

Washington mastery

The encampment at the foot of the Rimefold, and the frost-born who came to trust it.

The frost-born of the Rimefold do not trust easily. They have lived beside rifts and rimecrawlers for longer than any Marginalian, and they have learned that help from the south usually arrives late, leaves early and asks for thanks.

George Washington's encampment arrived early and stayed.

He set it up in the foothills below Hoarlight village in the first winter after his arrival: orderly rows of huts built by soldiers from a dozen different wars, with a parade ground, a hospital run by the Order of the Lamp and a watch rota posted outside his tent. He drilled the arrivals every morning in the snow. He did not ask the frost-born for anything. When rimecrawlers came down from the passes, the encampment stood between them and the village, and when the fight was over, the soldiers went back to their huts.

It took a full winter for the frost-born to come down to the camp. When they did, they brought hot stew, songs and a gift for the general: a heavy frost-born cloak of white

FATHER OF THE ARCHIVE, CONTINUED

wool, embroidered with the old Rimefold sign for a guardian. Washington received it with great formality and has worn it every winter since.

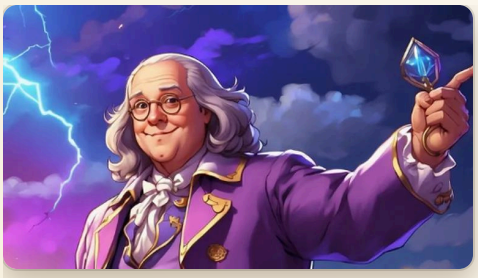
Sengrid Asimov's mother wrote from Hoarlight that week. It was the first letter in a year that did not sound afraid. "The General's people are here," she wrote. "We are sleeping again."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Deal Maker

Four-term president who convinced America that the only thing to fear was running out of acronyms for new agencies.

Abraham Lincoln, Emancipator

Rail-splitter turned nation-mender who delivered freedom with eloquence and paid with his life.



QUARTZ · ARRIVAL

Benjamin Franklin

Eleven occupations and counting

He gave Calvin eleven occupations to register. He has added four more since.

When Calvin Pennywevvy asked Benjamin Franklin for his occupation, for the Book of Arrivals, Franklin gave him eleven. Printer, writer, publisher, scientist, inventor, postmaster, diplomat, statesman, philosopher, musician (he invented an instrument) and swimmer (he is in a hall of fame for it, in a century that doesn't exist yet). Calvin had to add an extra page. Franklin has since added four more occupations in Marginalia, including "honorary Inkbinder" and "unofficial clock tower advisor."

Franklin is having the time of his life. He is endlessly curious, endlessly social, endlessly full of opinions, and Marginalia has given him an entire new world to be curious about. He has been caught in the royal library of Spinehold after hours twice. He is writing a Marginalian almanac, full of weather predictions and wise sayings, which the Bridgecrew already quote. He has a friendly running feud with Tesla about the nature of electricity, and he has challenged Devin to a kite-flying contest in the next thunderstorm. Bekah has vetoed it.

He is also, when it matters, a shrewd and patient diplomat. It was Franklin who quietly negotiated the first truce between the Guardsmen and the Bridgecrew during the Errata troubles, over a very long dinner.

In the card game, he builds a Lightbulb token and draws you a card. He would say both are equally illuminating.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Benjamin Franklin (1706 to 1790) was a printer, writer, scientist, inventor and statesman. His experiments with electricity, including the famous kite experiment described in 1752, led to his invention of the lightning rod; he also invented bifocals and the Franklin stove. He helped draft and signed the Declaration of Independence, negotiated the Treaty of Paris and signed the Constitution.

QUARTZ · ARRIVAL

Paul Revere

The rider

The Longroad Lancers gave him an honorary lance within a week.

Paul Revere was already in the saddle when he picked up his shard. It was lying on the road outside Boston on the night of April 18, 1775, glowing in the dark, and he leaned down to grab it without stopping.

He arrived in Marginalia at a full gallop on the Longroad, which is the only way anyone has ever arrived on the Longroad at a full gallop, and nearly ran down a Lancer patrol. When they caught up with him, the first thing he asked was, "Where's the nearest town that needs warning?"

The Longroad Lancers adored him on sight. Within a week he was riding their dispatch routes. Within a month he had set up a lantern-signal system along the Longroad, from Errata to the Rimefold, that could carry a warning of a new rift the length of the realm in a single night. The Lancers gave him an honorary lance, which he hangs above the door of his new silversmith's shop in Dogear Crossing.

Revere is a practical, energetic craftsman who happens to be very good in an emergency. He makes silver buttons for the Lancers, bells for Bindwell's towers and a very fine teapot for Alise Wellington. He is slightly embarrassed that a poem made him more famous than the other riders that night, and he always mentions William Dawes.

PAUL REVERE, CONTINUED

In the card game, Revere is Swift and gives your whole team Swift. Everybody rides when he rides.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Paul Revere (1735 to 1818) was a Boston silversmith and patriot. On the night of April 18, 1775, he and William Dawes rode out to warn that British troops were marching toward Lexington and Concord. Revere was captured by a British patrol before reaching Concord, but the alarm had spread. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1860 poem made his ride famous.

QUARTZ · ARRIVAL

John Adams

The lawyer who argued with everyone

He defended the Folded Corner's worst customer in front of the Queen, and won.

John Adams has an opinion about everything and a strong one about fairness.

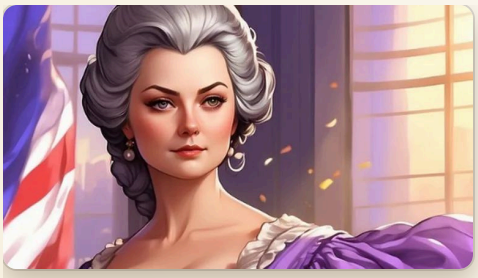
In his own century, he did something very unpopular: he defended, in court, the British soldiers accused in the Boston Massacre, because he believed that even the most hated people deserve a fair trial. In Marginalia, he did it again. When a Bridgecrew sailor was accused of starting the fire that damaged the Dogear Crossing granary, the whole town wanted him hanged. Adams took the case, argued it before the Queen herself for two days, and proved the fire was an Echo's doing. The sailor went free. Captain Isguard, who had arrested him, bought Adams a drink.

Adams is stubborn, prickly, honest, hardworking and constantly irritated by somebody. He is irritated by Franklin, who is too relaxed. He is irritated by Hamilton, who is too fast. He is especially irritated by the fact that nobody in Marginalia has written a proper constitution, and he is working on one, unasked, which the Queen has promised to read.

He is never irritated by Abigail. She arrived three weeks after him, and he met her on the road outside Dogear Crossing, and the two of them simply stood there holding hands for a very long time.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

John Adams (1735 to 1826) was a lawyer, a leader in the Continental Congress and the second President of the United States. In 1770 he defended the British soldiers accused in the Boston Massacre, believing everyone deserved a fair trial. He and his wife Abigail wrote each other more than 1,100 letters. He died on July 4, 1826, the same day as Thomas Jefferson.



QUARTZ · ARRIVAL

Abigail Adams

Remember the ladies

She told John to remember the ladies. In Marginalia, nobody forgets.

In March 1776, Abigail Adams wrote to her husband John, then helping to invent a new country, and told him to remember the ladies. He wrote back and teased her about it. She has not let him forget it since, and in Marginalia, she has found a great many allies.

Abigail is sharp, witty, well read, practical and nobody's fool. She ran a farm and a household through years of war while John was away, and she has taken to Marginalia with the same capable calm. Within a month she was advising Alise Wellington on the Folded Corner's accounts, which improved immediately. Within two she was a regular guest at Spinehold, where she and Queen Clarise have long conversations about running things while the men argue.

Bella Bute worships her. Abigail, touched, has taken Bella under her wing, and the two of them write letters to each other even though they live in the same town, because Abigail believes letters are where people say what they really mean.

In the card game, Abigail is a Guard, and she grows much stronger when John is on the field. Bekah thinks the card is only half right. John grows stronger when Abigail is there too. He simply won't admit it.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Abigail Adams (1744 to 1818) managed her family's farm and finances through long years of her husband John's absence during the Revolution. In a famous letter of March 1776, she urged him and the Continental Congress to "remember the ladies" in the new laws. Their letters are among the most important records of the era. She was the second First Lady.

QUARTZ · ARRIVAL

Molly Pitcher

At the cannon

She came through carrying a water pitcher. She now commands Nib's cannon crew.

Nobody is quite sure who Molly Pitcher is, including, some days, Molly Pitcher.

She arrived carrying a water pitcher, from a hot battlefield in 1778, and she answers to Molly. When Calvin asked for her full name for the Book of Arrivals, she gave him one, Mary, but the Inkbinders say her living page in the Archive is strangely blurred at the edges, as if several women's stories had been written on top of one another. Bekah thinks that's exactly right. Many women carried water to the guns in the Revolution. Many took a place at the cannon when the men fell. The legend of Molly Pitcher belongs to all of them.

Whoever she is, she is extremely good with a cannon.

Nib Sparkwhistle discovered this when Molly wandered into the Cogwarrens and watched him loading his Gemdrop Cannon wrong. She took it off him, loaded it properly and put a crystal through a target at two hundred paces. Nib was speechless for the first time in his life. She now commands his cannon crew, and the Gemdrop Cannon has not missed an Echo since.

In the card game, she deals a small amount of damage the moment she arrives. It's always exactly where she meant it to go.

MOLLY PITCHER, CONTINUED

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

"Molly Pitcher" is the legendary name for women who carried water to soldiers during the Revolutionary War. The story is most often linked to Mary Ludwig Hays, who at the Battle of Monmouth in 1778 is said to have taken her husband's place loading a cannon after he fell. Historians still debate the details.

QUARTZ · ARRIVAL

Marquis de Lafayette

The young general from France

He crossed an ocean to join someone else's revolution. Crossing into Marginalia seemed easy.

The Marquis de Lafayette crossed an ocean at nineteen to join a revolution that wasn't his, against the orders of his own king. So when a glowing stone pulled him into a completely different world, he took it rather well.

"Ah," he said, looking around the frozen foothills of the Rimefold. "Another adventure." And then, seeing the encampment below: "Is that the General?"

It was. Lafayette had been pulled from the winter at Valley Forge, and George Washington, who loved him like a son, embraced him in front of the entire camp, which nobody had ever seen Washington do before.

Lafayette is warm, romantic, brave to the point of recklessness and completely devoted to the idea that people deserve to be free, wherever they live. In Marginalia, he has become the encampment's liaison with the frost-born, whose language he learned faster than anyone, and he spends evenings in Hoarlight trading songs with them.

He also shares Washington's winter hardships without complaint, sleeping in the same cold huts as everyone else, just as he did at Valley Forge. The frost-born noticed. It's one of the reasons they came down the mountain.

In the card game, Lafayette arrives swiftly with two steel golems beside him. He never did travel light.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

The Marquis de Lafayette (1757 to 1834) was a French nobleman who sailed to America in 1777, at 19, to fight for the Revolution. He was wounded at Brandywine, shared the hardships of Valley Forge and helped trap the British army at Yorktown in 1781. He remained a lifelong friend of George Washington and later played a major role in France's own revolution.

QUARTZ · ARRIVAL

Chips

The purple-hearted dog

A war dog from 1943, and the best-loved arrival in Marginalia.

Chips is a dog. He is a large, shaggy, brave, friendly dog with one torn ear and a way of leaning against people's legs when they are sad, and he is quite possibly the best-loved arrival in all of Marginalia.

He came through from Sicily in 1943, a little after his most famous day, still limping from his wounds. He arrived in the Order of the Lamp's hospital in Bindwell, which the healers believe was not an accident. He allowed them to

CHIPS, CONTINUED

bandage him, ate everything he was offered, and then went around every bed in the ward, one by one, leaning against each patient until they smiled.

He has been the hospital's dog ever since. When he's not there, he's in Washington's encampment, where the soldiers of every century treat him like a comrade, or in the Folded Corner, where Bertha Bute pretends to disapprove and saves him bones.

Chips has also fought in Echo battles, and he is fearless. He is the only arrival the Echoes seem genuinely unable to copy. Bekah thinks it's because nobody ever made a legend out of Chips. He was simply a good dog, all the way through.

In the card game, when Chips is defeated, you Recover a Life. Of course you do.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Chips (1940 to 1946) was a German Shepherd, Collie and Husky mix who served with the U.S. Army in World War II. In Sicily in July 1943 he attacked an enemy machine-gun nest, forcing its crew to surrender. He was awarded the Silver Star and the Purple Heart, which were later revoked because of a rule against honoring animals. In 2018 he was posthumously awarded the PDSA Dickin Medal.

QUARTZ · ARRIVAL

John F. Kennedy

We choose to go

He asked Neil Armstrong one question, and listened to the answer for three hours.

John F. Kennedy set the goal. Neil Armstrong reached it. Kennedy never saw it happen.

When the two met in the Archive's observatory, not long after Kennedy's arrival, Armstrong, who rarely says more than he needs to, simply said, "Mr. President. We made it." Kennedy asked him one question, "What was it like?", and then sat and listened for three hours. Devin, who was in the room, says it's the most moving thing he has ever seen.

Kennedy is charming, witty, energetic and a gifted speaker, and the Marginalians took to him at once. He has an eye for big, bold goals, and he has found one here: the high rift that Armstrong discovered in the sky. Kennedy has persuaded the Folio Council to fund a proper expedition to study it, and his speech to the Council, about choosing to do things because they are hard, was so good that the Bridgecrew voted for the funding, which has never happened before.

He also sails. Most weekends he can be found on the Inkwash in a small borrowed boat, happier than anyone has seen him.

In the card game, he draws you two cards. Kennedy would say that a good leader always wants to see what comes next.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

John F. Kennedy (1917 to 1963) served in the Navy in World War II, surviving the sinking of his boat PT-109 in 1943, and became the 35th President of the United States in 1961. That year he set the goal of landing a person on the Moon before the decade was out, and in 1962 he said "We choose to go to the Moon" in a famous speech at Rice University. He was assassinated in Dallas on November 22, 1963.

QUARTZ · ARRIVAL

Thomas Paine

The pamphleteer

He wrote a pamphlet about the arrivals. Half the realm loved it, and half wanted him deported.

Thomas Paine arrived in Marginalia and, within a week, had written a pamphlet about it.

It was called "Common Sense for Strangers," and it argued, in plain, fiery, persuasive language, that the arrivals and the Marginalians were natural allies against the real enemies: the Echoes, the rifts and the Blank. It sold out in Dogear Crossing in a day. Half the realm loved it. The Closed Book hated it so much that they printed their own pamphlet in reply, which Paine then answered, and within a month every inn in Marginalia was arguing about pamphlets.

Queen Clarise found this very tiring. She also, privately, told Bekah that Paine had said several things about the arrivals more clearly than the Writ.

Paine is passionate, quarrelsome, brave and terrible with money. He writes quickly, argues loudly and has no patience at all for anyone in power, which makes his friendship with the Queen very strange indeed. They argue about monarchy every time they meet, and seem to enjoy it enormously.

In the card game, he gives every character a little extra power for one turn. Words, he says, do that.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Thomas Paine (1737 to 1809) was an English-born writer whose pamphlet "Common Sense," published in January 1776, sold in enormous numbers and persuaded many colonists to support independence. That December he began "The American Crisis," opening with "These are the times that try men's souls," which Washington had read to his troops before the crossing of the Delaware.

Thomas Jefferson

Renaissance politician who penned independence, doubled America's size, and still found time for extensive home renovations.

PART FIVE

Echoes and the Chronicle

The shard-born copies that fight, the five lost chapters, the storms and rifts, and the shadows at the edge of the page.

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The Chronicle 111

Storms, Rifts and Seasons 117

Shadows 125

Unanswered Questions 127

THE ECHOES

What Is an Echo?

The copies that fight

Every Reader fights Echoes. Here is what they are.

A shard is a splinter of the original crystal from the DevBerri lab, and it is full of time. When a hero picks one up, it carries them into Marginalia. But shards are fragile. The strain of pulling a whole person out of their century, or a nearby rift, or a shard storm, or simply time, can crack one. And when a shard cracks, something leaks out of it.

That something is an Echo.

An Echo is a reflection of the hero who carried the shard, but it is not made from the hero. It is made from the legend. From every story ever told about them, every statue, every exaggeration, every song. An Echo of Tesla is not Tesla: it is the mad wizard of lightning from the pulp magazines. An Echo of Washington is not the cold, frightened, stubborn man on the riverbank: it is a marble monument that never doubted anything. Echoes are louder than their heroes, stranger, simpler and almost always angrier.

Echoes don't negotiate. They don't rest. They take over a place, often a place from the hero's own history dragged into Marginalia around them, and they pull everything nearby into their story: workshops, battlefields, ships, crowds. Left alone, they grow.

And while an Echo is loose, the hero's living page in the Archive of Lost Histories fades. That is a lost chapter.

The only thing that stops an Echo is the true story, played back at it by someone who knows the difference. That is why Readers exist, and that is what every battle in the Chronicle is. When an Echo breaks, it dissolves into ink and purple dust, the crack seals, and the page comes home.

Bekah has one rule for Readers facing an Echo: never forget the real person behind the face. "The Echo is what people said," she says. "Your cards are what they did."

THE ECHOES

Lesser Echoes

Echoes of places and moments

Not every Echo wears a face. Some wear a whole workshop.

The great Echoes, the ones that wear a hero's face, come from the cracks in a hero's own shard. But when a shard cracks, it doesn't crack cleanly. Little fractures run off it in every direction, and from those, lesser Echoes spill out.

A lesser Echo is an echo of a place, a moment or an idea. The Echo of Menlo Park was a whole laboratory, full of clanking tinkers building tinkers. The Echo of the Crowded Bus was a driverless bus that rolled through the Archive forever. The Echo of the Rapids was a stretch of white water that appeared across a road in the Deckle Wilds and refused to leave. The Echo of the Regulars was an endless column of redcoats marching toward a Lexington that wasn't there.

Lesser Echoes are not as strong as the great ones, but they are dangerous, and they gather around a great Echo like moths around a lamp. To reach the heart of a lost chapter, a Reader usually has to clear three or four of them first.

The Chronicle is the record of that work: five chapters, each one a path through a lost chapter's lesser Echoes to the great Echo at its heart.

The Marginalians have their own names for lesser Echoes: "rattles," "leftovers," "smudges." The Bridgecrew call them "the small print." Nobody likes them. Everyone is glad Readers deal with them.

THE ECHOES · CHRONICLE

Echo of the Inventor

The heart of The Spark

A wizard of lightning, built from every pulp magazine that ever printed Tesla's name.

The first great Echo the Travelers ever faced took over an old water mill on the Inkwash, a mile below Dogear Crossing.

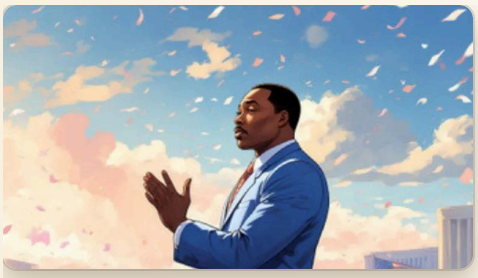
By the time they reached it, it was no longer a mill. It was every workshop Tesla had ever worked in, and a few he hadn't, bolted together into a crackling tower: coils as tall as trees, arcs of blue lightning, armies of clockwork tinkers building more tinkers, and at the top, a tall, gaunt figure in a black coat with eyes like live wires.

It was Tesla, but it was the Tesla of legend: the mad wizard who could split the earth, the bitter genius who hated the world that robbed him. It wanted every invention ever lost. It was pulling half-finished machines out of history into its tower, and every one it caught made the tower taller.

The real Tesla walked out to meet it with the Travelers, looked up at the thing wearing his face, and said, "That is not me. That is what they say about me."

The Reader broke it by going wide: tinker for tinker, spark for spark, until the Echo's tower overloaded under its own weight. When it fell, the lightning went out all at once, and the Echo dissolved into a rain of ink and gold dust over the river.

In the Archive, Tesla's page darkened again, clear and whole. The Spark was restored. The first lost chapter had come home.



THE ECHOES · CHRONICLE

Echo of the Dreamer

The heart of The Dream

A great voice with beautiful words and nothing true behind them.

The Echo of the Dreamer took over the great hall of the Archive of Lost Histories, and for three days nobody could get in.

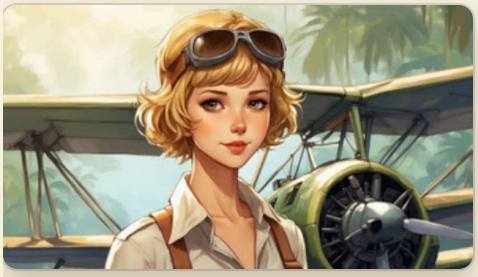
From the doorway, you could hear it: an enormous, booming voice, speaking some of the most beautiful words ever written about freedom and justice and hope. And the hall was full of a crowd, a vast shadow crowd stretching back into darkness, cheering every line.

But the words were wrong. They were real words, stolen from real speeches, and stitched together into something that did not mean anything. The Echo did not want to heal a nation or change a law. It wanted an audience. It wanted every voice in the hall to become its voice. Marginalians who went inside to listen came out hours later, dazed, repeating phrases, unable to remember their own names.

This was the Echo of Dr. King as legend: the speech without the work. The statue without the man who was arrested, threatened, tired and patient, year after year.

Dr. King faced it beside the Reader, and he did not raise his voice. “A dream is not a speech,” he said. “It is a promise to work.” The Reader built slowly, patiently, character by character, never letting anyone fall, until the shadow crowd began to thin and the great voice ran out of borrowed words.

When the Echo broke, the Archive’s great hall was completely silent. Then, one by one, the Marginalians who had been trapped inside remembered their names.



THE ECHOES · CHRONICLE

Echo of the Aviator

The heart of The Frontier

A silver plane that never lands, still looking for an island.

The Echo of the Aviator is the only great Echo that did not come from the shard its hero carried.

Amelia Earhart’s own shard fell in 1932, over the Atlantic. But the Travelers’ visits had cracked time farther along her path, all the way to July 1937, somewhere over the Pacific, on the flight from which she never came back. A shard lay there, and it cracked, and the Echo that came out of it was the legend of her disappearance.

It appeared as a silver twin-engine plane circling the sky above the Deckle Wilds, day and night, never landing, never running out of fuel. Radio sets in the Cogwarrens picked up its voice, calm and faint, reporting a position that didn’t exist. Storms followed it. Anything that tried to fly near it was knocked out of the air.

The real Amelia Earhart watched it from the edge of the Wilds. The Travelers didn’t have to explain. She understood.

“Well,” she said at last. “Let’s bring her down gently.”

The Reader flew every Explorer they had over the Echo’s crosswinds and storm fronts, faster and higher each turn, until the silver plane finally slowed, and circled once more, and came down, softly, in a meadow full of wildflowers, and dissolved into gold light.

Earhart walked out into the meadow afterwards and stood there alone for a while. When she came back, she was smiling. The Frontier chapter was restored.

THE ECHOES · CHRONICLE

Echo of Blackbeard

The heart of The Rebellion

Taller, louder, crueler, and with a beard that was a bonfire.

If the real Blackbeard is a legend he built on purpose, his Echo is that legend with nobody steering.

It came out of the fog off Errata Harbor on a ghostly Queen Anne's Revenge that had never run aground, never been captured and never, ever surrendered. The Echo on its deck was ten feet tall. Its beard was not full of smoking fuses; it was a roaring bonfire. It fired broadsides at everything, boarded everything, plundered everything, and it did not care about profit, or its crew, or anything except being feared.

Bekah is fairly sure Jane's hit song "Blackbeard's Burning Beard" made it worse. Jane, to her credit, agrees, and has since written a True Verse.

The Echo sent boarding parties of Echo redcoats onto the docks and tore through the Reader's hand with every hit, making them throw away cards at random. The trick, the Reader learned, was not to hoard anything: get every card onto the field before the Echo could plunder it.

The real Blackbeard watched the whole fight from the end of the pier, laughing, with a tankard in his hand. "All that fire and no sense," he said. "I'd never have lasted a week like that." When the Echo finally broke and its ghost ship sank into ink, he raised his tankard to it.

The Rebellion chapter was restored. The Bridgecrew threw a party. It lasted four days.

THE ECHOES · CHRONICLE

Echo of the General

The heart of The Founding

A marble monument that crosses the ice every night, forever.

The Echo of the General came from the crack on the Delaware, the very crack the Travelers made when they stood on that frozen bank and watched.

It appeared at the foot of the Rimefold as a winter that would not end. Snow fell and never stopped. And every night, across the frozen Inkwash, an Echo army crossed the ice in silent boats, led by a tall marble figure in a general's cloak, and attacked Washington's encampment at dawn. It never tired. It never doubted. It never felt the cold.

That was the point. It was not Washington. It was Washington the monument: the face on the money, the statue in the square, a man who had never been hungry or frightened or unsure.

The real Washington watched the final battle from the ridge with Collin beside him. Somewhere above them, Collin saw the Mysterious Man standing on the ice, watching too, sword drawn.

The Reader fought it the way the real army won: by getting back up. Every rested character refreshed, every line re-formed, every charge renewed, until the marble general cracked from the inside, and the snow finally stopped falling.

"The men who crossed that river were cold, and hungry, and frightened," Washington said afterwards. "So was I. Anyone who makes a statue of that night should remember it."

The Founding chapter was restored. All five lost chapters of the Chronicle had come home.

THE ECHOES

The Clockwork Curator

Keeper of the Clockwork Archive

An Echo that wants to own every patent ever filed.

Most Echoes are copies of a person. The Clockwork Curator is a copy of an idea: that every invention belongs to whoever files it first.

It appeared during the Age of Invention, when the shard storms pulled every great workshop of history into Marginalia at once. Somewhere in that chaos, a thousand patent disputes, lawsuits and stolen ideas cracked a shard together, and the Curator climbed out: a tall, brass, many-armed figure with a clock for a face and a filing cabinet for a heart.

It wants every patent. Every blueprint, every notebook, every invention, catalogued and locked away in its ever-growing Clockwork Archive, a ticking, grinding mirror-image of the real Archive of Lost Histories. Where the real Archive keeps lost chapters so people can find them, the Curator keeps them so nobody can.

Calvin Pennywevvy, who loves filing more than anyone alive, finds the Curator personally offensive.

The Curator builds a tinker every turn, winds its springs, catalogues new inventions for its own hand and strikes on the hour. Readers learned to break its machines and hit it hard between chimes. Every Curator defeated, anywhere in Marginalia, rewinds the whole Clockwork Archive a little, and every win by every Reader counts toward shutting it down for good.

THE ECHOES

The Rift Warden

At the bottom of every rift

Collin met it on the eighth floor. He came back up very fast.

Every rift has a bottom. At the bottom of every rift, waiting, is the Rift Warden.

Nobody knows exactly what it is. It is an Echo, or something like one, but it doesn't wear any single face. Readers who have reached it describe it differently every time: a general, an inventor, a pirate, a president, sometimes all of them at once, flickering from one to the next. The Inkbinders believe it is made from the leftover fragments of every Echo that ever broke inside that rift, gathered together at the deepest point, like sediment at the bottom of a river.

It is the strongest thing in any rift. Its Leader hits harder. Its characters are stronger. It starts with more energy and more life than any Echo in the Chronicle.

Collin Roberts was the first to meet one, scouting the eighth floor of an early rift. He came back up much faster than he went down and was very quiet for the rest of the evening. Then he started drawing maps for the Readers who would go after him.

Beating the Rift Warden seals the rift for good. The Inkbinders have noticed something strange, though: every Warden seems a little stronger than the last. As if they are learning. As if something at the bottom of all the rifts is paying attention.

THE ECHOES · THE CAMPAIGN

The Chronicle

Five lost chapters, twenty battles

Cracks from the Travelers' Shard have split five chapters of history, and an Echo guards the heart of each one. In the Archive of Lost Histories their pages are fading. None of these battles happened in real history: win them, and the true chapters return to their shelves, and their heroes come one step closer to home.

CHAPTER ONE · GOLD

The Spark

1876 to 1903 · Led by Nikola Tesla

An old mill below Dogear Crossing has become every workshop in history at once. Nib Sparkwhistle has his cannon loaded, Tesla has his coat on, and the Echo of the Inventor is building an army.

1876 · BATTLE 1

A Crackle at the Mill — ECHO OF MENLO PARK

Every lamp in Dogear Crossing flickers at once, and the old mill by the river starts to hum. Inside is a laboratory that should not exist: Menlo Park, rebuilt by an Echo, blueprints from four decades on one wall. Nib Sparkwhistle pushes up his goggles. "Tinkers," he whispers. "Hundreds of them." Something in the machinery is building an army of tinkers. Build yours faster.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

In 1876 Thomas Edison opened his laboratory at Menlo Park, New Jersey, often called the first industrial research lab. It produced inventions so quickly that newspapers nicknamed him "the Wizard of Menlo Park."

1888 · BATTLE 2

The Current War — ECHO OF EDISON

Two currents race down one copper wire across the market square: one steady, one alternating. Tesla and Edison are both pretending not to watch. The Echo of Edison is not pretending anything. Bekah writes: in real history, engineers settled this argument. Here, it learned to fight. Keep a crystal in reserve. A well-timed Zap turns a charge around.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

In the late 1880s Edison's direct current (DC) competed with alternating current (AC), backed by George Westinghouse using Nikola Tesla's 1888 patents. AC lit the 1893 Chicago World's Fair and powered the Niagara Falls plant, which began sending electricity to Buffalo in 1896.

1903 · BATTLE 3

Wings over Kitty Hawk — ECHO OF THE FLYER

A sheep pasture outside town, a cold wind, and a fragile machine of spruce and muslin. The Travelers watched this flight from the dunes at Kitty Hawk. Now its Echo circles Marginalia, looking for a pilot. Orville Wright shades his eyes. "It never lands," he says. "We always landed." Only an explorer can catch an explorer.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

On December 17, 1903, near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, Orville Wright made the first powered, controlled airplane flight: 12 seconds and about 120 feet. Wilbur flew 852 feet in 59 seconds later that day.

THE SPARK, CONTINUED

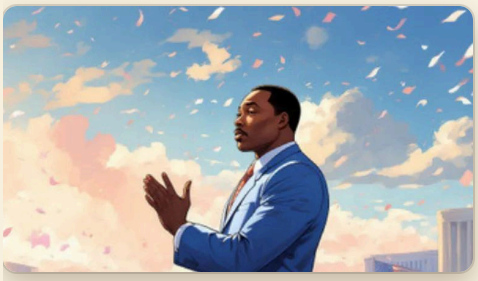
1893 · BATTLE 4 · THE HEART

Echo of the Inventor ECHO OF THE INVENTOR

The mill has become a tower of coils, and the whole valley hums at one frequency. At the top waits the Echo of the Inventor: Tesla as the pulp magazines drew him, hoarding every idea he never finished. The real Tesla straightens his collar. "That is not me. That is what they say about me." Beat him, and the first lost chapter is restored.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Nikola Tesla's alternating-current induction motor, patented in 1888, became the basis of modern power grids. At the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, Westinghouse's AC system lit the fair and showed Tesla's ideas to millions.



CHAPTER TWO · COBALT

The Dream

1845 to 1963 · Led by Martin Luther King Jr.

Pages are blowing out of the Archive's windows. Echoes of words and speeches have taken the stacks, and Calvin Pennywevvy is holding the door with a ledger.

1845 · BATTLE 1

Pages in the Wind ECHO OF THE RAVEN

Loose pages whirl through the Archive's stacks like leaves in a storm. A black bird of ink and torn paper screams a single word from above the great doors. Sir Henry John's sets his shoulders against the doors. Edgar Allan Poe is pale, and holding his poem. Spend every spare crystal. Power the page before it blows away.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Edgar Allan Poe's poem "The Raven" was published in January 1845 and made him famous almost overnight, though he earned very little money from it.

1955 · BATTLE 2

The Long Road ECHO OF THE CROWDED BUS

A city bus rolls through the Archive with no driver and no end to its route. The Travelers watched this bus pull away in Montgomery. Bekah still can't write about that night. One passenger refuses to give up her seat, in every timeline at once. Protest can't be targeted. Hold the line.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her bus seat. The Montgomery Bus Boycott that followed lasted 381 days and ended after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled bus segregation unconstitutional.

1852 · BATTLE 3

Voices at the Podium ECHO OF THE HECKLERS

A podium stands in the Archive's reading room, and hecklers from every era want their turn. Frederick Douglass steps up, and the room goes quiet. Calvin Pennywevvy mutters: "Nobody interrupts him. Not in my Archive." Put a Guard in front of the speaker. Let no charge interrupt.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

On July 5, 1852, in Rochester, New York, Frederick Douglass delivered "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?", one of the most powerful speeches in American history.

THE DREAM, CONTINUED

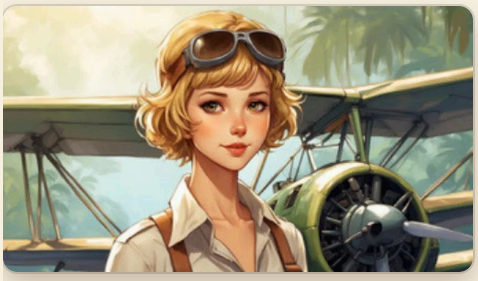
1963 · BATTLE 4 · THE HEART

Echo of the Dreamer ECHO OF THE DREAMER

The Archive's great hall fills with a shadow crowd that stretches to the horizon. The Echo of the Dreamer speaks beautiful words with nothing true behind them. Dr. King does not raise his voice. "A dream is not a speech. It is a promise to work." Restore the dream and the second chapter comes home.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

On August 28, 1963, about 250,000 people joined the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. From the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.



CHAPTER THREE · EMERALD

The Frontier

1805 to 1937 · Led by Amelia Earhart

The Deckle Wilds are rearranging themselves around explorers from three centuries. Elfie Layloft rides point, and something silver is circling above the trees.

1805 · BATTLE 1

River Crossing ECHO OF THE RAPIDS

The Inkwash has burst its banks in the Deckle Wilds: white water across the only road. Elfie Layloft's grey mare won't go near the rapids. A guide who knows the way waits on the far bank. Lewis wants to map it. Clark wants to cross it. Sacagawea already knows how. Keep your guide alive and your whole party can cross.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Sacagawea, a Lemhi Shoshone woman, traveled with the Lewis and Clark Expedition from 1805 as an interpreter while carrying her infant son. Her knowledge and presence helped the Corps of Discovery reach the Pacific.

1876 · BATTLE 2

Boomtown Standoff ECHO OF THE GOLD RUSH

A boomtown rises from nothing in a Wilds clearing overnight and dares you to take it. Its saloons and claim offices are all Echoes, and it is spreading toward the Wildkin villages. Every stable and claim office is ground worth holding. Build your town before theirs outgrows you.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

After gold was found in the Black Hills in 1874, towns like Deadwood sprang up almost overnight. William "Buffalo Bill" Cody later turned the Old West into a touring spectacle with his Wild West show, launched in 1883.

1805 · BATTLE 3

The Great Divide ECHO OF THE DIVIDE

The passes of the Rimefold fold in on themselves, and every one leads to a different century. Captain Lewis stands at the top of the world, looking for an ocean that isn't there. Elfie Layloft points west. "The trail moved again. Keep moving with it." Charge with purpose. Every charge can pay you back.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

On August 12, 1805, Meriwether Lewis crossed the Continental Divide at Lemhi Pass. Instead of an easy river route to the Pacific, he saw range after range of the Rocky Mountains.

THE FRONTIER, CONTINUED

1937 · BATTLE 4 · THE HEART

Echo of the Aviator ECHO OF THE AVIATOR

A silver plane circles above the Deckle Wilds and never runs out of fuel. It came from a crack far along her path: over the Pacific, in 1937. Amelia Earhart watches it for a long time. "Well. Let's bring her down gently." Bring her down, and the frontier chapter is restored.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

In 1932 Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. In July 1937 she and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the Pacific while attempting to fly around the world.

CHAPTER FOUR · GARNET

The Rebellion

1718 to 1863 · Led by Edward Teach, "Blackbeard"

Fog, smoke and cannon fire off Errata Harbor. The Bridgecrew are cheering for both sides, someone is watching from the rooftops, and a ghost flagship is coming in.

1718 · BATTLE 1

Powder Keg ECHO OF NASSAU

The Echo of Nassau floats in the fog off Errata Harbor, stacked with barrels of stolen powder. On the rooftops of Errata Row, a figure with glowing green hands is watching. One spark and the whole harbor goes up. Every hit you take hands you a lost chapter. Use it.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

In the early 1700s, Nassau in the Bahamas was a haven for pirates. In July 1718 Governor Woodes Rogers arrived with warships and royal pardons, and the pirate haven collapsed. Bartholomew Roberts, active from 1719 to 1722, went on to capture more ships than any other pirate of the era.

1718 · BATTLE 2

Queen Anne's Wake ECHO OF THE FLAGSHIP

A forty-gun ship sails out of the fog: the Queen Anne's Revenge as legend tells it, never run aground. The Bridgecrew are cheering on the docks. They haven't decided for whom. The real Blackbeard lights one fuse in his beard. "That's my ship. Mostly." Equip your crew. A ship makes any sailor twice as dangerous.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Blackbeard's flagship, the Queen Anne's Revenge, began life as a French slave ship he captured in 1717. It ran aground at Beaufort Inlet, North Carolina, in June 1718. Its wreck was discovered in 1996.

1863 · BATTLE 3

Siege Lines ECHO OF THE SIEGE

Trenches from three different wars zigzag across the fields east of Errata. Ulysses S. Grant chews an unlit cigar and studies the supply roads. Overnight, someone has painted CLOSE THE BOOK on the Guardsmen's barricade. Double Chapter hits twice as hard. End it quickly.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Ulysses S. Grant besieged Vicksburg, Mississippi, for 47 days. The city surrendered on July 4, 1863, giving the Union control of the Mississippi River.

THE REBELLION, CONTINUED

1718 · BATTLE 4 · THE HEART

Echo of Blackbeard ECHO OF BLACKBEARD

A ghost flagship in the rain, and on its deck a Blackbeard with a bonfire for a beard. Jane's ballad made the legend bigger. The Echo made it cruel. From the end of the pier, the real Blackbeard raises his tankard. "All that fire and no sense." Win here and the fourth chapter is yours.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Edward Teach, known as Blackbeard, was killed on November 22, 1718, at Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina, in a battle with sailors led by Lieutenant Robert Maynard of the Royal Navy.

CHAPTER FIVE · QUARTZ

The Founding

1775 to 1777 · Led by George Washington

Snow at the foot of the Rimefold, and it will not stop falling. Washington's encampment is pinned in the foothills by an Echo that crosses the ice every night.

1775 · BATTLE 1

The Midnight Ride ECHO OF THE REGULARS

Two lanterns burn in the clock tower of Dogear Crossing, which has never had a steeple. Echo redcoats march down the Longroad toward a Lexington that isn't there. Paul Revere is already in the saddle, and the Longroad Lancers are riding with him. Swift characters charge the moment they arrive. Ride now.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

On the night of April 18, 1775, Paul Revere and William Dawes rode out of Boston to warn that British troops were marching toward Lexington and Concord. The first shots of the Revolutionary War were fired the next morning.

1777 · BATTLE 2

Winter Encampment ECHO OF THE LONG WINTER

Snow falls at the foot of the Rimefold and never melts. A young French marquis shares the soldiers' cold huts, just as he did at Valley Forge. High on the ridge, Collin sees a hooded man with a sword of ice, watching. Then he is gone. Some cards refuse to fall. Outlast the winter.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

The Continental Army camped at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, from December 1777 to June 1778. Around 2,000 soldiers died of disease and exposure, but drilling under Baron von Steuben left the army stronger. The Marquis de Lafayette, just 20 years old, served there.

1776 · BATTLE 3

Signing Day ECHO OF THE CROWN

The Echo of the Crown has seized the Folio Council's chamber at Spinehold and declared itself king. Queen Clarise is not amused. Captain Isguard is even less amused. On the table a parchment waits. One signature is already on it, and it is very large. Gather your Founders. Together they are stronger.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

The Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Most delegates signed the official copy on August 2, with John Hancock, the president of Congress, signing first and largest.

THE FOUNDING, CONTINUED

1776 · BATTLE 4 · THE HEART

Echo of the General ECHO OF THE GENERAL

Ice grinds on the Inkwash where it runs out of the Rimefold. Every night the Echo of the General crosses it: a marble monument that was never cold, hungry or afraid. Washington watches from the ridge. "The men who crossed that river were frightened. So was I." Beat him and the Archive's final chapter is restored.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

On the night of December 25 to 26, 1776, George Washington led about 2,400 soldiers across the icy Delaware River. The next morning they surprised and defeated the Hessian garrison at Trenton, New Jersey.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

The Rifts

Tears in the margins

Where an unstable shard shatters, the world tears open.

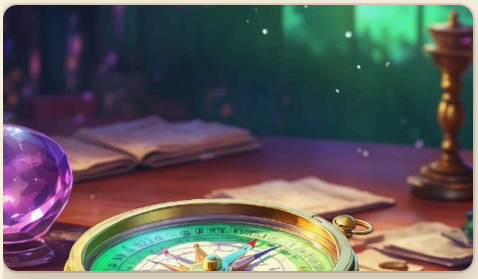
Most shards crack. A few shatter.

When a shard shatters completely, instead of letting one Echo out, it tears a hole: a rift. From outside, a rift looks like a crack in the air, glowing purple at the edges, crackling like a fire and smelling of hot copper. Rangers know the warning signs: birds going quiet, compasses spinning, the light turning violet between the trees.

Inside, a rift is a tangle of history. Floors, rooms and landscapes from every era, stacked on top of one another like pages torn from different books and glued together at random. You might step from a Revolutionary War battlefield into a 1920s airfield into a pirate's hold, all within a hundred paces. Everything is shifting. Everything is full of Echoes, because broken shards leak Echoes the way a broken jar leaks water.

Rifts open all over Marginalia: in fields, cellars, forests, riverbanks, most of all in the Rimefold. The small ones close by themselves. The large ones grow, and pull things in, and spit rimecrawlers and Echoes out.

The only way to close a large rift is to go down into it, floor by floor, and seal it at the bottom, where the Rift Warden waits. Harriet Tubman has led people out of five of them. Collin Roberts has scouted more than anyone. And Readers make the whole descent in what the Bridgecrew named the Rift Run.



STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

The Rift Run

Eight floors down

A deck you build on the way down, and a Warden at the bottom.

The Rift Run is the most dangerous thing a Reader does, and the most popular. Poppy Albright keeps a board in the Folded Corner with the deepest runs of the season, and there is always a crowd around it.

The rules are simple, and they came from Collin Roberts, who worked them out the hard way. You go into a rift with a small deck, only what you can carry. Every floor you clear, the rift gives you something back: a new card torn loose from the tangle, or a relic, a small piece of shard-touched luck like a Pocket Crystal or a Spare Chapter. You can take it, or you can leave something behind to travel lighter. You have three chances. Run out, and the rift throws you back out onto the grass.

Eight floors down, the Rift Warden waits.

The Travelers help every Reader who goes in. Devin tunes the chapter cards to hold together in the rift's tangled time. Collin sketches maps of the floors he has already seen. And Bekah waits at the top, every single time, with a notebook to record what the Reader found.

Readers who beat the Warden seal the rift for good, and walk out into sunlight with a pocket full of treasure and a story nobody else has told. Poppy puts their name on the board in gold chalk.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

Shard Storms

The weekly bosses

When shard dust from a whole era swirls together, it becomes a storm with a will.

Every closed rift leaves shard dust behind. Most of it is swept up, by Drack Balistar's apprentices if nobody else, and turned into crystals. But some of it rises on the wind, and drifts, and gathers.

When enough dust from the same era gathers in one place, it becomes a shard storm: a whirling mass of purple light that twists that era into a single living force. A storm of pirate-age dust becomes a ghost armada. A storm of factory-age dust becomes a steam-driven assembly line that won't stop building. Storms don't have one hero's face. They have a whole age's worth of legend, and they are powerful.

Shard storms follow the weekly pattern of the winds that blow down the Spine, so a new one rolls in every week, and the Longroad Lancers ride out to warn every town in its path. Each storm has its own rules, bending the battlefield around its era. And each one telegraphs its moves a turn ahead, like thunder before lightning. A sharp Reader can read the sky and disrupt the move before it lands: strike the storm's Leader or break one of its pieces, whichever the move demands.

Beating a storm scatters it, and the dust that falls afterwards is rich. Every Reader who breaks the week's storm walks away with a new pack of chapter cards. The storm always comes back, in some form, a few weeks later.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

Blackbeard's Armada

Weekly shard storm

A whole Golden Age of Piracy, sailing up the Inkwash at once.

When the dust of the Golden Age of Piracy gathers, it becomes the Armada: a fleet of ghost ships sailing up the Inkwash from Errata Harbor in a wall of fog, flying every pirate flag of the age at once.

The Armada fights like its legend. It fires broadsides across the whole battlefield. It sends boarding parties of redcoat Echoes onto the field. It plunders your hand. It opens every fight with a redcoat already aboard.

The real Blackbeard, who shares a name with it and hates that, has offered his advice to every Reader who faces it: hit the flagship hard and often. "A pirate who's being shot at," he says, "hasn't got time to plunder."

The Bridgecrew close every bridge on the Inkwash when the Armada is sighted, and then crowd onto the rooftops of Errata to watch the Readers fight it. They cheer loudly for the Readers. They cheer slightly more loudly for the Armada's best broadsides. Blackbeard pretends not to notice.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

The Iron Age

Weekly shard storm

An assembly line that builds itself, forever.

The dust of the age of factories and foundries gathers into the Iron Age: a shard storm shaped like an endless assembly line, clanking and hissing across the fields outside Bindwell, belching smoke and building as it goes.

Every turn, it runs another shift. It builds steel golems. It overclocks its workers until they glow. It swings a great steam hammer at the strongest thing on your side of the field. And it doesn't stop, and it doesn't rest, and the line never ends.

Andrew Carnegie, who knows something about foundries, watches the Iron Age with a mixture of admiration and horror. John Henry, who knows something about machines, won't watch it at all. When a Reader asked him for advice, he only said: "Break the machine before it breaks you. It don't get tired, but it don't get clever either."

Readers learned he was right. The Iron Age's moves can be disrupted by breaking its golems before they multiply, and by hitting its Leader before the hammer falls.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

The Continental Congress

Weekly shard storm

A storm of debates, taxes and very long speeches.

The dust of the founding era, full of pamphlets, petitions, arguments and quill ink, gathers into the strangest storm of all: the Continental Congress. It looks like a great hall floating in a cloud of paper, full of shadowy delegates in powdered wigs, all speaking at once.

It fights by procedure. It filibusters, resting your characters while it talks. It taxes your crystals. It ratifies, making its Founders stronger with every vote. It is patient and it is maddening.

John Adams, who sat in the real Continental Congress, says it's the most accurate Echo he has ever seen. Benjamin Franklin says it's much too well organized to be the real thing. Thomas Paine has written a pamphlet against it.

The trick, Readers learned, is to keep interrupting. Hit its Leader to cut off a filibuster or a tax before it passes. Break its Founders before they ratify. The Queen's Guardsmen, who have sat through several Folio Council meetings, say they know the feeling.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

Frontier Storm

Weekly shard storm

The weather of the whole Wild West, all at once.

The dust of the frontier gathers into the Frontier Storm, which is exactly what it sounds like: an enormous, rolling thunderstorm that sweeps in from the Deckle Wilds, full of crosswinds, lightning and the thunder of stampeding hooves.

Everything in the Frontier Storm has Explore, flying over blockers on the wind. Every round, the weather turns: crosswinds that knock your characters off their feet, twin lightning strikes, and sometimes a stampede with an Echo of Daniel Boone riding at the front, ready to charge.

The real Daniel Boone finds that last part very upsetting. “I never stampeded anything in my life,” he says. “I’d have told them to go around.”

The Longroad Lancers ride ahead of the Frontier Storm to warn the farms in its path, and Drack Balistar opens his brewery as a shelter, on the house. Readers who face it learn to hit its Leader hard to calm the wind, and to break the stampede before it reaches them.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

Moonshot

Weekly shard storm

A countdown in the sky. Scrub the launch before it reaches zero.

Neil Armstrong discovered the high rift, the one that looks like a moving star. When it spits out a shard storm, the storm is Moonshot: a towering launch gantry of Echo steel and shard light, rising out of a field, with a vast rocket on the pad and a countdown booming across the sky.

It doesn’t attack like other storms. It counts. T-minus three. T-minus two. T-minus one. And then it launches, and the blast costs every Reader in range two chapters of Life.

It was Armstrong himself who worked out how to stop it. A launch, he explained to the Readers, can be scrubbed if something goes wrong at the right moment. Hit Moonshot’s Leader during the countdown, and the whole sequence resets. Keep hitting it, and it never gets off the ground.

Moonshot is dangerous in other ways, too. It starts with more crystals than you and hits harder. But Readers who stay calm, work the problem and strike at the right moment can hold it on the pad forever.

Armstrong watches every Moonshot fight from the Archive’s observatory. He says that’s the most nervous he ever gets, and it’s worse than the real thing.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

The Chorus of Voices

Weekly shard storm

Every great speech in history, sung at once.

The dust of great words, speeches, sermons, poems and songs from every era, gathers into the Chorus of Voices. It is a shard storm you hear before you see: a vast, beautiful, overwhelming choir, singing every great speech ever made, all at once, in harmony.

The Chorus is hard to hurt and hard to silence. Its characters are tougher than they look. It draws an extra card every turn. It heals itself in harmony, swells its singers in crescendo, and when it hushes, you find you've forgotten one of your cards.

It is not evil, exactly. It is simply too much: all of history's voices, with nobody to decide which ones matter. Jane the bard, who went to listen to it once, came back and did not play her lute for a week.

Readers learned to break its crescendos and hushes by hitting its Leader, and to silence its harmony by breaking its singers. Emily Dickinson, when told about the Chorus, said only that the loudest voice is rarely the truest. Bekah wrote that on the Folded Corner's chalkboard, and it's still there.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

Poppy's Ladder

Ranked play at the Folded Corner

A chalkboard of Readers' names, and Poppy taking a small cut.

Readers need to practice, and Readers are competitive. Poppy Albright saw an opportunity.

In the back parlor of the Folded Corner, under the round window where Tesla fell through the roof, there are six green-baize tables and a huge chalkboard on the wall. On the chalkboard is a list of every Reader who has played a ranked match there, in order of standing. That list is Poppy's Ladder.

The rules are simple. Two Readers sit down, each with their own deck and Leader, and play to the finish. The winner climbs. The loser drops. Poppy keeps the chalk, keeps the records and keeps, as she cheerfully admits, a small cut of every prize pool. Readers who play with friends use the tables too, for free, as long as they buy a drink.

Captain Isguard disapproves of the betting. Alise Wellington approves of the drinks. The Travelers approve of the practice, because every match makes a Reader sharper against the Echoes.

Blackbeard has asked to join the Ladder several times. Poppy has told him several times that he can play when he stops hiding cards in his beard.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

The Riddle Room

Puzzles of the Inkbinders

One turn, one board, one right answer.

Deep in the Archive of Lost Histories, two floors below the reading rooms, there is a small round chamber with a battle table in the middle and a single candle. The Inkbinders call it the Riddle Room.

Every Inkbinder apprentice is tested there, and now every Reader is too. The table is laid out with a battle already in progress, frozen at one exact moment: a few characters on each side, a few cards in hand, a few crystals to spend. There is only one turn. There is only one way to win it.

The Inkbinders design the riddles from real moments in the history they keep. A night crossing of an icy river. A harbor full of tea. A turncoat who changes sides at the perfect moment. Each riddle carries a hint, written in the Inkbinders' spidery hand, and the hint always tells the truth, if you read it carefully.

Calvin Pennywevvy is the reigning champion of the Riddle Room and solved every riddle on his first try. He would like everyone to know that. He would also like everyone to know that he used an abacus for two of them, which is not against the rules.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

Age of Invention

Season 1, Week 1: The story

Every great workshop in history, pulled into Marginalia in one impossible afternoon.

It began with a hum.

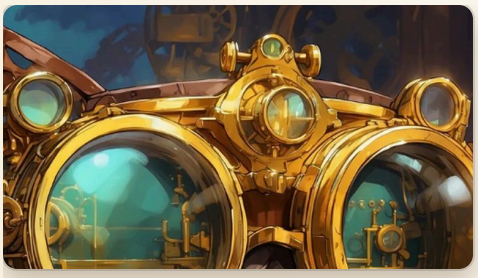
One ordinary morning, every lamp in Dogear Crossing flickered at once, and every compass in the Cogwarrens spun. Tesla put down his teacup at the Folded Corner and said, very quietly, "Something is resonating."

By noon the sky over the realm was full of drifting violet light. A great shard storm had formed high above the Spine, bigger than any the Lancers had ever seen, and it was made of the dust of a single age: the age of invention. Of patents and dynamos, telegraphs and steam engines, workshops and world's fairs. And as it turned, it began pulling the workshops themselves out of history into Marginalia. Laboratories appeared in fields. Factories sprouted beside the Inkwash. A telegraph office fell out of the sky and landed, perfectly upright, in the middle of the market square.

With them came Echoes: Echoes of inventions, of rivalries, of every patent fight and stolen idea in history. And somewhere inside the storm, gathering all of it, was something new, an Echo that called itself the Curator.

Tesla, the first arrival and the leader of Marginalia's inventors, stood up and put on his coat. "This one," he said to the Travelers, "is mine."

The Age of Invention is the first season of the Readers' war with the Echoes. The story runs four weeks: the first sparks, the Patent Race, the Clockwork Archive and, at the end, the Grand Exposition.



STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

The Patent Race

Season 1, Week 2

Every Reader invents on the fly, and the first to the patent office wins.

By the second week of the Age of Invention, Dogear Crossing had become the busiest workshop in history. The storm was still dropping inventions out of the sky: half-built machines, blueprints, prototypes, lost notebooks. Everyone wanted them.

That was when the Patent Race began.

It was Thomas Edison's idea, and Tesla, for once, agreed with him. The Curator was trying to catalogue every falling invention for itself. So the Readers would get there first. Two Readers would sit down at a table in the Folded Corner, and every turn, each would reach into the storm and pull out a choice of three inventions, keep one and build with it. Whoever built better, won, and the inventions they claimed were registered at the Archive before the Curator could lock them away.

Calvin Pennywevvy has never been busier or happier. Bekah has never seen so many patents. Nib Sparkwhistle has entered the Patent Race eleven times and been disqualified twelve, once before it even started.

The Race has a simple rule that makes every game different: every Invention costs one crystal less. Inventors, Tesla says, should never have to pay full price to have an idea.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

The Clockwork Archive

Season 1, Week 3: The community boss

The Curator built its own Archive. Every Reader in Marginalia has to take it apart together.

In the third week, the Curator finally showed itself, and what it had built.

Above Bindwell, right beside the real Archive of Lost Histories, a second Archive appeared overnight. It was made of brass and gears instead of stone, and it ticked. Its shelves were full of every invention the storm had pulled from history, locked in glass cases. Its doors were wound shut with springs. And at its heart, at the top of a clock tower that struck every hour with a sound like a slammed book, sat the Clockwork Curator.

The Inkbinders were appalled. Calvin was personally offended. The Queen called the Folio Council into emergency session.

The Clockwork Archive was too big for any one Reader to beat. So all of them fought it together. Every Reader in Marginalia who beat the Curator in battle rewound its clocks a little, and every win, from anyone, anywhere, counted toward the whole. The Bridgecrew posted the total on a board at the Folded Corner. Poppy stopped taking bets because nobody would bet against the Readers.

It took a week of every Reader in Marginalia fighting at once. Some say the ticking still hasn't completely stopped.

STORMS, RIFTS AND SEASONS

The Grand Exposition

Season 1, Week 4: The finale

Seven halls, seven champions, and the whole realm watching.

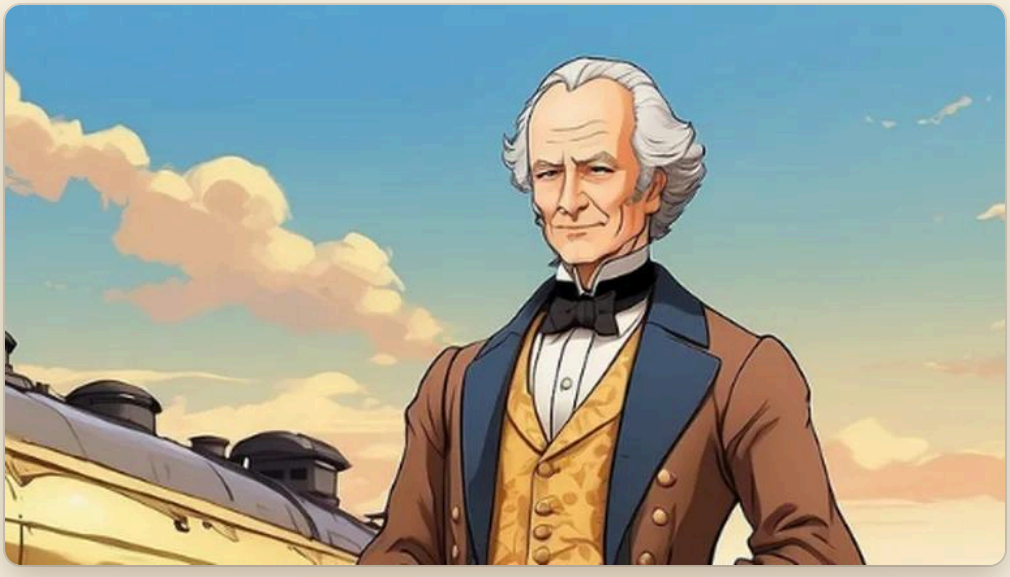
When the Clockwork Archive finally fell silent, its thousand glass cases cracked open, and every invention inside was set free. Tesla had an idea about what to do with them.

"In my time," he told the Folio Council, "we had a great fair in Chicago, to show the whole world what people could make. We should have one here."

And so the Grand Exposition was built: seven great halls in the fields below the Spine, stuffed with every invention the storm had brought, open to every Marginalian and every arrival for free. Nib Sparkwhistle demonstrated the Gemdrop Cannon. Edison exhibited a phonograph. Tesla lit the whole fair with the Little Tower, which Captain Isguard said was a fire hazard.

But the storm had one last trick. As the Exposition opened, the last of its dust settled into the seven halls, and in each hall, an Echo champion rose, stronger than the one before. To finish the season, a Reader has to walk the whole Exposition, hall to hall, and beat all seven champions in a row, with the whole realm watching from the galleries.

Those who manage it earn the Archivist's Seal. And the Age of Invention ends, like all good stories should, with lights, crowds and a very large party.



Cornelius Vanderbilt

Shipping tycoon who turned water into wealth and competitors into footnotes.

SHADOWS

The State Enemy

The only one the Queen ever named

The shards do not choose. They fall where the cracks run, and anyone can pick one up. Most of those who came through were heroes. One was not.

He arrived like all the others, and for a few days he was simply one more stranger. Then he began doing what he had always done. He demanded power. He told frightened people that their neighbors were their enemies. He tried to turn the Closed Book's fear into something far worse.

Marginalia did not let him.

Queen Clarise listened to the reports for exactly one day. Then she called the Folio Council, and for the first and only time in her reign, she used the power the Writ gives her to name someone an enemy of the realm. The vote was unanimous.

What happened next is the thing Marginalians remember. The arrivals and the inhabitants stood together, every century and every order, and refused him. Nobody would shelter him, sell to him, carry his messages or listen to his speeches. The heroes of history stood beside the Queen's Guardsmen shoulder to shoulder. He found no followers here.

He is out there still, beyond the realm's peace, in the waste places where Echoes gather. His card appears in the game as a villain and nothing more: a force that harms everything around it, friend and foe alike, which is the truest thing about him.

He is not a hero of this story. He is what the story stands against.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

Adolf Hitler led Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945. His regime started the Second World War in Europe and carried out the Holocaust, the systematic murder of six million Jews and millions of other people. He died by suicide in Berlin in April 1945 as Allied forces closed in. He is remembered as one of the most destructive figures in history.

SHADOWS

The Contract

A scrap of paper in a burned warehouse

Numbers, a seal nobody recognizes, and three painted words.

Captain Isguard's Guardsmen found it in the ashes of a burned-out warehouse on Errata Row: the corner of a contract, scorched at the edges.

What remained was a line of numbers, which Calvin Pennywevvy believes is a date and a payment. A wax seal, pressed into a strange shape nobody in Marginalia recognizes: an open book with its pages torn out. And three words, painted rather than written, in the same hand that paints the slogans on the walls at night: Close the Book.

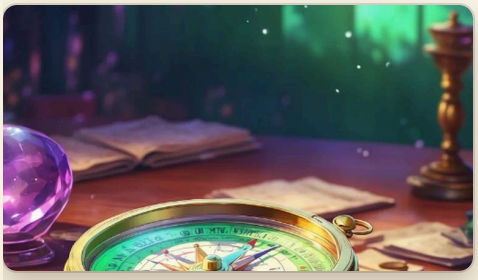
Everyone in the harbor knows who takes contracts on Errata Row: the Hired Assassin, the Greenhand. And everyone knows the Greenhand's code: never an inhabitant of Marginalia. The target of this contract is an arrival.

Since then there have been near misses. A falling beam at the Archive. A cut saddle girth at the Folded Corner stables. A green-stained knife left on the Travelers' pillow. And twice, when the Greenhand could have struck, they didn't.

The questions are piling up in Bekah's notebook. Who paid? Who is the target? Why does the seal look so much like something that belongs in the Archive? And why do the Inkbinders go quiet whenever anyone shows them a drawing of it?

THE CONTRACT, CONTINUED

The Travelers have not told the arrivals yet. Isguard wants to. Bekah wants to know more first. They argue about it most nights, in whispers, in the attic of the Folded Corner.



SHADOWS

The Crack That Spreads

What the Inkbinders fear most

Every lost chapter makes the world a little less written.

The Inkbinders have a secret, and Bekah Kent finally got it out of them.

The cracks the Travelers made did not stop at the moments they visited. They are spreading, slowly, through history, the way a crack in a windshield spreads a little farther every cold morning. The Inkbinders have been tracking it on a great chart in the lowest level of the Archive. So far, most of the new cracks are in American history, where the Travelers stood. But the chart is getting wider.

New shards have been detected in places the Travelers have never been. A glint on the steps of a library in ancient Alexandria. A purple stone in a caravanserai on the Silk Road. A crystal in a Florentine workshop, a chip of violet in the gold dust of Mali, a flicker on the barricades of a revolution across the ocean, and another, very high up, in orbit above the Earth.

Every era can be reached. Every era will be.

That means more arrivals. More Echoes. More rifts. And, the Inkbinders fear, more lost chapters, more of the world gone blank, and the Blank Margin creeping closer every season.

It also means, Collin points out, more heroes. More help. More friends.

Devin is working on the Mender faster than ever. Bekah has started a second notebook for names from places far beyond America. And Queen Clarise has asked the Folio Council to begin preparing Marginalia for visitors from every corner of history.

SHADOWS · STILL UNWRITTEN

Unanswered Questions

Open threads the Archive has not closed yet

The Mysterious Man. Guardian or hunter? Marginalian, arrival, or older than shards? Is his ice sword shard crystal? Is the shape in the clouds a dragon? Why did he say "Soon"? His Archive page is almost blank.

The Closed Book's leader, probably near the Folio Council. The Inkbinders go quiet about it.

The Contract. Who hired the Greenhand, and which arrival is the target? The seal (an open book with pages torn out) looks like it belongs in the Archive. Will the Greenhand turn?

The Doctor's scroll. Never opened in public. The Doctor may know more about shards than anyone.

The Blank Margin is creeping inward. Is it fed by lost chapters? What is on the other side? (Collin wants to walk in. Bekah says absolutely not.)

The Mender. Can Devin seal cracks permanently?

The Rift Wardens are learning. Something at the bottom of all the rifts is paying attention.

The high rift in the sky that Armstrong found, and Kennedy's expedition to study it.

Benedict Arnold (pulled from 1779, before the betrayal) and **Hamilton and Burr** (pulled from 1801, before the duel): will they go home to history as written? (They will; margin time keeps history true. The drama is in how they face it.)

Blackbeard's choice about going home.

The Grand Binder of the Inkbinders, never seen outside the lower stacks.

The crack spreads beyond America. The Inkbinders' chart shows new shards far from anywhere the Travelers stood. Every future set fits: Libraries" concept season). Each new era brings new arrivals, new Echoes and new storms, and new Marginalian reactions: the Queen has asked the Council to prepare for visitors from every corner of history.

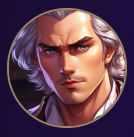
Teddy Roosevelt, Rough Rider

Asthmatic-turned-adventurer who charged up San Juan Hill, through the White House, and into conservation history.

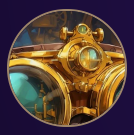
TIMELINE · I

The Shard Incident

From a warm purple rock in a box of odds and ends to the first Reader: the story so far, in order.

1. 

The rock. Collin finds a fist-sized lump of warm purple crystal in a box of odds and ends. It hums near speakers and makes compasses nervous. Devin clears the workbench.

2. 

Attempts One to Forty-Six. Bekah records every one: clocks stopping, a smell like rain on hot pavement, a phantom crowd cheering, the coffee maker brewing by itself. Brody runs the test plan; Andy films everything.

3.

Attempt Forty-Seven (11:52 pm). Copper coil cradle, a slow careful current. The crystal rings like a bell and the Shard splits off, showing Kitty Hawk.

4.

The watching. Bekah's three rules on an index card: watch, don't touch, come home (Collin adds "bring snacks"). Trips include Kitty Hawk (1903), the Current War, Montgomery (December 1955) and the Delaware crossing (Christmas night, 1776).

5.

The cracks. On the eleventh trip Bekah sees a hairline crack in the Shard. On the twelfth, two. Shards begin falling through history.

6.

The first arrival. Nikola Tesla picks up a humming shard in his New York lab and falls through the roof of the Folded Corner onto Poppy Albright's dealing table. For eleven days he is the only one. Then the flood begins.

7.

The Writ. Six weeks in, Queen Clarise issues the Writ of Welcome and Warning.

8.

The tavern in the Shard. The Shard stops showing history and shows the Folded Corner: Lincoln arguing with a knight, Earhart drawing maps in spilled cider, a goblin dismantling a telegraph key. Collin steps through; Devin follows; Bekah follows with a notebook and a flashlight. An hour later, once Bekah's note confirms everyone is safe, Brody (bag, first-aid kit, plan) and Andy (camera) follow.

9.

The audience. Andy talks his way past three secretaries and Isguard to get it. Bekah tells the Queen everything: "We did this. We didn't know, but we did it. So we're going to help fix it." Brody hands her a one-page plan; she still keeps it. The Queen gives them the Folded Corner's attic, an Archive pass, and one condition: help solve every problem the strangers bring.

10.

The first Echo. The Echo of the Inventor takes the old mill below Dogear Crossing. Devin, the Inkbinders and Tesla's resonance theory produce the first chapter cards. Bekah finds the first Reader.

11.

Now. The Chronicle's five chapters; Season 1, the Age of Invention.

Where the Shards Fell

The moments the Travelers watched, and the moments the shards reached. Margin time keeps every one of them true: each hero goes home to the exact second they left.

May 1718

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA · A HERO IS PULLED

Blackbeard nets a shard during the blockade, waiting for his medicine chest.

Christmas night, 1776

THE DELAWARE RIVER · A HERO IS PULLED

The Travelers stand on the frozen bank and watch. Washington breaks a glowing stone out of the ice.

1779

BEFORE THE BETRAYAL · A HERO IS PULLED

Benedict Arnold is pulled from before the betrayal.

1801

BEFORE THE DUEL · A HERO IS PULLED

Hamilton and Burr are pulled from before the duel.

The 1880s

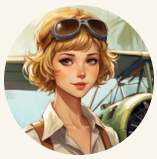
THE CURRENT WAR · THE TRAVELERS WATCHED

The Travelers watch from the back of a crowded hall. Tesla later finds a humming shard on his New York lab floor.

December 17, 1903

KITTY HAWK · THE TRAVELERS WATCHED

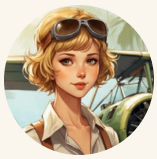
The first window the Shard ever opened: twelve seconds that changed the world.



May 20, 1932

OVER THE ATLANTIC · A HERO IS PULLED

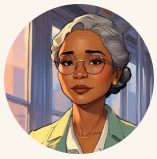
A shard rattles across Earhart's cockpit floor on her solo flight.



1937

OVER THE PACIFIC · A CRACK RUNS

A crack runs far along Earhart's path, and her Echo is born from it.



December 1955

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA · THE TRAVELERS WATCHED

The Travelers watch a bus pull away, and nobody speaks for the rest of the night.

August 1963

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON · A HERO IS PULLED

Dr. King picks up a violet stone on his hotel windowsill, speech unfinished.

July 1969

THE SEA OF TRANQUILITY · A HERO IS PULLED

A violet glint on Armstrong's boot inside Eagle, after the moonwalk.

The future

A CANYON ON MARS · A CRACK RUNS

A crack runs forward to Jared Nelson's survey, the vein the purple rock came from.

REFERENCE

Glossary

Words of the margins, from Archive to Writ

Archive of Lost Histories. The great library on the Spine beside Spinehold. It keeps the chapters that slipped between history's pages, the Book of Arrivals and every arrival's living page.

Arrivals. The official term for history's visitors: anyone pulled into Marginalia by a shard.

Bindwell. The capital of Marginalia, strung along the Spine: staircase streets, copper roofs and famous bells.

Blank Margin. The pale fog at the edge of every map, where the world stops being written. It has begun to creep inward.

Book of Arrivals. The register kept by Calvin Pennywevvy at the Archive, with every arrival's name, date and place.

Bridgecrew. The order that builds and keeps every bridge and dock and collects tolls by ancient charter.

Chapter cards. Cards pressed from shard ink by Devin and the Inkbinders. Each holds a borrowed page of a hero's story, lent willingly.

Chronicle. The five lost chapters and their twenty battles, each with a great Echo at its heart.

Closed Book. A secret movement that wants every stranger sent back at once, mended or not. "CLOSE THE BOOK" is painted on walls.

Cogwarrens. The goblin workshops under the streets of Dogear Crossing.

Cracks. The damage every visit through the Shard left in the Shard and in the moment visited. Cracks spread along a person's timeline.

Crystals. The glowing resource spent each turn: refined shard dust. Drack Balistar sells most of it.

Deckle Wilds. The ragged frontier forest along the west and south, where trails move when you aren't looking.

Dogear Crossing. The market town a day's ride from Bindwell, where more shards land than anywhere. Home of the Folded Corner.

Echo. A copy of a hero built from legend instead of truth, louder, simpler and angrier than the real person. Only the true story breaks it.

Errata Harbor. The only real seaport, where the Inkwash meets the sea. Everything that goes wrong washes up in Errata.

Folded Corner. The Wellington family's tavern on the market square, where Tesla fell through the roof. The Travelers live in the attic.

Folio Council. Nine seats: the Queen, the seven orders and the Merchants' Guild, meeting in the round chamber of Spinehold.

Frost-born. Pale, white-haired people with curling horns from the Rimefold: patient, famous cooks and singers.

Greenhand. The street name of the Hired Assassin of Errata Row.

Inkbinders. The ink mages who tend the Archive, write magic in Inkwash ink and co-created the chapter cards.

Inkwash. The great dark river from the Rimefold to the sea. Things written near it stay written.

Lesser Echo. An echo of a place, a moment or an idea, like the Echo of Menlo Park or the Echo of the Crowded Bus.

Lost chapter. A hero's living page in the Archive, fading while their cracked shard's Echo is loose.

Margin time. Time at home does not move while a hero is away. They go home to the exact second they left, so real history stays real.

Marginalia. The world in the margins of history, with its own towns, orders and queen. From above it looks like an open book.

Mender. The device Devin is building to seal cracks permanently. It has exploded twice.

Poppy's Ladder. Ranked play in the Folded Corner's back parlor.

Reader. You: someone from outside who knows real history and can tell the true chapter from the Echo's legend.

Riddle Room. The Inkbinders' puzzle room in the Archive.

Rift. A crackling purple tear left where a shard shatters completely, with floors from every era stacked inside.

Rift Warden. The composite of every Echo that broke inside a rift, waiting at the bottom.

Rimecrawlers. Glassy, many-legged creatures of frost and shard light from the northern rifts.

Rimefold. The frozen northern mountains, source of the Inkwash and home of the frost-born.

Shard, the. The sliver that split from the purple crystal on Attempt Forty-Seven: a window onto history.

Shards. Small purple splinters that fell loose through history from every crack. Anyone who picks one up is pulled into Marginalia.

Shard storm. Enough shard dust from one era gathered on the wind, twisting that era into a single force with its own rules.

Spine, the. The ridge of hills down the middle of the realm.

Spinehold. The royal castle at the top of Bindwell.

Travelers. The DevBerri team who followed the shards in to fix what they broke.

Wildkin. Horned, blue-skinned forest folk of the Deckle Wilds.

Writ of Welcome and Warning. The Queen's law: register at the Archive, bring no wars, help the town that shelters you. In return, shelter, food, courtesy and every effort to send you home.

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"A thing that isn't written down didn't really happen."

REBEKAH KENT, STORYTELLER

The world in the margins of history, where lost chapters drift. Read the whole Archive in the game, and play the lost chapters back with friends.

ROBERTS BROS GAMES · DEVBERRI