

GM Instructions

Materials Needed

Iron GM Base Materials

- a 10" glass round mirror
- 12 large envelopes for character packets
- Name badges
- Scissors
- A sharpie to label character packets
- Mounting Putty
- Pens
- Scratch Paper (useful for people translating book titles without writing on the books themselves)
- 12 index cards (for making shards)

Additional Materials

- 12 dot stickers each blue, yellow, green
- 2 bright flashlights (with batteries)
- A Roscolux Swatch Book
- Two small stones for the Stones of Restoration
- Clear tape for attaching labels to envelopes
- Optionally, 13 old used books to physrep books in a cool way

Casting Emails

- If you're casting ahead of time, email the pdfs in `Packets/` to players ahead of time; these contain the character sheets with any bluesheets and rituals.

Printing Instructions

- Print `Printing/char.pdf` duplex. Ideally print on some color of paper not blue, green, or white, such as grey or yellow. This contains 1 copy of each character sheet.
- Print 12 copies of the Rules and Scenario sheet (`Rules and Scenario.pdf`) duplex. These usually end up being on white but could also be some distinct color of paper. Distribute these to the players.

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- Print `Printing/blue.pdf` simplex, ideally on blue paper. This contains 6 copies of the Sleepy Valley bluesheet, 5 copies of the Shady Springs bluesheet, and 3 copies of the Specuceps bluesheet.
- Print `Printing/white.pdf` simplex on white paper. This consists of the rituals that go in packets, namely 1 copy of the Mirror Portal ritual, 2 copies of the Renewal of the Library ritual, and 1 each of the Revelation of Shadows and Substantiation of Dreams rituals.
- Print 6 copies of the Anchoring ritual, `Rituals/Anchoring.pdf`, also simplex on white paper. (These don't go in packets.)
- Print 1 copy of each book (`Books.pdf`) (duplex with short-edge binding on white).
 - For the basic version of books, fold each book in half so the contents are concealed and tape shut. You may print the book labels (`Book Labels.pdf`) as a reference if desired.
 - When using actual used books, print out `Book Labels.pdf` as well. Cut out the runic label and tape to the outside of each physical book. (Discard the English labels.) Cut the contents of each book out and tape somewhere inside the book. Put pieces of tape holding the remaining pages together so that it's easy to open the book to where you taped the contents.
- Print 1 copy of the Runes sheet and cut it into individual Rune cards (simplex, white, maybe cardstock).
- Print 1 copy of the Name Badges and cut it into individual name badges (simplex, white, maybe cardstock). Put green stickers on the name badges for Senior Librarian Siris and Librarian Habibah.
- Print 1 copy of each sign (`Signs.pdf`) simplex on white paper.

Stuffing Instructions

- Put each character sheet and the matching name badge in a large envelope, as well as any rituals and bluesheets listed on the character sheet.
- Make shards out of the gel swatches: cut a L-shaped piece of index card and tape a gel swatch of a different color into each one.
- Give each character 1 shard.

Runtime Instructions

- Put the copies of the Anchoring ritual around gamespace.
- Put the books around gamespace.
- Place the remaining colored stickers somewhere obvious in gamespace.
- Put the mirror and the flashlights somewhere obvious in gamespace.
- Subtly distribute one Stone of Restoration each to Kanak Dorking (the Saboteur) and Kendall Rodgers (the Failed Hero).

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- Once you know the exact size of game, fill in the Character Count Sign with sharpie and post it somewhere obvious.
- Divide the runes among the characters as evenly as possible based on which characters are actually in game.

Cutting Characters for a game of size 5-11

1. Every game should contain the The One in Distress (Librarian Habibah), The Fan (Noshi Sutherland), The Adventurer (Cass Peterson), The Rogue (Rudra Brehm), and The Failed Hero (Kendall Rodgers).
2. Games of size 6+ should add The Saboteur (Kanak Dorking)
3. Games of size 7+ should add The Dedicate (Quinn Anthony)
4. Games of size 8+ should add The Hunter (Meher Madoff)
5. Games of size 9+ should add The Researcher (Senior Librarian Siris)
6. Games of size 10 should add The Rebel (Reinier)
7. Games of size 11 should add The Novelist (Hema P. King) and The Babysitter (Ash Summers) and remove The Rebel
8. Games of size 12 should re-add The Rebel (Reinier)

Game Schedule

- Before game: give packets to players, answer questions.
- Gamestart: prompt Librarian Habibah to start off game with some sort of speech or announcement.
- During game: periodically make announcements reflecting time left in game. Adjust announcements if the Renewal of the Library ritual has been carried out.
 - 45 minutes in: “The light in the library is dimming. It seems as though the place itself is trying to conserve its last amount of magic before the inevitable collapse. There are 45 minutes remaining in game.”
 - 1 hour 15 minutes in: “The library begins to shake and falter. Everything around feels a little more... Ethereal. Less real. The hungry void doesn’t have teeth, but it seems to be baring them anyway. 15 minutes remain.”
 - 1 hour 25 minutes in: (if the Renewal of the Library has not happened) “The books begin to fall off the shelves. You can’t really see all the way across the room clearly anymore. The magic is dwindling and this dimension will soon be gone. Figure out what book you want to take and make any last-minute rituals. Anyone not anchored elsewhere in 5 minutes will die along with this dimension.”
 - 1 hour 25 minutes in: (if the Renewal of the Library has happened) “The Library is seems to have stabilized, but the Hungry Void is still teetering ominously. In 5 minutes, you will have to use your shards to determine which way it falls.”
- 1.5 hours after gamestart: ending vote. Have everyone vote on which way the Hungry Void goes with their shards. Once this is resolved, game is over. You can fudge this a little to allow in-progress rituals to complete.

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- Postgame: do a brief wrapup. Go around and prompt each player to talk about where they're going postgame, what book they took if any, and anything about their character that didn't come out in game they want to mention.
- Shameless plugs?
- Consider some sort of postgame food mob?

Plot Bible/GM Notes

Game should largely run itself and does not need active GM participation except perhaps to occasionally inform players about how much time is left in game. However, here are some quick references to help you answer player questions or understand the game setup.

Plots

- By default, the library is destroyed and everyone dies. This is generally considered a bad ending.
- Rituals are the main way of resolving plots. Some characters start with rituals, some are found in books, and the Anchoring ritual is available in gamespace. All rituals should clearly specify their effects on the sheet, so there isn't much need for GMs to run the rituals, but feel free to add color to the effects if you wish. The rituals in game are:
 - **Mirror Portal:** makes it possible to open a gateway to Specuceps. The Rebel (Reinier) has the ritual and wants to go there, and maybe the other Speculoids if they get unrooted. Others may decide they want to go there or choose it over dying.
 - **Renewal of the Library:** preserves the library for another 5 years. The two tree librarians have it, but it can't be done unless The Saboteur (Kanak Dorking) lets someone use their stone, and they're biased against this plot.
 - **Anchoring:** relatively easy ritual that lets people escape at end of game but requires two people who each want to go to a different of the parallel worlds. Copies are lying around.
 - **Rite of Eternal Life:** lets you become immortal by turning into an immortal tree when you get old
 - **The Shedding of Leaves:** lets a tree walk around for a short time, letting the tree librarians potentially escape.
 - **Reunifying Reality:** merges the two worlds into one, making it trivial to go between areas from each world
 - **Magic Transfer:** makes magic in one world stronger at the cost of the other world
- People are generally deciding what world they want to anchor with and who they want to be with postgame.
- Some books resolve people's goals if they take them home.

Characters at a Glance

- *The One in Distress*, **Librarian Habibah**: younger and less Zen librarian tree who doesn't want to die and summoned everyone who has a shard to try to find a way out.
- *The Fan*, **Noshi Sutherland**: kid from Sleepy Valley who used to travel to Shady Springs and have magical adventures, but now writes them off as imaginary
- *The Adventurer*, **Cass Peterson**: kid from Shady Springs who used to travel to Sleepy Valley and have magical adventures, but now writes them off as imaginary
- *The Rogue*, **Rudra Brehm**: descended from Shady Springs invaders, grew up in Sleepy Valley. Wants to reunify the worlds.
- *The Failed Hero*, **Kendall Rodgers**: tasked to travel between worlds to get one Stone of Restoration each from the lake at the edge of each world, but failed, dooming the Library.
- *The Saboteur*, **Kanak Dorking**: stole one of the stones the library needs to stay together; part of the Maintainers of the Sanctity of the Stones, the anti-portals-between-worlds organization of Sleepy Valley
- *The Dedicate*, **Quinn Anthony**: mage and religious dedicate of the Order of the Shadowy Text in Shady Springs, thinks the Rebel (Reinier) is the divine Librarian and that these trees are usurpers of some sort.
- *The Hunter*, **Meher Madoff**: stockbroker, monster hunter, and dream mage from SNOOZE
- *The Researcher*, **Senior Librarian Siris**: started this whole situation by doing the experiment that created the Connected Worlds. Is upset that the Rebel (Reinier) has ruined it, wants to save the library, if possible, and to live with honor or die with dignity.
- *The Rebel*, **Reinier**: sabotaged the Researcher (Siris)'s world experiment by letting Shady Springs send an army through a portal to Sleepy Valley, eventually leading to the main problems of game
- *The Novelist*, **Hema P. King**: wrote a series of books (*Shadowverse*) based on (true) stories told to them by Noshi Sutherland (the Fan). Ran out of books to write when Noshi came crashing down into reality.
- *The Babysitter*, **Ash Summers**: listened to stories told to them by Cass (the Adventurer), which turned out to be useful when they and their ex (the Failed Hero, Kendall Rogers) were attacked by monsters.

World Background

| Event | Time |
|---|---------------|
| On Specuceps, the world of Mirror Magic, Senior Librarian Siris (then | 450 years ago |

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| <p>researcher Siris; “The Scientist”) discovered a breakthrough that would allow them to test two worlds against each other, providing different magic to each. They built this research project, splitting a world into two halves, symmetric to one another. One was provided the Magic of Dreams, and the other the Power of Shadows. An observatory, The Library, was created adjacent to the world of mirrors, and from there the Mirror Mages valiantly watched their experiment to determine which world would thrive more. They wrote books about what they saw, and shelved them in The Library.</p> | |
| <p>Siris took root (died and became a tree) in the library, leaving the primary observation work to Librarian Hebibah.</p> | 185 years ago |
| <p>A Speculoid named Reinnier (“The Rebel”) had been refused by Siris as a student, and they decided to take their revenge by intervening in the Grand Experiment. They ventured into the world, sneaking past the Librarians, and used their Mirror Magic to open a portal between the worlds. They showed this portal to the people of Shadow World and convinced them to wage war upon Dream World.</p> | 125 years ago |
| <p>At the peak of the battle, a Dream Mage named Niha read the dreams of The Rebel, and thus she learned of the power of the Stones of Renewal in The Lake at the End of the World. She and her followers used these stones to break the Mirror from which the invaders emerged, and by reading the dreams of the invaders they eventually defeated the invasion before it became world-threatening. At the place of the now-broken mirror in each world, a pool of water emerged, shining eerily.</p> <p>Niha founded the Maintainers of the Sanctity of the Stones, which eventually evolved into SNOOZE, now the most powerful magical order in Dream World. It is tasked with (1) protecting the world from invaders, (2) protecting the Stones of Renewal, and (3) keeping the invasion a secret so that normal people don’t freak out.</p> <p>The Mirror Magic performed by Niha in The Invasion weakened the magical link between the worlds. The Library started to crumble, the pools of glowing water the only thing sustaining its existence. Librarian Hebibah journeyed every 5 years to the Lakes at the Ends of the Worlds to retrieve the Stones of Renewal and keep the link alive.</p> | 124 years ago |
| <p>Librarian Hebibah sensed the end of their Unrooted life approaching, and so the next time a visitor stumbled upon the library, Hebibah took them under their wing. The visitor, a child from Shadow World, was named Kendall Rodgers (“The Failed Hero”). Hebibah trained them in the magical arts, of all three varieties, in exchange for a promise to bring the Stones of Renewal every five years after Hebibah took root.</p> | 16 years ago |
| <p>Each character in game stumbles upon a shard of the Old Mirror (the one</p> | Various |

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| that broke 124 years ago) under various circumstances. | |
| The third time Kendall was supposed to bring the Stones, they were subdued by Kanak Dorking (“The Saboteur”), who is a powerful member of the Maintainers, and made to sleep for three days. Kanak stole the stone that originated in Dream World. | 3 days ago |

Glossary

Connected Worlds, The

Dream World and Shadow World

Divination of Dreams, The

Magic available in the world of

Dream World:

The world in which Sleepy Valley exists and Divination of Dreams is the magic available (GM codename)

Invasion, The:

The event 125 years ago where an army of mages from Shadow World tried to take over Dream World

Lake at the End of the World, The:

A place that is at the opposite end of either world from the portal; the Stones of Renewal come from here; each Lake is several days journey away from the portal, so even if someone could get outside the Library they couldn't get another stone in time.

Librarian, The:

- (1) How the members of the Order of the Shadowy Text refer to Reinnier, or*
- (2) Senior Librarian Siris*

Librarians, The:

The Speculoid researchers who observe the 2 worlds

Library, The:

The place between worlds in which game takes place

Mage:

One who studies the Power of Shadows or the Magic of Dreams

Maintainers [of the Sanctity of the Stones]:

*An order of mages in Dream World that seeks to defend their world from external threats
The Maintainers are a secret organization that pull the strings in a lot of places in Sleepy Valley but are not in public power.*

Mirror Magick / Mirror Majick

The magic that allows manipulation of worlds, travel between them, and so on

Order of the Shadowy Text, The:

The religious organization founded by the followers of The Librarian. Its dedictees have access to the Power of Shadows.

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Power of Shadows, The:

The magic available in Shadow World: is useful for hiding, thieving, concealing, deception

Shadow World:

The world in which Shady Springs exists and Power of Shadows is the magic available (GM codename)

Shady Springs:

The town in which all characters in game from Shadow World live. Also how the Librarians refer to that world

Sleepy Valley:

The town in which all characters in game from Dream World live. Also how the Librarians refer to that world

SNOOZE

The Secret Nocturnal Order of Zoological Enthusiasts, the organization that has subsumed The Maintainers

Specuceps:

The world of Mirror Magic, from which the experiment was created

Speculoid:

A resident of Specuceps. Plants roots and becomes a tree upon passing from this life.

Stones of Renewal:

The magic stones at the bottom of the Lake at the End of the World. Extremely useful for Some Mirror Magic. They eventually lose their power after being removed, which is why the Speculoids didn't stockpile a whole bunch.

Take Root:

Die and become a tree

Temple of the Shadowy Text, The:

The headquarters of the Order of the Shadowy Text

Unrooted:

The portion of a Speculoid's life before they become a tree