

# Meher Madoff

Another day, another dollar. Well, for you, another million dollars. You are a carnivore, a hunter, a winner, the alpha, and, some might say, an asshole. But that's their opinion.

You are a high-powered stock broker by day, wearing suits that cost more than some of the locals make in a year. You make deals involving enough money to buy your little town of Sleepy Valley several times over.

By night, you go to your hunting lodge as the head of the Secret Nocturnal Order of Zoological Enthusiasts [SNOOZE]. That means you hunt manticores. And unicorns. And all sorts of creatures thought purely mythological.

You are one of the privileged few to know of the magical world. In truth, magic only works well in a few places, and your home town is one of those places. The center of this magic is somewhere in these woods, and strange things pop up here all the time. So, you hunt them down and kill them before they can wreak havoc on the town. It's a dirty job, but someone's gotta do it, and nobody does it better than you.

It's not without its perks. You've learned to master the Divination of Dreams. It allows you to only need sleep when you want to, and when you do sleep, you can enter the dreams of others. That also gives you the ability to learn things about other people -- things that can give you inside information that can give you advance warning on your stock trades.

With the money you've made via stock trading, you've added to the hunting lodge's finances, and in turn, it owns these magical woods. You may have inherited your position as head of the lodge as a family legacy, but it has prospered and grown under your guidance (and funding). Plus, you like to pick up the odd artifact that appears on occasion.

Speaking of strange things popping up in the woods, a kid showed up there a couple of years back. They kinda reminded you of yourself -- hungry, eager to learn. You took them under your wing and taught them to hunt. Damn good at hunting - they helped you hunt dire tigers, wyverns, basilisks, and maybe more you've forgotten. They said they came from a place called Shady Springs. The lodge has some history mentioning other worlds, and you suppose the monsters must come from somewhere, but you never really thought of it too much before. Besides, you never really cared much about history. Supposedly, travel between worlds is taboo, but the kid seems all right. You might want to visit this Shady Springs yourself one day. See what they have to kill over there.

Anyway, life's been pretty good, but there's a fly in the ointment. Your dream magic has called to your attention that an asteroid is on track to collide with Sleepy Valley in several years' time. You've hushed it up, so as not to cause any unnecessary panic, but you have to deal with it.

## *Fading Lights - Character Sheet*

Dream Magic does a lot of things, but deflecting an asteroid from its course is not one of them. You need to find a way to fix the problem, but you're not sure where to turn to.

But you're good. If anyone can figure something out, it's you.

## People You Know

- Cass Peterson -- kid who popped up in the woods one day, claiming to be from another place called Shady Springs. You taught them all about killing monsters.
- Kanak Dorking -- another SNOOZE member, but more of an academic and historian than good at killing things.
- Noshi Sutherland -- a local kid, fan of HP King.
- Henna P King -- a local novelist made good. Tends to write about a place called Shady Springs. Hmm - where have you heard that name before? Probably just a coincidence.
- Rudra Brehm -- a local. Relatively reclusive. Your families never really got along.

## Goals

- Be in charge. You're the best, and if anyone can save the day, it's you.
- Protect the kid. You've got a soft spot for Cass. You're their mentor.
- Find a way to Shady Springs. You've always wanted to see it.
- Save Sleepy Valley. An asteroid will crash into it, if you do nothing.

## Items and Sheets

- A shard of glass that might have once been part of a mirror. You found it while hunting with the kid, and it matches a similar piece the kid found.
- Some Runes.
- "Sleepy Valley" bluesheet.
- The "Substantiation of Dreams", a ritual of Dream Magic.

# Rudra Brehm

You grew up in this world, but you aren't *of* it. Well, maybe you are. It's not really clear. More than a hundred years ago, your great grandparents came here to fight a war. There are stories passed through the generations, books of forgotten magic... (You used to sneak them out of your parents' room and read them at night, but you never could get any of the magic in them to work right. That's what happens when you're in the wrong world, you suppose.)

Your parents still felt like outsiders, a hundred years later. They didn't want that for you. They gave you a name in the style of the locals. They moved to Sleepy Valley to give you a good life. But you've watched them suffer. You've heard how some of the locals talk about them. It makes you sad.

You aren't quite clear exactly how much the world your ancestors came from is different from this one, aside from the magic. The stories talk about some religion focused on a librarian god, and the names and foods seem different, but other than that it's really hard to tell. Stories aren't really all that much to go on, you guess.

You've had a pretty good life, in these 21 years so far anyway. You befriended some of the local children, and when you were in high school you became something of an older sibling figure to a kid named Noshi Sutherland. They were your closest friend. They told you fantastic stories and you helped them get a grip on the way the world works.

Three years ago, you let your instincts to see new places and learn new things take over, and you left Sleepy Valley for the Peace Corps. You travel around the world, helping people - it's extremely rewarding, if sometimes lonely. You get to experience all sorts of interesting places, and you send postcards home when you get a chance.

When you left Sleepy Valley for the Peace Corps, your parents gave you a token to remember your family by: a shard of mirror that they said came from your great grandparents. You've had it with you every day ever since. When you look in the tinted glass, you see your own reflection but it reminds you of your parents.

You also took with you your copies the Shadowverse series as something to remember your town by; its author, Hema P. King, knew you growing up and gave you books as birthday presents. You've been reading them, and something has seemed eerily real about them but you can't put your finger on it. They reminded you of the stories your grandparents used to tell before they died.

Today you were building water infrastructure in the middle of nowhere when you heard an eerie sound. You realized it was coming from within your wallet, and when you touched the shard inside you were pulled into it. Now you're in a library of some sort. You hope the other

## *Fading Lights - Character Sheet*

volunteers aren't too worried about you. But that quickly leaves your mind - these trees are fascinating and your adventure sense is tingling. What is this place?

You have this strange feeling that this could be a place between worlds, a place that could let you return to the world your ancestors came from. But would you really want to leave the world you know for a world you only know from stories? Is it worth the risk if you might find a place where you really fit? If only you didn't have to choose... If there was some way to bring the worlds together so they were just like different countries. You're sure there's a lot everyone could learn...

But enough dreaming, time to find out what's going on and do what you can to help.

## People You Know

- Noshi Sutherland: the kid you were a friend, almost a sibling, to as you grew up. You send them a postcard when you can. What are they doing here?
- Hema P. King: Well-known author who lives back in Sleepy Valley. Wrote the eerily familiar Shadowverse books you've been reading.
- Meher Madoff: a wealthy hunter who spends time in Sleepy Valley. They've always given you an uneasy feeling for some reason.

## Goals

- Figure out what's going on here.
- Find out more about the world your ancestors came from.
- Get out of this situation safely.
- Help those around you who need your help.
- Figure out what world you belong to - where you can be happy and where you will feel at home, but also where you can have the coolest experiences.
- If you can, figure out how to make your parents' lives better. You don't want them to suffer as outcasts for the rest of their lives. Maybe you can get them back to the world of their ancestors?
- Find a way to set things up so that both worlds connect, so you don't have to choose one and leave the other behind.

## Items and Sheets

- The shard passed down from your great grandparents. It is precious to you, but it seems to have a further meaning here?
- Some Runes.
- "Sleepy Valley" bluesheet.

# Librarian Habibah

This is not how it was supposed to happen. This is not right at all.

You had it all planned out when you rooted about 16 years ago. You had that perfectly serviceable human, Kendall Rodgers, all trained and set up. All they had to do was, once every five years, journey to the lakes at the edge of each world, find the Stones of Renewal, and bring them back here. Even for a human, that shouldn't be so hard. I mean, you must've done it dozens of times just fine. This mendicant goes and messes it up just three attempts in. Ridiculous!

Kendall should have been here three days ago. They must've left it to the last minute, and then gotten eaten by a manticore or something. And so you're dying.

You thought it'd be fine, rooting here in the Library alongside your mentor, Senior Librarian Siris. You could observe the worlds from here, and it's not like you could go home anyways, not since those humans cut the Library off from Specuceps.

See, when you first came here with Siris it was easy to go home to Specuceps. Sure, you spent a lot of time here observing and taking notes, but you could go home on your breakdays to enjoy the untainted, perfect beauty of home. But all that ended about 125 years ago when some sabotage turned the mirror leading to Specuceps into a portal between the parallel worlds. Soon Shady Springs was marching armies into Sleepy Valley, and the whole thing was a mess. And then even worse, the humans in Sleepy Valley somehow figured out some portal-closing magic. It closed the portal between the human worlds enough to stop the armies, but in doing so it shattered your only connection to Specuceps. You and Siris have been stranded here sense then. He was already rooted at that point, but you were mobile, enough to maintain things until you too got old. But by then, a kid who wanted to be a hero, Kendall Rodgers, wandered in. You taught them some tricks, gave them some training, took them with you on a journey of several days to the lakes at the edge of each world. You trained them to follow in your footsteps. You trusted they'd be able to take care of things when you were rooted with branches merged into the bookshelves. But alas, you were wrong.

And now there's nothing for it. Without the Stones of Renewal, the pool of light that powers the Library will soon be drained. Then the Library will crumble. You are rooted in place. You cannot leave. You are doomed to die here.

It's already destabilized the library enough that the crumbling dimensional magics of this place have disturbed broken the spatial continuum: see some sort of Hungry Void arose outside the Library earlier today. It's naturally going to end up in one or the other of these worlds. With the mirror you might be able to steer it, but neither world deserves to have to deal with the corruption and destruction it's going to cause wherever it ends up.

And that's why you used some of the remaining magic reserves to send a distress signal. It should've reached people in both worlds that are connected to this place. Maybe their human magic, or their human cleverness, can be useful for once. You don't want to die here.

## Notes

- You're rooted in place, but are remarkably flexible and have branches that reach all throughout the library. As a player you can talk and move about freely.
- As long as you're rooted, you can't leave the Library, even if a ritual would otherwise let you do so.
- If Senior Librarian Siris isn't in game, it's probably because they're asleep due to the low magic levels.
- Normally, you have some ability to control the small portals that connect the worlds to the library, but the Library's magic reserves are so low these portals don't function at all.

## People You Know

- Senior Librarian Siris: Your mentor and elder Speculoid. You think he probably doesn't appreciate you getting all these humans involved in this, but there was no other way.
- Kendall Rodgers: The hero who was supposed to ensure that the Stones of Renewal were gathered from the lakes at the ends of each world every five years. Your distress call seems to have finally brought them here, but somehow you doubt they brought the Stones of Renewal.

## Goals

- Make a speech at the start of game to explain to everyone why you called them here and what's going on. (You can base this on the message in the scenario or not, as you see fit.)
- Find a way to survive.
- Work with the humans to figure out a way to get yourself out of here or to figure out any magical alternatives.
- Talk to Kendall Rodgers again and figure out what happened. Is it possible they, or one of the other people you summoned, have the Stones?

## Items and Sheets

- The "Renewal of the Library" Ritual. It would save the Library, if you had the Stones of Renewal.
- A Shard. Your last memento of the mirror that once took you home to Specuceps.
- Some Runes.
- "Specuceps" bluesheet.

# Quinn Anthony

Most people in Shady Springs think of the Temple of the Shadowy Text as a curious throwback. They come to services, when they bother, because that's how they grew up, or as a social occasion. They all come to the annual Festival of Tomes and participate in the sacred rites, but they care more about the food and the bookselling. They don't really think of the Librarian as a real figure in their lives. And they barely tithe at all.

What they don't know is that the Order of the Shadowy Text is not just some cultural institution claiming divine authority arbitrarily. No, you are the heirs to potent magical traditions. It's just, you're also duty-bound to keep your magic secret from ordinary folk. Too many run-ins with witch-hunters and violent governors in centuries past, perhaps. It's frustrating, really, to lead the Order, but not get taken seriously. If only it wasn't also against your oath to use magic to steal. Then maybe you could afford to maintain the Temple properly. But then you'd be no better than the fallen mages you keep down.

But then again, when your Order has used magic in major ways, it hasn't gone well. Over a hundred years ago, the Librarian, your divine patron, appeared to your predecessors and made great promises. They would open a path to another world via a great mirror, and you could invade and take their resources and wealth for your own. It's uncomfortable to think about now, but those were different times, and your predecessors jumped at the chance, working with the government to supply armies. At first it went well, meeting little opposition. But then, somehow, the people of the other world managed to shatter the mirror with your armies stranded on the other side. The war memorial in town has huge lists of those presumed dead.

Interestingly enough, the gate to the other world didn't close completely. Every now and again, someone would show up, confused, by the sacred pool at the Temple. For whatever reason, it was usually kids. You'd show them magic, show them the temple, even sometimes take them with you on missions. Mostly, you wanted to learn everything you could about their world and the magic that brought them here. You never learned all that much that was practical, but you still enjoyed it. Life in the Order does get lonely, if nothing else. The one you miss the most is Noshi Sutherland. They were a dear child, keen and attentive, and with a real potential for magic. But they stopped crossing over years ago, and you've not seen any kids come across since.

You have met the Librarian a few times. They're a bit sheepish about the whole thing. Maybe if they were better at being infallible the Temple would be doing better. But they've helped you develop your magical skills, which has been important in your constant secret struggle against the fallen mages. See, some magic users don't follow your code and use their magic to steal from those in need and to corrupt governments around the world. It's your duty to protect those without magic from their corrupt attempts. You're glad to do it. It just doesn't pay well.

## *Fading Lights - Character Sheet*

But now you've been drawn here, to what's obviously the Divine Library. You don't know what the Librarian has planned, but there must be knowledge here beyond anything the Order knows. This could be a great opportunity. Except the Library seems to be in danger. These two weird trees seem to have taken it over, denying the Librarian their rightful place. Perhaps that is why you've been brought here, to set things right. You must seize the moment and do your Order proud.

## Notes

- Shadow Magic doesn't seem to work very well in the Library, at least not right now. Something about the Library's magic is blocking it. Only the simplest of rituals will work.

## People You Know

- Noshi Sutherland: a kid from the other world, now grown into a teenager. A quick learner with a real potential for the shadow arts. You're happy to see them again.
- Reinier: The Librarian, a divine figure and the patron of your Order. They have taught you many useful magics over the years, though they were also responsible for that doomed invasion over a hundred years ago. "Reinier" is, like, their secret mystical name or something.
- Cass Peterson: a local high schooler in Shady Springs whose parents take them to services relatively often.
- Kendall Rodgers: a freelance travel writer who you've found hanging around the temple at odd hours now and again. You've wondered a time or two if they could be a fallen mage, but they seem innocent enough.
- Ash Summers: works at the local convenience store. Stopped coming to services after they graduated high school.

## Goals

- Restore control of the Library rightfully to the Librarian.
- Find a way to get more money for your Temple.
- Convince Noshi Sutherland to come with you when you leave.
- Make it back out of here safely.

## Items and Sheets

- A mirror shard passed down in your Order as a memento of the failed invasion.
- Some runes.
- "Shady Springs" bluesheet.
- The "Revelation of Shadows", a ritual of shadow magic

# Ash Summers

“The hero Kendall Rogers has failed...” That says it all. The moment you heard your no-good ex’s name, you knew that whatever weird thing that was going on was their fault, and you are going to have to bail them out again.

Just like the last time.

The two of you were out by the cabin at the pond. You know, the cabin that your grandparents left you. It might even be worth a pretty penny, if only you could find someone who would be willing to buy a cabin next to the Temple of the Shadowy Text—a temple filled with weird cultist freaks. Not going to happen, but something to daydream about while wasting your life away at a mind-numbing convenience store job.

Anyway, there you were—out for a romantic weekend in the woods—when a pack of nightgaunts attacked the cabin. Heck, the only reason you knew they were nightgaunts was from stories told by that creepy kid you used to babysit for. Cass Peterson. That was their name. The kid used to tell you all sorts of stories about adventures that they used to have with the dream wizard, Meher Madoff, in the magical land of Sleepy Valley.

Anyway, there you were—surrounded by a pack of monsters out of some kid’s imagination, and all you had were the objects in the cabin. But you knew one thing about nightgaunts from the stories—they were allergic to salt. So you grabbed your old grandpappy’s shotgun, filled it with rock salt from the kitchen, and blasted those nightgaunts away.

When you revived your ex, who had fainted in a puddle of their own urine, they just babbled about how those things must have been following them, and how they were this “hero” who travelled between the worlds of Sleepy Valley and this one.

If it weren’t for the kid’s stories of Sleepy Valley and the now-dissolving puddle of ectoplasm on the floor, you might have dismissed it as someone’s bad dream. But killing monsters doesn’t pay the bills, so you were still stuck at your dead-end minimum-wage retail position.

Oh, and that other one—your ex, Kendall Rogers—you left them there in the cabin while you drove back to town. That relationship was over, and they could deal with the next pack of monsters on their own.

Anyway, here you are, in a... library? You guess? Only libraries don’t have trees growing in them, with shelves carved from the branches. But there are books, and if there are books, this must be a library. Or a bookstore. No, it’s definitely a library. Bookstores serve coffee and baked goods.

You're not sure, but you suppose this might be that Sleepy Valley place you keep hearing of? And you recognize other people from the town of Shady Springs here with you.

## People You Know

- Kendall Rogers, the Failed "Hero" -- your no-good ex, who is always getting into trouble but can never get out of it themselves.
- Cass Peterson -- the kid you used to babysit for. They used to tell you all sorts of crazy stories about adventures in a magical land called Sleepy Valley.
- Quinn Anthony -- some monk or high priest or grand poobah or whatnot of the Temple of the Shadowy Text. Probably a crazy cultist. Although... "Shadowy Text"? Library? There could be a connection.
- Meher Madoff -- Supposedly some "dream wizard" from Sleepy Valley whom the kid would talk about. If nightgaunts and Sleepy Valley and magical libraries filled with talking trees are real, perhaps wizards are as well.
- A large tree in the corner -- Okay, you only know them about as well as you can know a talking tree who spoke to you through a magically glowing shard of glass that your ex once left at your place (well, it wasn't glowing at the time), but you do recognize the voice. Perhaps you had better ask them what's going on. Why not? That sounds perfectly normal.

## Goals

- Screw over your ex -- okay, you're bitter. But in your defence, they are a useless sack of walking meat who messes up everything they touch. And the tree did blame them. And you'd trust a talking tree over your ex any day.
- Save the day -- *someone* has to fix what your ex broke. Again.
- Protect the kid. You've got a soft spot for them. And they did teach you how to defeat nightgaunts.
- And get paid for it. You don't want to have to go back to your dead-end job, though who would pay for monster-hunting?

## Items and Sheets

- A shard of glass that might have once been part of a mirror. Your ex left this piece of junk at your place, and you just haven't gotten around to throwing it out yet.
- Some Runes.
- "Shady Springs" Bluesheet

# Cass Peterson

This can't be happening. This shouldn't be possible. And yet... it seems familiar.

You're just an ordinary kid. You live in a nice little house with a small yard and a pet goldfish. Your mom's a dentist. Your dad edits magazine articles. You're right on the edge of Shady Springs, so you got to play in the woods a lot as a kid.

You'd go out there, to this pond you liked. It was always so still and reflective, bright as the sky. You'd imagine you'd go through it and have adventures in a magical world of secrets and wonder.

There was this mystical figure there, Meher Madoff. They took you on grand adventures, hunting basilisks and dire tigers and wyverns. They'd show you magic, give you dreams of whatever you asked, guess your secrets, create beautiful spiraling webs of color. They'd listen to you talk about your life and your ideas like they really cared about you. It was adventure after wonderful adventure.

But that was all imaginary. I mean, it's not like stuff like that's possible in the real world, right?

You'd tell your babysitter, Ash Summers, stories about your adventures. They were always like, "Cass, you've got such an imagination!" They were always nice and baked you cookies, so you thought they must be right.

As you got older, you stopped going into the woods so much. You started rock climbing with friends. You went camping in other forests that didn't have magical pools. You still loved adventure, but you started to forget about the ones you had as a kid.

You're sixteen now. You don't need a babysitter. You tend to think about the future, not the past. You just wish that people would take you seriously, see that you're not just some silly kid any more.

But you still have a shard of mirror you found as a kid near the pool. You weren't sure if your parents would let you keep it, so you took it straight to your room without telling them. It's been there ever since. It's shiny, but it's not much to look at. You just left it there out of inertia.

Until today, when it started glowing and making that awful noise. And now you're here, in library that feels oddly familiar. And there's Meher Madoff, right in front of you. Does that mean it was all real?

And if the magical world of your childhood was real, do you really want to go back to Shady Springs? Or maybe it takes going to another world to find a place where you fit, where you matter, where people treat you like an adult.

## People You Know

- Ash Summers: Your old babysitter. You spent a lot of time with them back in the day, but you're too old for that now. You see them occasionally around town, but you don't really know what to say.
- Meher Madoff: A hunter and mage from your adventures as a kid. They always took you on the most exciting and magical quests and ensured you got safely back to the pool. I guess they're real after all?
- Quinn Anthony: Works at the temple in town. You've always found the services boring when you've had to attend. All "Librarian this" and "tithe that".
- Kendall Rodgers: You've seen them around Shady Springs a few times, but you don't really know what their deal is. The alarm said something about them, though.

## Goals

- Figure out what's going on.
- Decide whether you want to go home or go to Madoff's world of magic.
- Get somewhere safe, at least. This library seems like it's not doing so well.
- Maybe find someone who treats you with respect and is willing to, sorta, take you on as an apprentice or something.

## Items and Sheets

- The shard you kept all these years.
- Some runes.
- "Shady Springs" bluesheet.

# Kendall Rogers

"The hero Kendall Rogers has failed..." Oh, how those words sting. It was supposed to be an easy courier job -- go to the lake, pick up a stone, take a portal to the lake's mirror, pick up a stone there, and head back. Heck, you've done it twice before -- easy peasy. It always felt beneath you. And now you can't even do that right.

You're supposed to be this chosen hero, recruited from your home town of Shady Springs to... do heroic stuff, but you've always been an abject failure who can't even do anything right. It's like how your ex, Ash Summers, broke up with you. The two of you were out for a romantic weekend in their cabin by the pond over in Shady Springs when some nightgaunts who had been tracking you attacked the two of you. You tried to fight them off, but their rubbery skin just kept deflecting the blows. You were useless. Then your ex pulled out an old shotgun, filled it with rock salt from the kitchen, and blasted the nightgaunts to pieces. The old rock-salt-in-a-shotgun trick worked, and they were melting into a puddle of ectoplasm. However, you didn't catch all of it. Just before the blast hit, one of them knocked you out and you hit the floor hard. It was embarrassing. And to rub salt into your wounds (pun intended), Ash decided to leave, taking the only vehicle you had out of there. You had to hike back for miles in the cold, damp weather. That was it for you two.

Anyway, you've been the Library's hero (read: errand monkey) for over 15 years now. Every 5 years or so, you have to perform this epic quest -- sorry, epic fetch quest -- to grab some rocks on shore of the sacred lakes on each side of the mirrored worlds. Each lake takes you several days journey to reach! Then the librarians (read: talking trees) use the stones to replenish the magic pool that sustains the library and connects the twin worlds of Shady Springs and Sleepy Valley. There was some bit about the world being split into two identical copies, with the Library existing in between the two. And there was something about how this was done with Mirror Magic and how one world had Shadow Magic and the other had Dream Magic. This story must have had dream magic woven into it, since you always fell asleep at this point. Besides, trees are not particularly known for their conversational skills. You suppose you should be more curious as to why the trees are talking, but \*shrug\*. You've seen enough weird stuff that you don't question it anymore.

Anyway, you were supposed to bring back these stones, but one of them got stolen by a white rabbit wearing a waistcoat who was shouting about being late. You suppose you could have picked up another stone, but you weren't going to let a bunny get one over on you. So, you chased it down the rabbit hole and somehow ended up smoking weed with a giant caterpillar until the ghosts of your parents showed up to tell you what a loser you've been. So, you left through a garden (which had some tasty tarts) until you reached a wall that someone had been throwing rotten eggs at. Beyond the wall was just fire and brimstone and people being tortured, with a special seat reserved for you.

And then you woke up. Maybe you should have clued in that this was all just stuff you read somewhere (Hah! Take that, people who think you can't read!), but like you keep saying, you've seen enough weird stuff that you don't even question it anymore. By the time you got back to civilization, three more days had passed than should have. Either you were asleep for three days, or time went wonky - at this point, either seems possible.

Much as you miss the comforts of modern life (coffee and public transit, for starters), you needed to go back to the Library and tell them what happened. You have one of the two stones -- that's got to count for partial credit, right? And you could always go out and get another stone with another day out and another day back. You've got time, right? They wouldn't leave it to the last minute, would they? And if they did, it's their fault for not sending you sooner.

*As if the end of the world cared whose fault it is.*

## People you Know

- Librarian Habibah -- a tree with a stick up their... whatever it is that trees have. Your boss. Sends you on epic fetch quests. Panics a lot.
- Senior Librarian Siris -- an older tree. Sleeps a lot. Doesn't talk as much.
- Ash Summers -- your ex from Shady Springs. Maybe they weren't too happy with having to fight off Nightgaunts on your romantic weekend in the woods, but it's not like you invited the monsters on the date with you. And your ex didn't need to leave you stranded in the woods afterwards either.
- Quinn Anthony -- high priest at some temple back in Shady Springs. You forget the name. Probably isn't important. You've sometimes seen them in the company of Noshi Sutherland.
- Noshi Sutherland -- kid you've seen in both Shady Springs and Sleepy Valley. Sometimes going on adventures with Quinn Anthony while in Shady Springs.
- Cass Peterson -- kid you've seen in both Shady Springs and Sleepy Valley. Sometimes going on adventures with Meher Madoff while in Sleepy Valley.
- Meher Madoff -- Hunter/stockbroker? Something or other in Sleepy Valley. You've sometimes seen them in the company of Cass Peterson.

## Goals

- Be a hero! Or at least try not to screw things up any worse than they already are. You guess the end of the world is pretty bad, so that's a low bar.
- Impress the locals! You're the hero! And totally not a screwup. Okay, you are, but they don't have to know that.
- Talk to your ex. Do they still have a grudge? It wasn't your fault.
- Protect the kids. Because it sounds like a thing a hero would do.

## Items and Sheets

- A shard of glass that might have once been part of a mirror. Part of an old mirror artifact. You found this on your travels. You used to have 2 of them, but can't find the other...
- A Stone from the Lake at the End of the World. You used to have 2 of them, but can't find the other... You hope this isn't becoming a habit.
- Some Runes.
- "Shady Springs" Bluesheet
- "Sleepy Valley" Bluesheet

# Kanak Dorking

You're always busy fixing things everyone else broke. Why can't everyone else just follow the rules like they're supposed to? Your colleague Jayesh was taken prisoner by the enemy just weeks ago because he thought the "strictly separate spy communication from normal life" rule was nonsense, and you had to rescue him. This is why we can't have nice things.

You're a secret agent, working for the YWK, the local spy agency. You're sent out to investigate rumors of strange happenings and to infiltrate the enemy's government - all in a day's work.

Twenty years ago, you decided to join the local hunting lodge with your extra free time. You're good at sniffing out secrets, and it didn't take you long to find out that there was a secret society based there, the Secret Nocturnal Order Of Zoological Enthusiasts [SNOOZE], who taught you about the strange beasts that live around these parts. You hunt them not only for sport but to protect the citizens of Sleepy Valley from Manticores and Hydras alike.

After a few years in SNOOZE, you sniffed out a secret society *within* the secret society. You joined the Maintainers of the Sanctity of the Stones [MOSS]. Not the flashiest of names, but it does important work. You learned the secret magicks, the Divination of Dreams, diligently, until you were judged worthy. On one of the monthly hunting expeditions on a cold January day 13 years ago, you were brought to the Lake at the End of the World and shown the Stones of Renewal. Ekta, your mentor in the Maintainers, told you about the importance of these Stones. She told you the story that has been passed down through the generations, of the invasion by people from another world, of the Divination of Dreams that the founder Niha used to learn the secrets of the world, and of the breaking of the Old Mirror, to break the portal the invaders used. It all revolved around these stones, which were too powerful to be left in enemy hands. Finally, in the ceremonial ritual of induction, you, the newest member of the Maintainers, were passed the Shard of the Old Mirror, an artifact of the war.

You have done your duty dutifully in the intervening years. Except for a few false alarms five and ten years ago, the Lake at the End of the World had been blissfully peaceful and you had been able to dedicate yourself mostly to your secret agent work. But then a few days ago you had to take a detour on your way to a foreign realm to see what was going on at the Lake. You found some hoodlum who had stolen a Stone and seemed to be headed in the direction of Sleepy Valley, several days away. No matter, you put them into a deep dream, took their stone, and sent them away. If they come back you'll give them a talking to.

You'd barely gotten back to your duty late last night and you were ready to dive back in, but then someone *e/se* messed up yet again. You were brushing your teeth and getting ready to head out to spend your day getting to know the foreign land in which you're working lately, and you heard a piercing ringing. It turned out to be coming from the mirror shard around your neck,

and, before you knew it, you were sucked into the mirror and ended up in this Library. Something isn't right here...

## People You Know

- Meher Madoff: Another member of SNOOZE, but not one of the Maintainers. They know the Divination of Dreams too, and you respect them a little for it. They're not much a fan of following the rules, you're not looking forward to when you eventually will need to bail them out of hunting peril. When not hunting, they're a stockbroker.
- Kendall Rodgers: It's the rascal who tried to steal the Stone of Renewal. What are they doing here??? Definitely up to no good, can't trust anything they say. Maybe they're trying to reopen the portal between the worlds or something.

## Goals

- Protect Sleepy Valley and the world surrounding it, from dangers both mystical and mundane (especially mystical).
- Protect the Stones of Renewal and ensure that they are not used to reopen a portal between the worlds.
- Figure out what the deal is with these trees? They seem like interesting folks. Maybe they can help you figure out how to stop these invaders from ever visiting your world again.

## Items and Sheets

- A Shard of the Old Mirror. A symbol of your ascendance within SNOOZE, and a symbol of your life's work. Also a symbol of the portal by which the invaders entered your land generations ago.
- A Stone from the Lake at the End of the World that you took from that hoodlum. You haven't had a chance to return it to the Lake yet.
- Some Runes.
- "Sleepy Valley" bluesheet.

# Hema P. King

You are the award-winning author of the critically acclaimed *Shadowverse* novels as HP King. Your fans are eagerly awaiting your next novel and keep asking when it's coming out. And asking. And asking. And they won't go away, really.

Argh! You're a fraud, who's hit writer's block. The original book ideas weren't even yours really. The whole series is based on the make-believe adventures of a local kid, Noshi Sutherland, who used to come by and talk to you all the time.

They told you about a world called Shady Springs, where some magical Power of Shadows was real. However, shadow mages had to abide by the rules, or the Order of the Shadowy Text would hunt them down. There, the kid claimed they got apprenticed to a mage named Quinn Anthony, and had a series of adventures hunting down rogue mages who didn't abide by those rules.

Well, it wasn't too hard to file off the serial numbers and publish those stories as books. Noshi Sutherland became Shion Northlander. Quinn Anthony became Mark Harley. The Order of the Shadowy Text became the Association of Insubstantial Tomes.

You even threw in some stuff about the tall tales told about the Brehm family -- locals who were supposedly descended from invading soldiers. You dressed it all up as part of an invasion from Shady Springs, though.

Not to mention that it takes a lot of work to take a rough plot outline and turn it into a book. Ideas are easy. Turning them into novels is work. You do have talent at writing. Only you're not so good with the ideas part.

You felt a bit bad exploiting a kid like that (you even still have a shard of glass that the kid thought was part of a magical artifact), so you made sure to look out for them. You gave the kid some odd jobs from time to time. Now, with the kid's dad sick, your guilt has encouraged you to help support the family.

But the stories have stopped. You're glad the kid isn't so obsessed anymore, but without the stories, your books have stopped too, and your fans are getting impatient. They're even writing hate mail and posting conspiracy theories as to why you stopped writing - it's a mess. You hate to admit it, but a part of you is secretly hoping that the kid will go back to the way they were before and start spouting stories again.

It's an ugly world you live in, but an author's got to eat.

## People You Know

- Noshi Sutherland -- the kid. You renamed them as Shion Northlander for the books, though.
- Rudra Brehm -- youngest member of the Brehm family. Their family is reclusive and not well-liked by the other locals. You felt bad for them when they were a kid and gave them books to read. Left town a few years ago to go save the world or something.
- Meher Madoff -- head of the local hunting lodge, which owns most of the wilder areas around town.
- Kanak Dorking -- another lodge member. They're the one who got drunk one night and told you that the Brehm family was descended from invaders. That tidbit also made it into your books.
- Quinn Anthony -- the mage from the kid's stories. You renamed them as Mark Harley for the books.

## Goals

- Get inspired! Your fans are waiting for the next book, and it's getting ugly. But you need a source of inspiration.
- Be a know-it-all about the Shadowverse. You authored it, so you know it best. Sure, you took some poetic license and changed or made up details as you saw fit, but it's all fiction anyway. And if you don't remember, make it up!
- Help the kid out -- you do feel some obligations towards Noshi, so make sure they end up okay.

## Items and Sheets

- A shard of glass that might have once been part of a mirror. Noshi gave this to you once to prove that their stories were real.
- Some runes.
- "Sleepy Valley" bluesheet.

# Reinier

It's not fair. None of your plans ever goes how you want it to. Is it really your fault that your desires outstrip your reach?

You are, of course, a Speculoid, though in this stage of your life you look the same as a human. You originally wanted nothing more than to learn the ways of science and Mirror Magick, and you did well enough in your university studies back on Specuceps. When you heard the great Librarian and Mage Siris was looking for an apprentice, you applied right away. No one would at all compare, it would be a dream come true. But then Siris passed you over for that numbskill Habibah. Habibah didn't have half your GPA and their thesis was a load of bad statistics and wishful thinking. The indignity of it!

You may, not, quite... have taken it in a professional manner. And that may, perhaps... have lead to difficulties in finding another mentor. But that doesn't matter. No one else was a worthy mentor for you! You found a different way. You eschewed the formal hierarchy of mages and found a secret society, the Vampires of Iron, that taught the forbidden world-bending magics. They taught you skills and techniques you'd never dreamed of. Techniques for not just observing and manipulating other worlds, but visiting them. The potential was extreme. You could get your revenge and explore unknown realms in a single stroke!

See, Siris had this experiment going observing two parallel worlds that were mirror images except for the introductions of different magic. They'd been working for centuries to document the effects of their meddling. So, 60 short years after the snub, you used your forbidden techniques to sneak into the library they were observing from, and from there to one of the worlds. There, in the village of Shady Springs, you found the Order of the Shadowy Text, which worshipped a divine figure called the Librarian. It was a simple matter to use your magic to pass yourself off as the Librarian, and then get them to help you open up a big portal between the parallel worlds using the giant mirror that connected the Library to Specuceps. Then, you convinced them to gather a huge army and invade the other world! It was chaos! Centuries of Siris's work was ruined, there was chaos and excitement everywhere, and messing with these humans was such fun!

Unfortunately, it didn't end the way you wanted. The people in Sleepy Valley should've been easy pickings, ambushed without warning. But despite the invasions initial success, somehow the humans in Sleepy Valley managed to figure out a powerful Mirror Magick technique, gather the Stones of Renewal, and shatter your mirror, cutting you and the Order off from your armies and cutting Specuceps off entirely. Had Siris helped them? You don't know. What you do know is you were trapped in the world of Shady Springs without the materials you need for your most powerful forbidden magicks and no way home. You still had the Order of the Shadowy Text, but somehow it was less fun to impress them after they'd seen your failure.

## *Fading Lights - Character Sheet*

That was 124 years ago. You haven't been able to return to the Library. But given that it's cut off from Specuceps, and it's not like Siris or their apprentices would help you, you haven't been trying too hard. But you've been learning what you can of the world you're trapped in, building your contacts with the Order, and following any mystical leads you can find. You do know a ritual that'd let you get back home, but you haven't been able to find the necessary supplies. And you're nearing the end of your mobile life; soon you'll need to put down roots and become a tree, and you really don't want to be stuck among humans forever.

Of course, none of that is what brought you here. No, the magic that summoned you definitely originated here, in the Library. But your old approach wasn't getting you anywhere. Maybe this actually your chance.

Of course, this place does seem to be falling apart. But hopefully you'll be long gone by then.

## Notes

- Most of your magic takes significant preparation. Aside from your "Mirror Portal" ritual, you don't have anything major ready.
- You've been passing yourself off as human but you're not terribly well-disguised, you wouldn't be surprised if Speculoids could recognize you.

## People You Know

- Senior Librarian Siris: The Speculoid mage who snubbed you a century and a half ago and created the parallel worlds experiment.
- Librarian Habibah: The apprentice that Siris picked over you.
- Quinn Anthony: The head of the Order of the Shadowy Text, who thinks of you as the divine Librarian.

## Goals

- Find a way to carry out your Mirror Portal ritual and return home.
- Failing that, figure out a better place to put down roots than here.
- Find out who's to blame for your invasion failing.
- Show up Siris and get your revenge. Well, additional revenge.

## Items and Sheets

- The "Mirror Portal" Ritual
- A shard of the mirror that got shattered in your failed invasion
- Some Runes
- The "Specuceps" bluesheet
- The "Shady Springs" bluesheet

# Noshi Sutherland

Squee! You defended that hydroelectric dam from fallen mages who were trying to subvert the waters to power their own perverted rituals! You saved the world yet again!

Or so you used to think. It was just the plot of one of your favorite books in the Shadowverse series. You used to imagine that you were Shion Northlander, the main character of the series, who visited a world called Shady Springs, where Shadow Magic was real. However, shadow mages had to abide by the rules, or the Association of Insubstantial Tomes would hunt you down. There, you (er, Shion) got apprenticed by a mage named Mark Harley, and had a series of adventures hunting down rogue mages who didn't abide by those rules.

How embarrassing! It took years for you to realize that your "adventures" were just the recycled plots of Shadowverse books, perhaps with a few names changed here and there. Gah! You're 16 now, and you know better. You live in a small town called Sleepy Valley. Magic isn't real. Books are just stories. And the "magical artifact" you have as proof that it was real is just a piece of broken glass. You keep it with you to remind yourself of what is real and what isn't.

You just want to live your past down and get a job from someone who respects you as an adult. Or close enough anyway.

You used to be friends with Rudra Brehm. Their family wasn't liked very much in your town, and your family kept telling you not to play with them. That just made you want to hang out over there even more. But then they went off to join the Peace Corps. But you got postcards! From all over the world! You wish you could travel like that.

But you were alone again. And then your mom passed away. And your dad got sick. Now you have to take care of your ailing dad all by yourself, as well as working a part-time job to earn extra cash. The author King gives you odd jobs and even helps out financially every once in a while, and that helps. But you don't really have time for kid things anymore.

You really hope someone finds a cure for your dad. Without him, you'll be all alone in a cold, uncaring world devoid of magic.

## People You Know

- Hema P King: local author who wrote the *Shadowverse* series under the name HP King. Gah. You used to like the series so much. Too much. You'd even go by the author's house and talk about the plots for hours. So embarrassing!
- Rudra Brehm: your friend who went off to join the Peace Corps. Their family is not liked much around town, but you've never understood why.

## *Fading Lights - Character Sheet*

- Meher Madoff: head of the local hunting lodge, which owns most of the surrounding woods.
- Kanak Dorking: another local hunter.
- Shion Northlander: main character from the Shadowverse books.
- Mark Harley: fictional character from the Shadowverse books.
- Quinn Anthony: You know them! But you don't! You're confused. You should ask them if they recognize you.

## Goals

- Figure out what's going on. What's real? What happened? Are you dreaming?
- Find a cure for your dad. Your life would be much lonelier without him.
- Find someone who can be friends with who will treat you like an adult.
- Decide what you want to do with your life.

## Items and Sheets

- A shard of glass that might have once been part of a mirror. You used to think of this as proof that your stories were real. Now, you keep it to remind you that sometimes it's just a piece of glass.
- Some Runes
- "Sleepy Valley" Bluesheet

# Senior Librarian Siris

You thought that your shame and failure was over. Your experiment was ruined, you were dying far from home with no escape, but at least you could die with dignity in peace. But now Habibah's letting off this awful racket, and all these weird humans are showing up. So you guess you're doomed to die in shame and chaos.

It all started so well. You were the foremost researcher in world magicks among the Speculoids, pushing the field to new heights. You had plans for your most daring experiment yet: splitting an isolated world into two mirrored copies, introducing different magic into each, and then monitor the effects. You found the perfect world, full of simple-minded, ordinary humans, and set up a Library to observe from. You carried out your plan. And for hundreds of years, everything went swimmingly. You gathered so much interesting data. You published paper after paper.

But the experiment was going so well, you didn't want to abandon it, and you were getting old. Before too long, you'd need to give up your mobility and root. So you looked for an apprentice. The two top candidates were Reinier and Habibah. Reinier had the better grades, but talking to their professors, there were some concerns about temperament and ethical commitment. So you chose Habibah, and they came along to assist you.

Everything went well for the first 60 years or so. You rooted, put out branches, melded with the wood of the library shelves, continued your analysis. Habibah took over a lot of the day-to-day activities and errands to Specuceps. But then, about 125 years ago, disaster struck! Somehow, someone used forbidden magics to twist the giant mirror that took you back to Specuceps into a gateway between the two parallel worlds! Armies were marching from Shady Springs to Sleepy Valley! The worlds were no longer isolated! Your experiment was ruined! Oh, and people were dying, you guess.

This was no accident, you know. Because behind the lines of the armies, you recognized one Speculoid among the humans. Reinier, the untrustworthy student you'd rejected.

There was a partial recovery, of a sort. Somehow, the mages of Sleepy Valley figured out some powerful technique to shatter the mirror gateway, leaving only a small connection joining the library between the two parallel worlds. The invasion was halted. But, unfortunately, this significantly damaged the Library itself. Not only was it completely cut off from Specuceps, leaving yourself and Habibah stranded with no way home, but also losing that connection cut off the supply of magic the Library depends on. There was only one source of magic that you had access to that would help. The Stones of Renewal that could be found in the lakes at the edge of each of the Connected Worlds. Gathering the Stones would give the Library enough magic to last 5 more years. So, you sent Habibah to gather them, a journey of but several days in each world. And this worked fine, for more than a hundred years.

But eventually, about 16 years ago, Habibah grew old, and they too needed to root. So they recruited a human, the hero Kendall Rodgers, to do this for them. The first two times, it went swimmingly. But this last time, they were late. The deadline was days ago. The library is falling apart. And you expected to die with it, after all this.

## *Fading Lights - Character Sheet*

You thought when the Hungry Void arose earlier today due to your crumbling dimensional magics destabilizing the library's position in the firmament, everything was over. But no, the library's not enough to draw it, it's going to end up in one of the worlds, cause devastation and corruption. Even in your dying breath, your experiment gets further ruined.

But now Habibah's pulled something, and all these people are showing up. Maybe there's some way they can help.

But wait. Among the people Habibah summoned, you recognize one face. Reinier. This is all their fault. Well, at least if you die, maybe you can take that traitor down with you.

## Notes

- You're rooted in place, but are remarkably flexible and have branches that reach all throughout the library. As a player you can talk and move about freely.
- While rooted, you can't leave the Library, even if a ritual would otherwise let you do so.
- Normally, you have some ability to control the small portals that connect the worlds to the library, but the Library's magic reserves are so low these portals don't function at all.

## Goals

- Find a way to save the library. Could any of these people have what you need?
- Find a way to live with honor or die with dignity.
- Learn as much as you can, since knowledge is still the highest calling.

## People You Know

- Librarian Habibah: Your apprentice who has served you well over the years, even if they are being a bit undignified this very moment.
- Reinier: A Speculoid that sabotaged your experiment and doomed you to die using forbidden magic, apparently in revenge after you rejected them.
- Kendall Rodgers: The hero that should've brought the Stones of Renewal that would've saved the library for another 5 years.

## Items and Sheets

- The "Renewal of the Library" Ritual. It would save the Library, if you had the Stones of Renewal.
- A Shard. Your last memento of the mirror that once took you home to Specuceps.
- Some Runes.
- "Specuceps" bluesheet.