

PRL
s e r i a l s

Meridian

Issue 5, Volume 6, May 30, 2026

2026 Crossover Event
THE SECOND UNREST
act iii

MAY 2026

A battle as big as this one, rages like a wild fire. The threat is everywhere, and so are the helpers.
Always look for the helpers.

In this issue:

acε - ARCANE WIZARD'S LOG 2120 - FON WITCHES IN THE UNE-VERSE

PRL

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from the editor

This issue of the PRL Serials features the return of the PRL Two-in-One (2 in 1). The last time the 2 in 1 was featured was all the way back in 2019 in Volume V, and it returns this month with Fon Witches in the Une-Verse, a pseudo-anthology of the exploits of the Mmoatia, Pultine and Tracia, and the unofficial leaders of the Death Witch Coven, the Quietus and Detritus witches. The battle against Une rages on, and the witches of the Une-verse are embedded deep in enemy territory.

I should say that the PRL Serials definition of the 2 in 1 refers to a single serial issue that includes two different issues of two different ongoing serials. The 2 in 1 has also been used to characterize stories featuring two major characters, in the sense that you get two big names in one issue, like the Marvel 2 in 1 with the Thing that paired him with others from the universe in each issue. We have never used this definition here at the PRL, we've always viewed the 2 in 1 as a way to fit more story into a Volume Issue. The PRL Team Up is our equivalent of the Marvel 2 in 1 where you get major characters teaming up for an issue of an ongoing serial.

My first encounter with the 2 in 1 was in comics, when I was reading Steranko's Nick Fury that was in issues of a 2 in 1 Strange Tales comic with Dr. Strange. Marvel called this an anthology, I believe, but it was the inspiration for our 2 in 1. The idea fascinated me, even though there wasn't any narrative overlap between the stories it fostered the idea of a shared universe where spies were undercovering complex schemes while the Sorcerer Supreme protected the same Earth from arcane threats. I can't remember if I was there for Nick

Fury or Dr. Strange, because Steranko's art is legendary enough that I could have just been curious to read it, or I was doing the complete read of every Dr. Strange comic and got to the 2 in 1 issues that way; either is plausible. And no, I have not finished every issue, though I think I read every comic from his first appearance through the eighties, and most of the ones since 2012. My fascination with Dr. Strange reflects my preoccupation with the idea that magic can be learned by reading, that books contain secrets lost to time and attention, and if we can find the right one we can do magic. I love the books of the Marvel Universe, the Book of Ashanti and the Darkhold, books of spells and grimoires are fascinating. But I will warn against expecting magic from just any book that purports to be a grimoire or magical book. In my experience, books that contain real magic, display magic without regard for the beholder. Books of magic are not shy, and if something claims to provide magic, it must demonstrate it first. That is a weak warning, it can be hard to discern true magic, it is too easy to rewrite human memory in favor of a desired outcome, to see magic where it is not.

But back to the 2 in 1, even though the Strange Tales comics I was reading featured stories with completely different narratives, creators can choose to tell one story across both serials featured in a 2 in 1. It allows for a more in depth way exploration of the characters involved and gives space to really show the fallout of a given situation. The Second Unrest is a sprawling fantasy space saga and there is so much happening. We realize that there are a lot of issues planned for Volume 6, but that's because we need the real estate to do the story just as we come in for our landing. Une

launched a surprise attack against our heroes in the Fonlands and Hyperion universes, and the Fonlands launched its own attack on the Une-verse, and there are so many moving parts. In order to document this conflict, to show how the heroes struggle against a threat to all life everywhere, we're trying to really show the struggles of the characters in the battles, and formats like the 2 in 1 allow for that.

Fon Witches in the Une-verse is a combination of the Strange Tales version of the 2 in 1, and the 'one story, two points of view' model that I just described. It features two separate stories of members of the Death Witch Coven and the Mmoatia in the Une-verse as their forces regroup after the explosion of the transportation. Pultine is trying to stop Maxx, the Superguardian's self-destruct sequence, Tracia wakes up in the Une-verse after the explosion on a barren planet, and Quietus and Detrius are drawn to sweet music in the aftermath of the explosion.

But enough about the 2 in 1. Go enjoy the May issue and get ready for the 2026 Annual Issue. It's coming soon and there are major revelations ahead that will alter the history of the Fonlands and universe Prime 5. What could be so paradigm shattering? Some flowers? No, it has to be something else. Like the Blight Maker, we haven't heard about that thing in a while. You're serious? A whole Annual Issue about flowers? Purple Mysticisms, The Second Unrest interlude? Ok, there it is, dear readers! The Purple Mysticisms are beautiful, I wish I could grow some, they glow in the dark. And apparently they have secrets that the aboatia Lorv uncovered on the planet Ryocea. Come back soon to find out how the Purple Mysticisms could be a major threat to Une! - Roy Cureton, 05/2026 * * *

VOLUME 6

MAY 2026

Meridian

Issue 5 - **THE SECOND UNREST - act iii -**

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The Vodun are scattered across two existences as the battle against Une continues. In the Une-verse, Xêvioso and Fâ continue to round up their forces while Agê remains MIA. In the Smiting Chamber, Sakpata and his seven continue their work of ridding the multiversal structure of Une.

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ACÉ

Tier 1





- THE VODUN RECONNOITER -

BY ROY CURETON

Fâ hasn't had a body for as long as the other Vodun, and she wishes she could navigate space like she had the Discs of the Fonlands. She had primarily resided in the Disc of Lêgba before her emergence, but she'd been able to inhabit all of the Discs, including the Lofted Disc, and she could move quickly among them. In the Une-verse, she can move quickly by flying through the space overgrown with Une's tendrils, but it isn't fast enough. She can't move at the speed of her thoughts as she had inside the Discs and it takes more than a desire to arrive at a destination. Also, she can't create portals like the other Vodun; she never had need for portals and never learned the arcana.

Currently, she is flying in search of Xêvioso who is close enough to her that the two can speak via a mental link, but they are very far away from one another. She travels to his location because others have started to gather there and he is formulating an attack on Une who

sleeps. The mental link to Agê has gone silent and Fâ worries that she is in trouble, or worse, dead, though Fâ would likely be able to sense that if it were true. She tries not to dwell on it and focuses all of her power on navigating the Une-verse to Xêvioso, and it is no wonder that she doesn't notice Zacchaeus until he causes a cluster of space rocks to explode, the space of the Une-verse is filled with long tendrils of Une's mycelium in every direction. Fâ startles out of her focus and comes to a stop in space. It isn't long before she senses Zacchaeus' power and flies toward the explosion. She finds him standing in a long black cloak with the hood up over the armored suit adorned with her Veve.

"I thought I saw you flying by," Zacchaeus says with a wry smile, tilting his head back to see underneath the hood. "Mind if I hitch a ride? I been flying for a while and I'm tired. I would've fallen asleep if I hadn't been looking out for somebody to pass through."

Fâ extends a hand and focuses her power on him, careful not to kill him, but to energize him with arcana to enact Death Magic spells. She'd met him before they traveled to the Une-verse and she'd evaluated his mastery of Death Magic before he was allowed to wear the armor that bore her Veve. He will be able to recuperate his magic with time, she knows, but she isn't willing to carry him as she continues to Xêvioso's location. When she is done, Zacchaeus levitates up from the space rock to hover before her and he rides a smoke of dark violet at his feet.

"Thank you," he says with a bow. "I wouldn't have expended so much power but I saw that moving planet and it just didn't feel right. I had to get away from it as fast as I could."

"Moving planet?" Fâ asks with concern. "What do you mean it didn't feel right?"

"After the cube exploded, I



Zacchaeus and Fâ, Une-verse

ended up somewhere far from here in that direction,” Zacchaeus points behind them. “I traveled a long way, for a long time, days maybe, because that planet had a feeling coming off of it. It was a magical feeling, strong, and dark, scary, like something scary was riding it through space.”

Fâ thinks on this for a moment, then says, “It is probably best that you fled. But we must know more about this foreboding planet. We will find Xêvioso, others rally to him. Once we are there, we will find out more about that planet.”

“You gone look for it?” Zacchaeus asks in disbelief.

“We have to know as much as we can about this place to plan a successful attack against Une. Come, we have a long way to go.”

Zacchaeus follows Fâ and feels his spine tingle at the memory of the planet.

“I haven’t seen it,” Mulweri says.

“We should have seen it,” Maria says with concern.

They float in relatively empty space and in the distance, Xêvioso is a beacon of golden yellow arcana that calls all of the Vodun’s forces to his location. Two beams of his energy sweep the space around him like the lights of a lighthouse.

“Are we sure that it is real?” Mulweri asks. He is annoyed by the implication that they, him in particular, could have missed a planet-sized ship moving through the space of the Une-verse. He had seen many planets when he traveled the depths of the Une-verse, and though he wasn’t able to do a complete survey like Maria, who is also known as Wazad the Transverse who can ryde the wynds of any existence to navigate the entirety of it faster than even Mulweri could travel as a Tinyeleti Warrior, he went to the depths of the realm and saw so much.

“As more of our forces regroup and we learn of their experiences after the explosion of Xêvioso’s cube, we keep hearing the same story about a moving planet. No one engaged it, but a lot of people saw it.”

“You didn’t see it. In all my time as a stealth Warrior of the Tinyeleti, I have never encountered one as you. You have mastered the pattern to embodiment and it allows you to move faster than even my eye can detect. That is significant, Wazad. The Tinyeleti are fast enough to evade the Vodun Jo, and I know that your ability outclasses mine. You will have to tell me more about how you learned to do what you do, it will be helpful here and when this is all done, the other Tinyeleti will be glad to know it. And if you didn’t see a planet-sized ship, then I trust that there isn’t one.”

“But traversing an existence the way I do doesn’t necessarily allow me to count the planets and the stars, or the tendrils here. I can see the entirety of it, but I will have to

explore specific places to really know the details. That’s why we do this together, you are much more capable of seeing the details than I can when I’m getting a full view of the existence. We should look again. I will go right from here and you go left. Find me if you find anything.”

“I have to say that I think we can be doing more to aid the plan that Xevioso has devised...”

“We can’t be surprised by whatever this is,” Maria interjects. “It won’t matter if we enact Xêvioso’s plan if there is something out there to sabotage it. The enemy is sleeping, Mulweri, we can’t risk anything waking her before Xêvisoso’s plan is ready to go.”

Mulweri listens in silence and then nods. “Let’s see what we can discover.”

The two travel in opposite directions, both disappearing in the blink of an eye.

A few miles from the spot where Maria and Mulweri had disappeared, Xêvioso is suspended in space, clad in golden-yellow armor that is similar to the Veve armor that wielders of Pattern magic in their forces wear, and his horns have emerged, two that extend up from his temples and two that extend down from his jaw. The golden-yellow beacon issues from his body and his eyes are inundated with energy as he converses with Clay, who trained with the Vodun Gu in Chaos and Death magic, the Halfyn Heir, a formidable wielder of Pattern magic, and the Ice Prince of the Une-verse who uses the name Dae in this reality.

“I’m glad that you all were able to find us here,” Xêvioso says. “Others should be arriving. Please find some place to rest and if I can restore your energy, I am happy to.”

The Halfyn Heir accepts the offer and floats before the Vodun as golden-yellow energy is exchanged between them, and as this occurs, the two converse.

“Have you seen it?” Xêvioso asks. “The Golden Executioner...”

“Adofo?” The Heir interrupts, remembering the Executioner who had fought by his side in the Talj Junction.

“Adofo is here, but another of their ranks bore witness to the planet-sized ship, and they arrived here from the same direction you and the others traveled.”

“I landed on Juoil, or what seems to be this reality’s version of Juoil, after the cube exploded,” the Heir explains. “Dae, the Ice Prince, has protected thousands beneath the surface of the planet. We should do what we can to aid them.”

“That is an impressive feat,” Xêvioso says kindly as the smile on his face melts to concern and the two of them continue their conversation telepathically. “Have you brought the enemy to this location?”

“Dae is no enemy,” the Heir responds with confusion. “He saved me and I went to the subterranean town that he has maintained with his magic for a long time.”

“How long?” Xêvioso asks.

“Generations,” the Heir says, happy to vouch for the version of his love that he’d discovered in the home of the enemy to all existence. “He said that he has seen children born and then become adults.”

“Isn’t that odd?” Xêvioso asks. “Do you all live so long in your home universe?”

Fyns, the name of all known humanoid beings of the Bright Universe that the Heir calls home, have long lifespans and he explains this to Xêvioso.

“Long enough to see the children of your children grow into adulthood?”

The phrasing makes the Heir think for a moment. “When the Ice Prince, my Ice Prince, and I give birth to our twin daughters who are fated,

we will see them grow and raise three sons who will divide the cosmos. Needless to say, we are not excited about a future that portends a divided cosmos. I will admit that I am happy to stall that future, but our twins are fated and we will see their sons conquer and make war with one another, but we will not live to see the resolution. So, yes, we fyns live long enough to see our grandchildren grow and even their children, but we see that in very old age.”

“And how old does Dae, this realm’s Ice Prince, appear to be?” Xêvioso asks. “You’ve been in the Fonlands among beings of other realms for a while and none of you age in the Fonlands because of the arcana of the Smiting Chamber and the discrepancy of time there and where you’re from. But if this Ice Prince is of this realm and he has survived as long as you say, shouldn’t he look much older? Fyns do age, right?”

Indeed they do and the Heir turns to look at Dae, the Ice Prince, who is talking to Clay.

“Hide your suspicions and learn more,” Xêvioso continues telepathically. I am sending the three of you to bring a contingent of hares to this location; they have been tangling with tendrils and are having trouble navigating. Learn more about Dae, it’s possible he has the arcana to be long lived and forever young, or maybe he is just another tendril of the enemy. I’m counting on you to confirm his loyalties. If he is not truly with us, find out why he left his planet with you and what he wants. And ask him about the moving planet, natives have probably seen it before. I am sending the coordinates of the hares to your memory. Be careful, Halfyn Heir. I expect to see you back soon with a pack of hares and intel on our new recruit.”

“I won’t let you down,” the Heir says and he leaves the Vodun.

“The Vodun putting us to work?” Clay asks affably when the Heir rejoins him and the Ice Prince.

“We have to retrieve some



The Halfyn Heir and Xêvioso, Une-verse hares,” the Heir says with a smile to Clay that sours into a scowl at the Ice Prince.

“Y’all about to fight again?” Clay asks. “Now I know how everybody in the Smiting Chamber felt about me and Ivan. I’m gonna get some healing from the Vodun.”

“Why are you looking at me like that?” the Ice Prince asks. He is taller than the Heir and he glares down at him, but the Heir is tall and solid, and unintimidated by the glare.

“You’ll come with us to collect the hares?” the Heir asks.

“I left Juoil to help,” the Ice Prince snaps, “of course I’ll come.”

“Good, Clay and I would be happy to know more about this universe and how you managed to survive.”

Clay has returned to them by this point and he can sense something is off between them, but he is also eager to fill the space around Xêvioso with allies.

“Let’s talk on the go,” Clay suggests.

“Let’s,” the Heir says and flies away in the direction Xêvioso had indicated. Clay is not far behind, and the Ice Prince keeps his distance from the Heir behind Clay.

* * *

“I don’t understand,” Sakpata says, standing in the mists of the heptagon in the Smiting Chamber, looking down at Ahdis and the Decay Witch. Their attire matches the Vodun’s—gray, form fitting armor adorned with Sakpata’s Veve—but they are half his size. Sakpata is visibly confused and he says again, “I don’t understand. You can’t decide to spare an existence, we have gathered for the sole purpose of clearing Une from the realms she has infected. The realm I sent you to is overwhelmed by Une, you are doing the sentient inhabitants there a favor by eliminating them. If and when Une decides to wake up there, they will be instantly desiccated and they will cease to exist in a painful way. Go back there and do what we planned.”

“They are like the Bludonians,” Ahdis protests. She had been on the Lorv’s ship Top when it traveled to Bludon to help with the Daemon infestation and there were Bludonians cured of the infection that was a form of Une’s infection. “This place isn’t like the other lifeless existences we’ve cleaned up. They didn’t fight Une’s infection so she just spread and now she is everything, but they continue with their bodies in their lives they had before Une arrived. There are vast civilizations that span the realm with a detailed shared history, there was so much life there before Une made her way into everything. I won’t be their death. They have survived so much, they don’t deserve genocide. They are not just vessels of Une’s power, they are beings like you and me, and we can free them.”

“What do you think?” Sakpata rolls his eyes from Ahdis to Decay. “Is it possible to wipe out Une without wiping out these things?”

“They are the Cymbee, they are not things!” Ahdis says forcefully and Decay puts a hand on her shoulder.

“The Cymbee is a strange case,” Decay says frankly, “and that is why you should see it for yourself before you settle on the annihilation of everything that might be tainted. I find many of the Cymbee tedious and would never choose to spend extended time there among all that pageantry and ritual, but I can’t deny that it is beautiful. Their castles are carved into planets and visible from space, it is a wonder to behold, even with the fungus that darkens corners and weighs the air with the delicious stink of decomposition. Some of them would not want to be free of Une, there are religions that venerate her, but there are many that have fought their entire existence to bring about a present that is free of her voice in their minds, even if it is just the mummerings of a mad thing in sleep.”

“Azalaan!” Sakpata yells and he crosses his arms at his chest, looking back and forth between the witches while they wait for the God of Dreams to stand next to Decay. “Are you aware of the Cymbee? Did you dream about it?”

“Since they told me about it, yes,” Azalaan says. He is distracted. Azalaan had been monitoring Ali, Djallon, and Ivan in a universe with plant life capable of movement and speech that had been taken by Une. This existence is similar to Cymbee in that sentient beings from the existence continue their lives with Une’s infection, but every sentient thing is being actively hunted and consumed by the self professed son of Une, Baobabd, a large and sentient baobab tree that slaughters other beings of its universe that it feels are unworthy of Une’s taint. The universe is mostly consumed by Une and Baobabd is finishing the job, but Ivan, Ali and Djallon had arrived just in time to turn the tide. Azalaan was helping to coordinate an attack on Baobabd—who was the lynch pin of Une’s power in that existence by that point because he had amassed so much of her power by consuming

other infected beings—and he is eager to get back to it.

“And?” Sakpata asks.

“I have only seen it in dreams so I feel that it must be significant. When anything new comes, you will be the first to know.”

Sakpata is frustrated as Azalaan returns to his deep concentration in front of a scrying portal that shows views of Ivan, Ali, and Djallon.

“You all do realize that there are thirty-three existences?” Sakpata says, returning his attention to Ahdis and Decay. “We have a lot of work to do, we need solutions that don’t involve us fighting a war.”

“Most of those thirty-three are inert and you’ve already developed the construction to rid Une of those,” Decay says. “We have done a very efficient job and according to my count, we only have about ten to go...”

“Nine,” Azalaan interjects, never taking his eyes from the portal.

“Nine,” Decay corrects herself.

“We can save the beings of Cymbee,” Ahdis says. “I won’t be their executioner.”

“Fine,” Sakpata relents. “But I am going with you. I would prefer that we all do this together since overwhelming force is likely to end it more quickly, but I don’t see the logic in pulling the others out. Can we join the others in their battle? Cymbee is already infected, if we can save the uninfected, we should do that first.”

They all agree and Decay, Ahdis, and Shini who had been resting from his last mission creating a death magic magnet in an inert existence, joined Sakpata on the heptagon before disappearing into the mist.

* * *



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THE ARCANES WIZARD

UNEA VS JO!





BY WESLEY LIVINGSTON

“Here we go,” Nyame said. “I have never seen Jo fight before.”

“I am sure that their battle has been raging since Jo sensed the Wizard being attacked,” Gleti said.

“I can see that,” Nyame said with annoyance, “but don’t you see that they are both ready to bring this out of their mental construction and into the physical? They are too evenly matched this way.”

“Jo is tentative,” Obatala said.

“In what way?” I asked, staring at the Vodun, Jo, and the enemy, Unea, floating in the aether outside of Aido Hwedo. They faced one another and neither of them had moved for a considerable amount of time.

“Are you not watching their battle?” Nyame asked and I felt stupid that I didn’t understand what

she was talking about.

“Their spirit forms are inside of their bodies,” I said, grasping for something so that I could save face.

“He doesn’t know the mental realm,” Gleti said, “Sakpata wouldn’t have taught him because he hardly ever uses it himself. The mental realm is a place where manipulators of the pattern who have a strong physic ability can exist without their physical bodies. It is a shared mental space and for those who can attain it, it is possible to do anything they can imagine. Battles fought there are intense and often last for much longer than is perceived in our physical realm.”

I had heard of something just like that before in my own reality. Maria, Wazad the Wonderful of our home universe, and Wazad the Transverse of the Multiversal Structure, had told me about a mental realm that the ancient Wazad used to tame the first Lightning God, but like Sakpata, apparently, I didn’t

use it enough for it to be top of mind, and I didn’t realize that the battle in front of me had been waging for what I would consider to be weeks on the mental plane. I only caught the tail end of it, when Jo, as two large, white stars that pulsed with energy, smashed into what seemed to be a large serpent made of Unea’s tendrils. The serpent was dwarfed by the size of the stars that clapped together with the tendril serpent at the center and there was a bright explosion that rippled the fabric of the mental realm and pushed us all back into our bodies where we were spectating the Vodun and Unea at a distance, only now, it seemed that they were actually squaring off against one another and on the verge of attack.

“I told you,” Nyame said with enthusiasm that is rare for her.

“Jo could have easily bested her there,” Obatala said. “She was just being overly cautious in the event Unea was holding back, but I’m sure that Unea was exhausting

herself mentally and Jo could have delayed that last attack.”

“Why tire herself when she can get a full assessment of her opponent?” Gleti asked. “Jo has her just where she wants her.”

“She should be ending her quickly if she can,” Obatala said. “The enemy’s black wall of death approaches.”

Obatala was right. I had been distracted since Unea broke the spacetime loop spell, but her reinforcements were close to entering the aether around the Fonlands and they would appear as the same black wall of death that had moved across the Talj Junction. The Fonlands would be completely sealed away behind the orbit of planets and stars from the Disc of Jo, the thick layer of ocean underneath the orbiting stars that was the Vodun Agbe and others from her Disc, and the even thicker layer of iron under the ocean that was made by beings of the Disc of Gu and manned by armies that were in large formations all across the surface. Despite all that, I was worried about the black wall entering the aether around the Fonlands. We had all watched the destruction that it wrought on the Talj Junction universe that Pultine and Alia had freed from Unea’s taint, but the damage had been so severe that the existence didn’t survive the eradication of the wall. It was possible that the same could happen to the Fonlands, that the mere presence of the black wall in the same

physical space would harm the Discs of the Fonlands and Aido Hwedo himself, but we would only know for sure when it arrived and we were prepared to face it and eradicate it if it did cause damage.

“Leave that to me and the Orbitals,” Gleti said with a smile and her body began to glow like a full moon as she flew away from the line of spectators and toward the aether where the enemy’s reinforcements would arrive.

“I should go and help her face what is coming,” I said but Obatala put a hand on my shoulder.

“We are backing the Vodun,” he said as the serpent form of Damballa laughed.

“She is summoning the Orbitals, Wizard, that is all the help she needs.”

I missed the start of the battle between the Vodun and Unea because I had to find out what the Orbitals were. Gleti is a Luminary of the Disc of Jo, a moon goddess in the religion of the Fon people of the history of my home universe, and that meant that she was a being of immense power. The Luminaries of Jo’s Disc are among the greatest powers of the Fonlands, but I had never seen any of them in action, and I was curious how Gleti’s powers would manifest.

As she moved away, the space around Gleti was distorted,

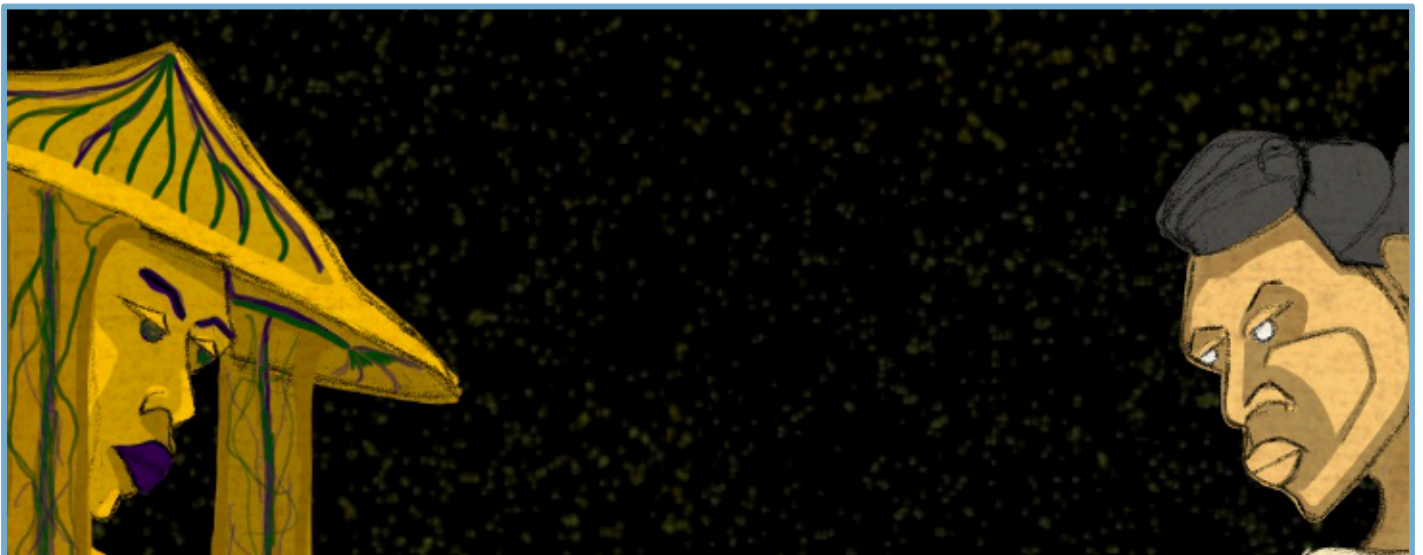
pulsing like a standing wave, and I watched as this effect seemed to replicate, like there were many standing waves around Gleti creating a bubble of distortion that began to expand out into a wall. The wave wall pulsed with glowing white light and soon, it towered before Gleti.

“That is beautiful,” I said with wonder, looking along the massive size of it as it continued to form in either direction, setting the aether aglow.

“And very deadly to anything that passesss through it,” Damballa said. He seemed captivated like I was, though he had seen Gleti’s Orbitals many times before. “The light waves are hard light moving at devastating speeds, Orbitals that can tear anything apart. Gleti is a wonder,” Damballa said and I could hear his admiration for her in the way he spoke.

I stared for a long time, but I had to turn when I heard a voice cry out in anguish. I had never heard anything like it, and it was likely that none of us actually heard it but felt it as an expression of deep, mental anguish. When I turned, I gasped to see the physical forms of Jo and Unea were much larger and Jo gripped what turned out to be Unea’s severed arm in a fist. It hung limply in Jo’s hand and Unea looked more shocked than in pain.

“You should leave this place now!” Jo screamed in her way that could be heard by anyone paying



attention with a mental link.

“I will not leave until your Mother-Father is dead and Pultine sees this bright, vibrant reality succumb to my influence.”

“You are doing this to humble a mmoatia?” Jo asked with derision and she laughed at Unea.

“The existence that bore her must pay for her insolence, and then she will serve me for an eternity.” Unea seemed to be breathing heavily and she had her hand on her shoulder where the arm had been ripped off. She seemed to be in pain, but she mustered vitriol for Jo.

“You cannot take a Vodun?” Jo asked. “You settle for second tier when you could puppet Vodun and Gods.”

“Those like you think too much of yourselves,” Unea sneered. “It is better to erase you from existence completely.” As she said this, tendrils shot out from the space where her arm had been and Jo used the arm as a weapon to deflect them. Unea was delighted at this, as Jo failed to notice the tendrils creeping out of the severed arm and soon Jo was wrapped up enough that Damballa, the Luminaries, the glowing planet Mosu and I worried that Jo might need help.

“You are a coward!” Jo yelled, letting the tendrils wrap her tightly. “And I don’t believe you are capable of destroying a Vodun.”

As she said this, Jo’s body began to glow inside out and as the glow intensified, the tendrils began to smoke and burn. As she swelled into her star form, which I wasn’t aware Jo had, the tendrils split and flailed away. Unea was visibly frightened.

“I would tell you to leave,” the giant white star form of Jo that pulsed with green, yellow, and violet magic, said in its way, “but we mean to burn you completely out of existence. You will threaten life in no other realm.”

Beams of fantastic starlight

that followed the invisible lines of the Pattern in the direction of Unea shot out from the incredible body of the star and these beams impacted, then encapsulated the form of Unea, trapping her in a prison of hard light that made it appear as though she was trapped in glass.

“Very well executed,” Obatala said.

“Maybe this form was unnecessary,” Damballa said.

“There’s no way it’s that easy,” Nyame said and she flew toward the Vodun who was returning to a smaller size. “Is that really all she had?” she asked Jo when she floated the space beside her and they stared at Unea in glass.

“Not by a long way,” Jo said, sounding more disheartened than I imagined she would after such a successful maneuver. “I worry that all we can do is trap her. I wanted to obliterate her, but something about her nature makes me apprehensive to do that. When the Wizard had her in the loop, she only used that time to get stronger, and when she figured a way out, she was stronger than the Wizard. The Wizard is not a light weight, he was our vanguard for a reason, I never worried that Une or Unea, or even the black wall if it had arrived first, would be too much for him and she wasn’t until she was. When we battled, I calibrated my powers in the mental realm and I could see that her nature is to learn and adapt. Fighting her is like teaching her and she is an extremely fast learner. I haven’t brought all that I can bring to bear against her because if I face her again, it won’t work a second time.”

“Then we burn her to ashes,” Nyame said and extended a hand in front of her that was inundated with a bright white light, “and then the ashes to dust, the dust to nothing. We are quite literally made for this.”

“I don’t think that it will matter. Kill this Unea, the energy she harnesses returns to Une along with all of her knowledge, and Une can make another Unea. She can send

anything at us, she can make powerful copies of us. We have to figure out a way to eliminate Unea so that it is severed from Une, at least then, we will actually be chipping away at Une’s lifeforce. Unea is powerful and she will be more powerful when she manages to shatter the glass. How do we take her power?”

“We need a black magic user with the will to deny Une,” Nyame said. She still aimed her light at Unea, hoping for a reason to blast her. “They are the only ones who can change the nature of the power that Une wields into something that will hurt her or reject her.”

“What about your son?” Jo asked. “Anansi is strong in Sublime and Transmogrification, and he is wise.”

Nyame looked to Jo.

“I will find Anansi,” Obatala said and disappeared from my side.

“Do you think Anansi can do what Nyame described?” I asked Damballa.

“I guess anything is possible,” he said.

I had never met Anansi and was eager to see what he could do against the enemy. I thought about Jo’s logic and how difficult it was to face an enemy like Une who could make very powerful and expendable proxies to fight on her behalf and exhaust her enemy. That skill made her more powerful than the Vodun, because even though it would take an amazing expenditure of arcana facing them, a Vodun could become exhausted. And Unea had only gotten more powerful, who knows if there was a limit to how powerful she could become.

Jo’s victory, and the beauty of Gleti’s wall of Orbitals, shrunk in my mind as I eyed Unea in the glass from a distance.

SMITTING

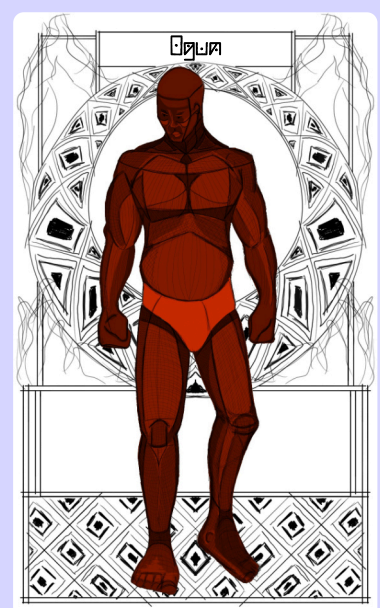
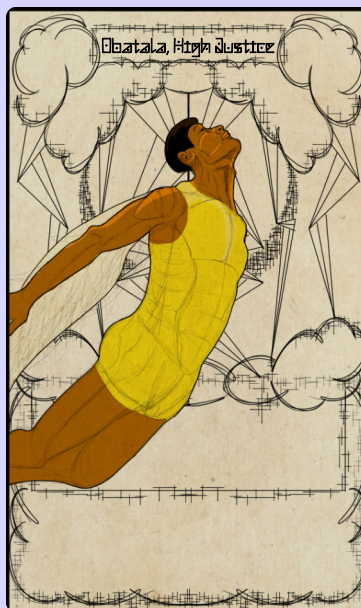
THE MOST POPULAR TRADING CARD GAME IN THE FONLANDS AND UNIVERSE PRIME 5!



The game of Smiting was invented by Xêvioso and Gû in their youth, when the discs of the Endlands were much less populated and there was little to do. Both Vodun can be short-tempered and after countless physical battles that disturbed the very structure of the Endlands, their mother-father insisted they find a nonviolent means to end their disagreements, and thus, Smiting was created.

The game requires a Deck of Smiting that each Vodun perpetually builds to oppose one another. A card is created for the Deck by condensing the Vodun's memory of an encounter with any being into a rectangular shape that solidifies into a card with a picture of the being, a description of its origin, power level, stamina, health and any other pertinent information. Initially, the cards only included Endlanders, but both Xêvioso and Gû have done extensive exploration of the multiversal superstructure and have collected cards that defy the imagination of their opponents.

The back of Smiting Cards (pictured left) has been the same since the first decks of Smiting were created and is a Veve design created by Gu to represent the powers of the Vodun. Below, from right to left, are the art cards for Shango from Xevioso's first deck, Obatala in Yellow, and Ogun from Gu's first deck.



PRL

s e r i a l s

MAY 2026
TWO-IN-ONE

FOR WITCHES IN THE ONE-VERSE

*The Divine
Essence*

An illustration featuring two female characters in a magical, dark setting. On the left, a woman with long red hair and a green dress with a white grid pattern sits on a large, brown, striped, wing-like structure. On the right, a woman with dark skin and long black hair, wearing a purple dress with a white grid pattern, sits on the ground. The background is dark with glowing yellow, branching, tree-like patterns. The overall style is reminiscent of comic book art.

The Death
Witch Coven

THE SECOND UNREST - act iii -

PRL

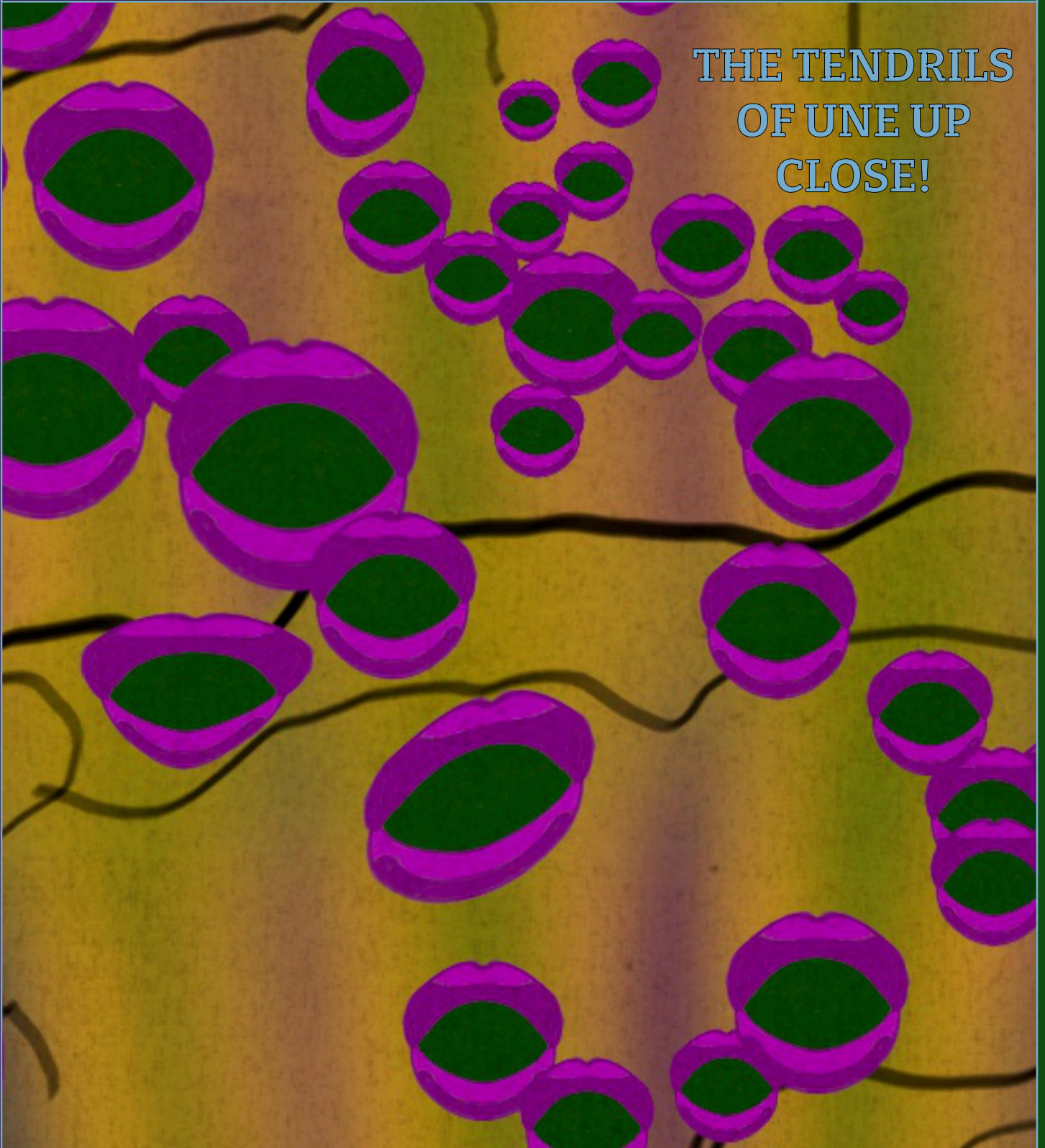
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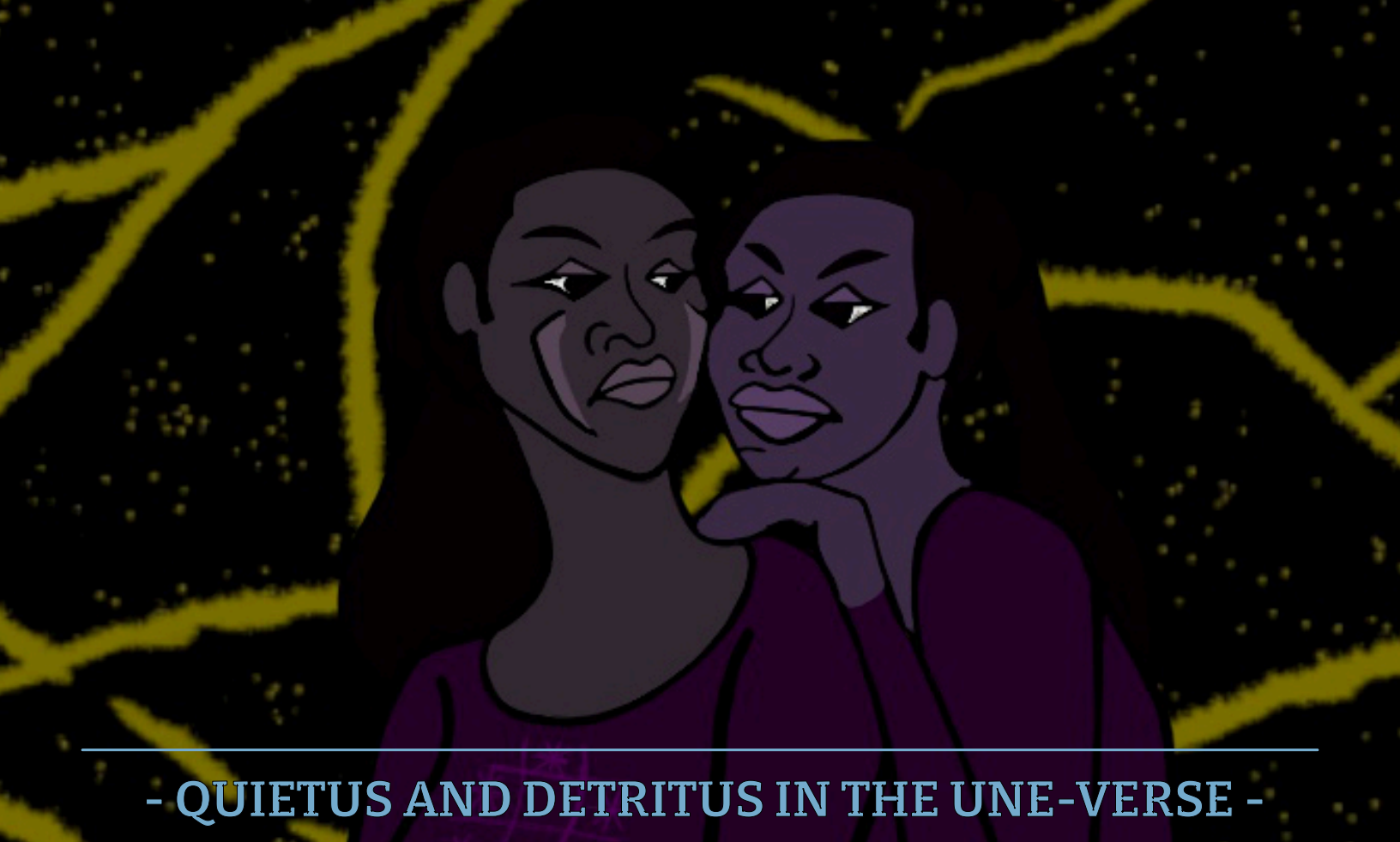
MAY 2026

4

The Death Witch Coven

THE TENDRILS
OF UNE UP
CLOSE!





- QUIETUS AND DETRITUS IN THE UNE-VERSE -

BY VIV

Detritus can reduce things to rubble. It is taxing for her to hold a large thing in her mind and focus her powers on it, then to activate the very molecules of the thing's composition to cause the rapid aging of the thing to wear it down to dust. But if she can hold something in her hand, she can turn it to ash or dust or sand, the by-products of time and physical forces, in little time and with little effort. Detritus is a very powerful member of the Death Witch Coven, many revere her as senior among them because she concocted many of the spells that the original Tynalari enacted around Moon Daisy to bring about the Coven.

But even Detritus bows to Quietus. Detritus wielded great deterioration powers, but Quietus could make any physical process stop. She could stop a Third Heart from producing Divine Essence, an ecstatic gland from processing it. She could render an eye blind, a river dry, and Detritus realized that Quietus wasn't bound by physical processes. Quietus could halt arcane spells, she

could make spirit energies cease to be. Of course, such powerful magic requires a great amount of energy, and it takes time for Quietus to collect the arcana needed, but she does store immense power inside of her and her violet magic is tinted grey.

The greatest day in the long life of the Detritus Witch was the day that she delivered the news to Quietus that she had brought their sisters back from Kútmómē. They had both been working independently to free the Coven and though there was never a formal challenge, the two competed to be the one to free them. Quietus has been reclusive since hearing the news, partly believing that Detritus had proven her superiority and leadership of the Death Witch Coven by enacting and executing such an intricate plan. Detritus was gracious in her victory, and she allowed Quietus her space, until it was time to face the threat to all existence.

"I have to admit that I find this place very pleasant," Quietus

says through her mental link with Detritus. "The music is intoxicating."

"This is not a time for entertainment," Detritus says in her hard voice. Since arriving to the Une-verse, she has been on edge, and since the explosion of Xêvioso's cube, she's been just short of frantic. She established the psychic link with Quietus shortly after the commotion had settled, and though they were separated by immense distance, they maintained contact as they decided on a plan of action. Detritus was flying through space to arrive at Quietus's location.

"You have to come here to hear it," Quietus says, ignoring Detritus's apprehension. "It is as though the Griots fill space with the harmonies of the balafon, but it is somehow better."

"The way you speak of it, I worry about being lured to my death with pleasant music," Detritus says.

"That is not the purpose of

it,” Quietus says. “Besides, Une sleeps, and this music seems to keep her that way while it apparently helps in the creation of those impossibly large tendrils.”

“Wait, what are you saying?” Detritus asks with confusion. “Are you at Une’s location now?”

“I didn’t realize it at first,” Quietus admits. She takes time to stand from her position on the large space rock that isn’t covered in tendrils, but they crowd the scene all around the view from the surface, letting in rays of the sun that are intense to stand in, but Quietus has been alternating between the shade and the sunlight because there is vegetation on the rocks exposed to sunlight and it is nice to lie on it until the sunlight becomes too intense. Though the view of the cosmos is crowded with tendrils, she has managed to trace some of them back to what appears to be their origin, a ball of what appears to be yarn the size of a planet that she could feel coursing with death, life, and the pattern. And all around it was the delightful sound of the balafon, though she could not determine where it originated from. It should have been impossible to hear anything in the void of space, but over the time that Une has conquered this existence, she has encouraged the growth of vegetation near stars to turn the entirety of the cosmos into a breathable atmosphere.

“So you are there?” Detritus asks with annoyance now.

“I guess,” Quietus says as she situates herself in the light on her back. She only wears her undergarments after disengaging the armor of Fâ, and her dark skin glistens. She admires herself in this light.

“Well, what should we do?” Detritus asks in a sudden panic. “I am coming to you now.”

“I thought you were approaching this whole time, that’s why I’ve stayed put.” Quietus has been waiting for Detritus, though even if she hadn’t agreed to seek

Quietus out in this new realm, Quietus would still be lounging in it and taking in the sites. She had noticed the variation in the colors of the tendrils, almost the way rocks exhibit color variations, sometimes in striations that are jagged, other times splotches like a bleeding infection.

“Have you made contact with Fâ?” Detritus asks.

“I haven’t tried, I am waiting to complete my picture here. It is glorious, Detritus, I am eager for you to see and hear it. And there are smells but many of them are too sweet for my tastes.”

“Are you getting too comfortable, Quietus?” Detritus asks, letting her judgement and anger be apparent without inciting hostility between them. “Remember how dangerous this enemy is. She will creep into your mind and turn you against us, and I would rather not have to kill you in a foreign realm.”

This makes Quietus laugh out loud to herself. “I’m sure you are eager for the excuse. But that’s not what this is. I am intrigued by this formation of the magics, I would not have expected something so beautiful for one as hellbent on destruction as Une. I think the music encourages the growth of the tendrils, even the scent I think is like a pheromone that encourages growth. I am almost certain that the best thing we can do is find the source of those things and turn them off, but I have been here for a long time and can only enjoy it, I can’t trace anything. I don’t feel any mind but Une’s that buzzes through the tendrils. Maybe she is doing this all on her own?”

“She has amassed amazing power,” Detritus says as she grunts and groans, displaying the effort it takes to wield her magic in such a way as to propel her in space toward the mental signature of Quietus. Detritus uses Death Magic, not the natural abilities that manifest from her use of Divine Essence, to propel herself through space and it requires gathering the latent magic that exists

in abundance in this realm of decay and death, and also dispelling them, which is alternating hand constructions that tax the muscles in her arms.

“Hurry, Coven sister, we have much to learn so that when we happen upon Fâ and the others, we can put them to useful work. Une is no match for the Death Witch Coven.”

Detritus rolls her eyes as she continues her arduous journey, even though she agrees with Quietus.

After some time, Detritus begins to smell flowers that remind her of the forests of the Disc of Agê and it soothes her aching muscles. She stops her flight through the cosmos and smiles to herself as the scent of flowers grows stronger. Detritus likes the smell of flowers because it can’t exist without dirt and the breakdown of living things, without the detritus of nature, and this has always strengthened her. She is drifting casually when she begins to hear the bouncing notes of the balafon, but the tangle of tendrils in the cosmos makes it difficult to survey the distance to confirm if she had made it to the location Quietus described.

Detritus looks around herself hoping to see anything that Quietus had described, but there is only the vision of tendrils, the smell of flowers and the the sound of a balafon.

“Do you really not see me?” Detritus hears the mental voice of Quietus after some time.

“No,” Detritus chuckles, “but I haven’t been looking very hard. I see why you like it here.”

“Come to me now, I have discovered something most interesting,” Quietus says and she continues to talk while Detritus navigates to her.

“What is it?” Detritus asks.

“Did you wake the enemy?”

“I doubt that’s even possible, she is a very heavy sleeper. I didn’t wake anyone, though I did receive a communique from Ruin.”

“Is she headed this way too?”

“She is.” Quietus says. “You both will be very shocked by my news.”

“If I ever find you...”

“Turn,” Quietus interrupts and they see one another, then fly to hold hands before Quietus leads Detritus through the crowded cosmos. Eventually, they land on the space rock where Quietus had been lounging and she shows Detritus the sleeping enemy.

“Une is a mushroom.” Quietus says.

“Right,” Detritus says with a hint of impatience. “Say other things that we both already know.”

“Une is a mushroom according to Pultine and the Hyperion, Agê has never encountered Une as she does here, the Hyperion only facilitated mental connection between them. I believe that even Agê has probably noticed this by now, wherever she is, but the biggest clue is the breathable atmosphere of this place. Une is a mushroom, but there is an algae as well. The Une-verse is probably the largest lichen in all of the multiversal structure. The music, you hear it?”

Detritus does and it is as impressive as Quietus had described, pinking deliberately and steadily in clear tones that cut through the crowded cosmos.

“The algae boosts the growth of the tendrils, they are symbiotic. Their union is surprisingly beautiful, Une brings death to the multiversal structure while being pampered with music and aromatherapy. If we can kill the algae, it will be a shock to Une’s system.”

“It will make her vulnerable

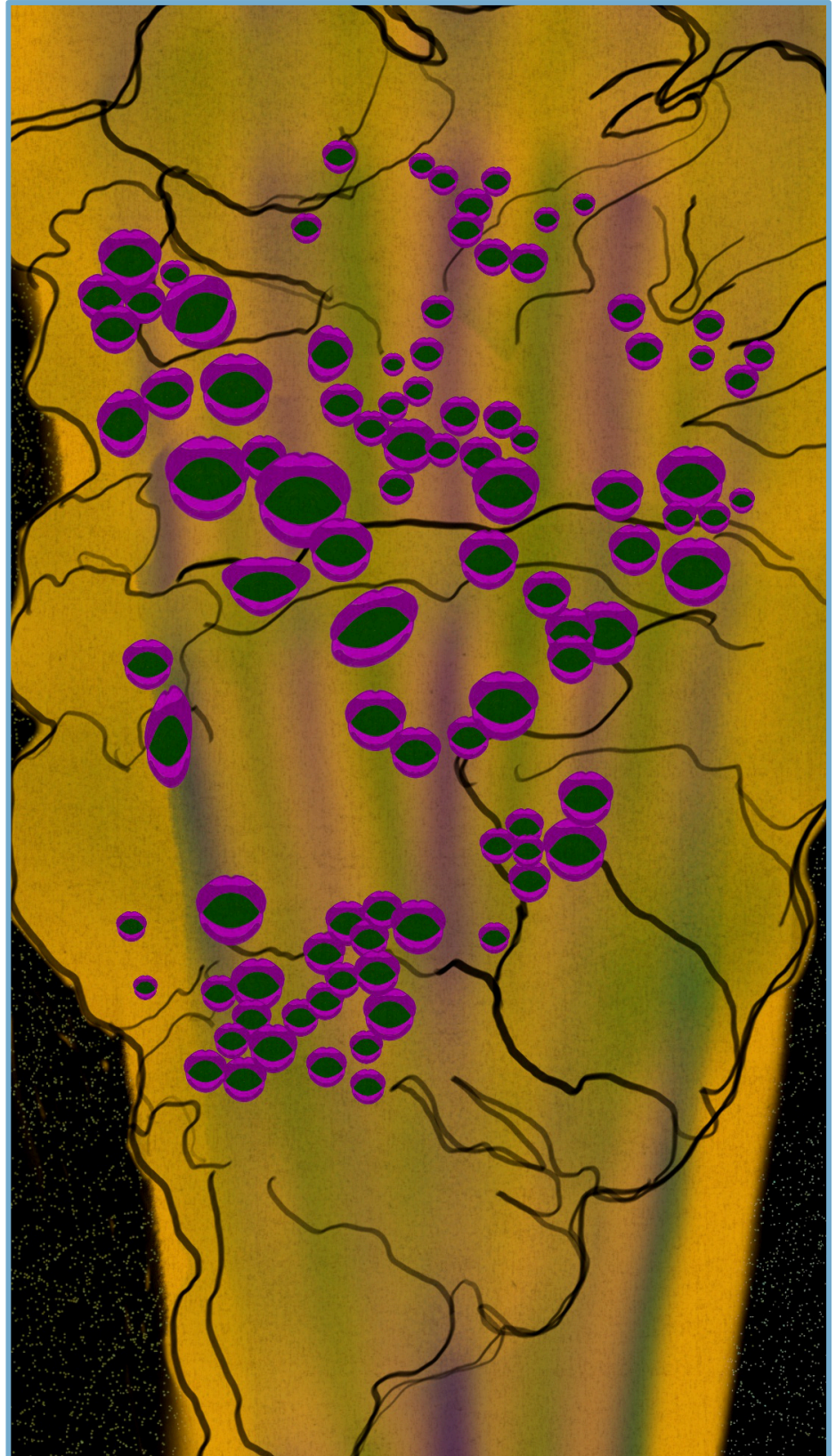
to the Vodun’s attack,” Detritus says, now impressed at the intel Quietus had gathered.

“What did I miss?” both of the witches hear as the Ruin Witch lands on the large space rock. “I sense the death of something very

imminent. Its death will send wails of anguish across the cosmos and what was strong, will wither.”

“So are the words of Ruin,” Quietus says with a smile.

Lichen, close up of Une's tendrils



PRL
s e r i a l s

MAY 2026
39

The Divine Essence

featuring

WEREHARES OF
THE DARK KNOLL





- PULTINE AND TRACIA IN THE UNE-VERSE -

BY VIV

The beach is calm, there is only the sound of waves crashing gently against the shore—almost like the rustling of leaves to Alia—and distant calls of birds, maybe gulls. The wind blows gently and Alia realizes the rustling leaves are the tall trees that look like palm trees with the bunches of leaves sprouting from the top and moved by the wind.

“This is Bludon,” the Queen Rowen says and Alia sees her standing with Pultine next to her. They are on an island of sand that seems to materialize as she looks around at it, she had only been looking at the view before her but it all comes into focus next to Rowen and Pultine. It is a golden beach.

“Bludon,” Pultine says and Alia sees her nod, surveying the sparkling ocean in the distance. “How did you do this?” Pultine asks, looking to Alia.

“You have reconstructed Maxx’s memory with amazing accuracy,” Rowen says in awe. “I do

good to glimpse a mind. When I touch someone, I can inhabit like this, but then I risk losing myself. You have opened the Superguardian’s mind to us, how is this possible?”

“She is the Hyperion,” Pultine says with a half bow. “She will never cease to amaze us.”

“Well, as nice as all this is, I can’t stop Maxx from self destructing,” Alia says.

“Where is he in all of this?” Rowen asks. Her eyes are closed and she holds both sides of her bulging head. “I feel him like disembodiment...”

She is interrupted by a blur of violet that flies off with her in the blink of an eye.

“Something has her!” Alia says in a panic.

Pultine flexes her arms and clenches her fists as her wings rise

high above her, about to take off in the direction of the violet blur, but then there is a blur of red and Pultine disappears just as Rowen had.

“What are you doing?” Alia asks and she turns to regain the view she first attained after arriving here. The sun appears directly before her, shining bright and threatening to be too bright for her. She realizes that it is not the sun shining down on the golden beach, it is the golden form of Maxx himself.

“The lean has set,” Maxx says loudly. “Maxx has attained Superconsciousness. Maxx will self-destruct in time remaining: three hours twenty minutes, when transference of consciousness is complete. Outsider command detected, unauthorized access breach attempt denied. Intruders will be eliminated.”

Alia’s Hyperion form covered her in a golden yellow light just as Maxx plowed into her. She felt the force of him driving her



backward and his arms wrapping her like a vice in their grip. She explodes, forcing all of the energy she can muster outward, and it loosens his grip, sending them rolling and tumbling in opposite directions over the ocean and golden islands. Alia feels herself stopped, like she is caught in a large hand.

“I’ve got you,” the Queen Rowen says before Alia sees her approaching.

“What happened to you and Pultine?”

“Maxx in violet and in red,” Rowen says and she sees the golden yellow Maxx who Alia thought was the sun recovering and then joined by a violet version of him.

“We don’t want to fight you...” Alia says before Pultine attacks them with her fireworks sparking and popping all around her.

The clash is like balls of light attacking one another and when blows land, a spraying of colored light flies off the balls. Pultine is at an advantage because both versions of Maxx want to do the same thing and perform the same attacks, which causes them to strike one another more than they are able to lay a hand on Pultine. Eventually, she smashes their heads together and they both fall out of the sky and into the ocean. Pultine smiles at Alia and Rowen as she approaches them.

“What happened to yours?” Alia asks and Pultine laughs.

“I bashed that one before I came to help.”

“I think we need them if we plan to stop the countdown,” Alia says.

“We need the yellow one,” Rowen says. “The others were

created after his time in the Fonlands. The yellow can stop the sequence.”

“Guess I’m going fishing,” Pultine says and leads the trio down into the ocean waters.

Tracia was with the Werehares before the explosion of Xévioso’s cube, and they were so smitten with her, that even after the explosion, a contingent of them found her floating unconscious in the Une-verse and they guarded her carefully as their numbers grew and they staked out on a barren planet. There was some grass that the Werehares thought of as a scraggly oasis in the otherwise barren rock that at least had breathable air. They rested Tracia on the branch of a large tree that was the center of the scraggly oasis and it was large enough that it seemed as



though it was the only thing that could still be nourished by the planet.

The Werehares are from Universe 6DOD33, a designation of the Smiting Chamber. They were recruited by Agê from the enchanted Green deck that Issac Washington had played against Agê in preparation for the Second Unrest as it has come to be known (See Divine Power – 2 – Plant and the AGÊ Smiting Exhibition), and they eagerly accepted because Agê appeared to them in hopes of rallying an army that displayed the hare's impressive skills in battle, but it just so happened that when she appeared, it was the high holy day when the Akinbo praised and venerated their nature goddess who was their most supreme goddess. Agê, with the dark green tint of her skin, green hair of vines, the tiara of vegetation that grew naturally above her forehead that gave the appearance she wore a crown, and her garments that were also flora, was the vision of the Akinbo Goddess.

Akinbo, the planet Earth of Universe 6DOD33, that is the center of the expansive Empire Long Foot that spans the Milky Way galaxy, is home to the Werehares, akini, the name for humans born on Akinbo, who have the ability to transform into humanoid hares with long ears and strong limbs that allow them to move at thrice the speed of other akini. Long ago, this ability to transform occurred spontaneously among the akini born on Akinbo, but over time, it has been consolidated to family lines that only intermarried with other families that displayed the transformation. By the time Agê appeared, these families ruled the Empire Long Foot all over the galaxy and the most powerful family occupied Castle Akinbo as the Holy Empiratee, who was worshipped by akini who were unable to change, and respected by those who could. The Empire Long Foot was in a time of chaos and it was not chance that Agê appeared before the Werehares of the Dark Knoll on Akinbo who were separatists from the Empire who organized covert action to undermine the Empiratee on Akinbo, though the Dark Knoll was a real

place that was hidden from others using magic. The Smiting Chamber had distinguished the Werehares of the Dark Knoll as the best warriors and wielders of Green magic in their existence.

"If you are not the Goddess Akinbo," Lukas Volcanus said in his strained voice as he stood out on the knoll looking up at the shimmering goddess in green, "then what are you?"

"I am the Vodun Agê," she said and lowered herself closer to the ground where they stood, but she stopped short of landing when they all seemed to recoil in fear. The knoll is a large hill of vibrant grass and there are thousands of akini in front of her, some of them as men and women, some as hares standing just as tall and curious with their long ears all the way up. "I am in need of your help. Something is coming, for me, for you all. It comes for all of existence, and I think that the power of your collective can help to stop the thing that means to end us. I will show you what I can mentally if you will allow it, but I do understand if you all choose to ignore this fight and continue on with your lives. Just know that one day the threat may come and you will have to deal with it alone because if it does come, that means that we have failed and I am no more."

Some of the akini wept at this, all of them were upset by the words.

"Nothing with logic and a clear thinking brain would dare threaten the Akinbo Goddess," Lukas Volcanus says angrily. "We will follow you across another existence to defend your honor, high Goddess. Just tell us how many you need and we will follow."

Lukas Volcanus took a knee, and then all of the akini in the Dark Knoll were on a knee as well, swearing fealty to the Vodun who was not what they thought she was. They followed her to the forests of her Disc in the Fonlands, across many realities of the multiversal structure, where they were hosted by

the royal family of the Zomo Monarchy and trained in the uses of Green magic as it exists on the Disc. The akini who did wield magic tended to wield Green and Black magic, and those who relied on Black magic were assigned to help guard the Disc of Agê, but there was a legion of werehare soldiers who had sworn to face Une and it increased Agê's contingent significantly.

When they were in Xêvioso's cube, their leader was Jalukas Volcanus, a tall darkskinned man who only ever wore a length of cloth around his waist and his brown belly hung over his waist slightly. He was big and strong and he loved to eat, all akini are vegetarians and constantly nibble on grasses that they carry on their person in sacks, and the Werehares of the Dark Knoll followed him as their leader because he was fair, tough, and fun to be around. He made quick friends with the others in the cube and he was praising Tracia as a vision with a few other akini when the cube shattered. After the explosion, Jalukas found other akini quickly, the Werehares of the Dark Knoll share a psychic link that allows them to communicate in silence as they go about their stealth missions, and they could feel one another across the vastness of the Une-verse that buzzed with her dormant consciousness. When Jalukas and a group of fifty or so akini found Tracia, she was unconscious and floating, and they guarded her on the barren planet, in its scraggly oasis that seemed to only exist to allow Jalukas and the Werehares to nurse the jungle goddess back to health. They could tell that she was the daughter of Agê who Jalukas had come to accept as the creator of Akinbo, and they couldn't help but worship her.

When she wakes up, Tracia is confused. She thinks for a moment that she is on the Disc of Agê because she is high up in a large tree and there is a full canopy of leaves. But then, there are no sounds, or there are sounds, familiar voices, and smells, but they are not of the Fonlands. Then Tracia remembers and she takes a deep breath that lifts her shoulders. She rolls off of the

large branch that was soft with moss just like she remembered it in the jungles, and moss had grown there as she lay asleep on her back.

"You made this whole area come alive," Jalukas Volcanus says with his head bowed as she lands on the ground. Many of the akini who were milling about the base of the sole tree on the planet that is now surrounded by lush grasses and flowers, even insects that flit around the renewed oasis, stand and bow their heads to her.

"Where are we?" Tracia asks, looking around at the hard, rocky surface all around them. It isn't a desert exactly, it is more of a dry mountain with its rugged terrain that sometimes crops up into summits. It is a dead planet, ravaged by time.

"We are here, goddess," Jalukas says. "We have the means to fly with the vodun armor, but we decided to stop here until you recuperate. We have established links with many of akini around this space and they report meeting others of our forces. We are told to seek out the Vodun Xêvioso and we have the direction we need to travel, whenever you are ready of course."

"I wonder if I can portal?" Tracia asks herself aloud. "I can't imagine that Xêvioso is close to our position and traveling a realm will take a lot of time. We need to pool our resources. What is your name?"

"Jalukas Volcanus of the Dark Knoll, and we are the Werehares at your service, goddess." He bows. They all bow.

"None of this is necessary and it is taking up time. We need to figure out the fastest way to get to Xêvioso. So instead of bowing, let's put our minds together and get to where we need to be before Une discovers us and eats us all, or worse, corrupts us and makes us eat others."

The Werehares are humbled by Tracia's frankness.

Before she was the Hyperion, Alia Zephyr was a patient. She could do things that were hard to explain and she would have many adventures before she realized that she was...



Amazing Alia, the Alia

Alia was first mentioned in *Made in America* (Series 1) – [Issue 10 – The Inner Aliarum](#). She was a patient at Morris Village in Columbia, SC where Dr. Thomas Eakran was a part-time consultant. Dr. Eakran takes Alia to the Institute for Brain Function (IBF), where she becomes a super secret government asset (detailed in [The Magician 12. Busting Out](#)). Throughout the first series of *Made in America*, we learn that Alia can see the future when she looks into the sun.

Alia appears as a main character in [Amazing Elroy](#), and following the exciting conclusion of Kevin Blackmon's story, Alia becomes the main character of the PRL Epic.

[Least Possible Future](#) - Alia strikes out on her own and it isn't long before the awesome history of her name catches up to her. She reconnects with Ivan and Clay and makes a home just in time to deal with the worst of it.

[Alia](#) - There have been many Alias, but only one like Alia Zephyr. After Alia loses her ability to see the future, she also loses her eyesight. And Dr. Thomas Eakran wants his most interesting patient back.

[The Hyperion](#) - In the aftermath of [Lost in Space](#), the Alia is in space and she is on a mission to reset the universe before it descends into darkness. There's never been a hero like the Alia, no one can do the things she does.

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The Magician

THE MAN IN
A BIND?



Kevin Blackmon, devious smile



- THE MAN SETS A TRAP -

BY ROY CURETON

“You know” Kevin says casually, flirty almost, like he wants to make someone smile, “I’ve experienced this before.”

“What do you mean?” Uneb asks. She has a sultry voice and she enunciates English words like they are not her native tongue and she wants to be sure she is understood. She sits at a table across from Kevin who wears a hoodie and jeans, which contrast sharply with the Unrb’s naked body that doesn’t have all the details of femininity like body hair and nipples, just the bulbs of her breast and lithe limbs.

“I mean, you’re not the first beautiful woman to rummage around in my mind, nor are you the first monster to try to bend me to your will.

Uneb laughs and leans closer to Kevin. “We are only just meeting, you can’t know my intentions.”

“The other beautiful woman

still lives comfortably in my head, she will always live here, and she taught me to see things like you for what you are.”

“You already know what I am,” Uneb says in a reasonable voice. “You and all the ants that I swat around inside your existence know what I am. I am not here for illusion or obfuscation. I only want the truth, your truth, that you cannot hide from me. I see you, Kevin Blackmon, and all this fighting has made you weary. I am glad to meet you like this, it is an important opportunity for you to hear what needs to be said. Kevin, you don’t have to fight anymore, and you don’t need anyone’s permission to rest, not mine, not the others who I am cutting down as we speak.”

“What do you think you see in me?”

Uneb arches her brow and purses her full, violet lips in contemplation for a moment.

“I see you weary, Kevin.

You’re dragged around this universe and expected to be the savior of beings who can never know you or understand you. You are alone, Kevin, your amazing ability has left you stranded and yearning for something different. I can offer you that. I can give you everlasting life, I can give you the entirety of this existence. I can give you more than you can imagine.”

Kevin is weary, tired of being summoned only to destroy things, even if those things would destroy innocents. He feels that all he has ever been slowed to be is the man with the preternatural ability, not a real person with complex feelings and emotions.

“I can give you the Hyperion,” Uneb continues with a hopeful look on her face that she had happened upon the source of his sadness and longing. “You have not been whole since she left you, your life has been underground and solitary since then. She can be yours along with this existence and you can finally know the happiness that

eludes you. Just come to me, Kevin,” she says and extends a hand.

The two sit at a table surrounded by wild growth, though Kevin doesn’t recognize anything. He knows that this means he is not in his own mental construction, Alia taught him that it was impossible not to recognize something in your own mental construction.

“Why do you think you know me?” Kevin asks with a smirk.

“Meat is not as complicated as it purports to be,” Uneb chuckles.

“And you aren’t as smart as you think you are,” Kevin says, leaning in just like Uneb. “I do love Alia, she is the best friend I have ever known, but we were never good for one another. She isn’t the romantic love of my life, that title belongs to either the female or male from Rhasdwiis who I spent time with on separate deployments to the IP, or to Desperation Jackson, but I don’t want to be put on the spot here.”

Uneb sits up straight and leans back, a look of skepticism and confusion on her face.

“You didn’t think I was easily predicted, did you? Alia and I are family and she taught me to protect myself against others like you,” Kevin says with a smile. “How do you know Alia?”

Uneb is seething with anger. She frowns and her lips are pursed.

“You don’t have to die with her and this existence,” Uneb says like a low growl. She is angry now. “The Hyperion will die for her insult to Une, but you can save her.”

Kevin just laughs. “You



really don't get it, do you? I know you, Uneb, I know Une because Alia used you to send a message. She is savvy with minds, I don't know anyone better. See, when Alia located Une, she left a mental command for the inhabitants of our universe in the event that you showed up. It took a while to decipher, I had to let you linger, but I know you now. And not only that, you are trapped."

Uneb is fuming mad now, but she tries to maintain her composure. "So Alia is here in this existence?"

Kevin nods sheepishly.

"And so are you. She has you just where she wants you..."

"No!" Uneb says forcefully and it ends the mental construction.

Kevin sits up inside of his quarters. The Queen Ravelith, Kazi Lograt, Eakran, and Desperation Jackson are there, Desperation with his arms crossed at the chest of his spacesuit glaring at Kevin.

Kevin is on his bed, but he had been standing and everyone is relieved to see him back to himself.

"What happened?" The Queen Ravelith asks and she sits next to him on the bed. "You just collapsed."

"Alia sent a message though Uneb," Kevin says, smiling at Ravelith who looks very concerned. "She was trying to control me, but Alia was there to stop it, like an echo of her soul that she buried inside of Une that was activated when Uneb arrived here. It wants to kill us all be to make Alia suffer. We are nothing to her."

"It is strange that you are smiling so brightly," Ravelith says and puts a hand to his cheek. "Are you alright?"

"Alia is here with us even though she is also very far away, fighting the same fight. We will win, no matter how hard it all is, even if it feels like a chore for me. I won't lie,"

he says as he looks around to everyone staring at him with concern, "I am afraid that these conflicts and universe ending events will be the rest of my life and I want to be anywhere but here. But everything we have faced was leading to this, to Une in the multiverse, and Uneb here, threatening to eat us all. This time matters and I will bring my best to bear and I am glad that you all are with me."

Everyone is heartened by his words and Kevin stands from the bed and looks up at the screen on the wall where Desperation leans that broadcasts the battle against Uneb. She is retreating, she is no longer surrounded by the forces of opposition, she moves away from them into the dark reaches and the forces hold their position.

"Uneb believes Alia is here and we have to maintain that illusion," Kevin says. "And Ravelith, Lograt, you were right, the black wall is coming. It is good that Uneb retreats, but she will return with a wall of death. I don't know what we have to oppose it, but Alia says we need arcana, magic, Violet, Green and Yellow specifically to oppose the wall. Lograt, do the Kazi practice color magic?"

"Our magic is a manifestation of the masteries," Lograt says with utter confusion. "I have never heard of arcane colors."

"We need to figure it out, I don't think we have much time. Gather representatives from every culture of the universe, in person or via video feed, we need to figure this out quick. Alia says the amount of magic necessary to oppose what is coming is enormous."

"I will have everyone convened in the main conference room immediately," Eakran says and leads everyone, except for Desperation, out of the room.

When they are alone, Desperation walks angrily to stand in front of Kevin and they stand nose to nose as Desperation vents his frustrations.

"You want to fucking die, don't you? You getting them bitch feelings again, I can see it on you." Desperation is speaking quietly but forcefully.

"You know I can't help those feelings, I shouldn't have told you about it, I knew you wouldn't understand. I'm good, I didn't get tempted by the ultimate death and I came out the other side better for it. You the one being dramatic as fuck, you the only bitch I see in here."

"Oh I'm a bitch now? When me and Kal out there ripping shit apart and you in here, what, fucking calling up your BM on your fucking mind phone or whatever the fuck it is?"

"My BM?" Kevin laughs and puts his hands on Desperation's shoulders. "You ain't gotta be jealous of Alia, man, that shit was a long time ago and it's not a good memory. This is saving the universe shit, it ain't sharing a mental bond and being together. Alia is calling shots from across the multiverse, this is big time, Danny." Kevin steps into Desperation, their bodies touch. Kevin is half a foot taller than Desperation now and he leans his head against his. "I don't want to die, and I don't want you to die. I just want more of us together like this, not fighting all the damn time."

"I like fighting," Desperation says and he wraps his arms around Kevin's waist. "But I get it."

"After we stop this, we going to Hawaii or somewhere."

"I'm down with that. But how we gone stop this shit we don't know what color magic is? You sure Alia ain't make that shit up?"

Kevin kisses Desperation's cheek. "I hope not, cause otherwise, I don't know what the fuck we gone do."

* * *



SECTION 9 - 3

THE DISC OF GU

PHYSICAL, NATURAL, AND SOCIAL PROPERTIES

FROM THE MANUAL AND REFERENCE OF THE FONLANDS

The Manual and Reference of the Fonlands is the official guide of the Fonlands and the Prime 5 Universes, located on Node 5 of the Multiversal Structure. This month, we explore a few features on the Disc of Gu.

DISC OF GU

BY WESLEY LIVINGSTON

Artisan

The artisans of the Disc are a humanoid kin skilled at crafts such as weaving, carpentry, carving stone and wood, pottery and glass blowing. Some artisans do metalwork, but the majority of metalwork on the Disc is completed by smiths. Artisans are also skilled at hand to hand combat, which is common for inhabitants of the Disc.

Great Serpent Senghor

Senghor was the first of the volcanic ninki nanka to emerge from the volcano with the highest elevation on the Disc, that is located in the overlap with the

Disc of Sakpata. He is the brother of Namandiru, the reclusive Great Serpent of the swamps in the overlap of the Discs of Agbe and Agê, who is known as the mother of the ninki nanka.

High Red Flame

The High Red Flame of the Disc of Gu, along with the other light sources of their respective Discs of the Fonlands, was produced by the Disc after the naming of the Vodun. It is a spherical, raging red flame that is the daylight source of the Disc. It travels north-south, moving from one extreme to the other at regular intervals.

The Hira

Large buffalo-kin who are among

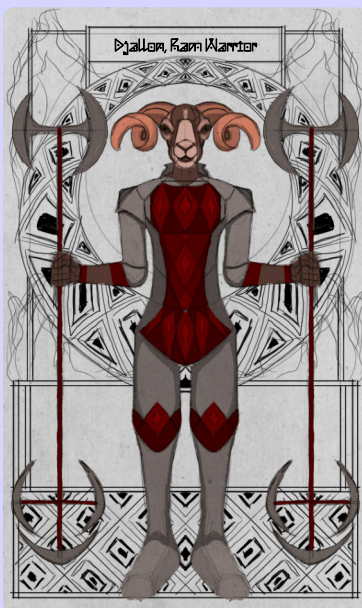
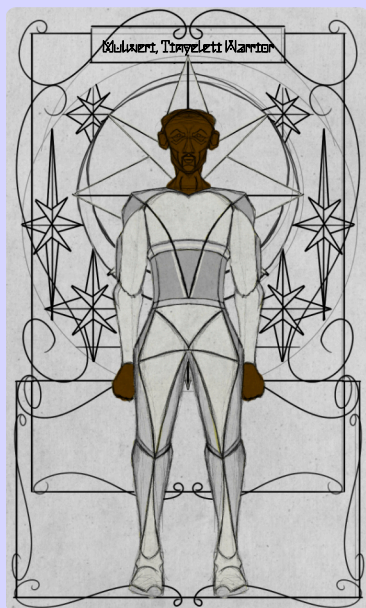
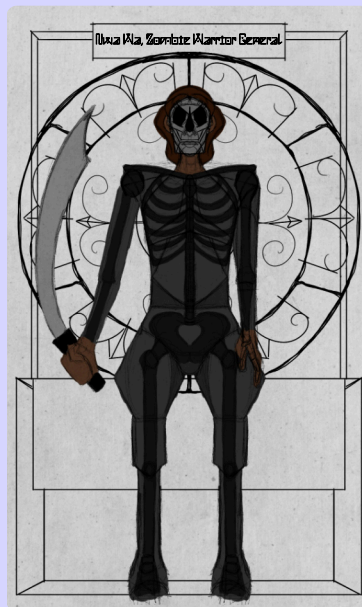
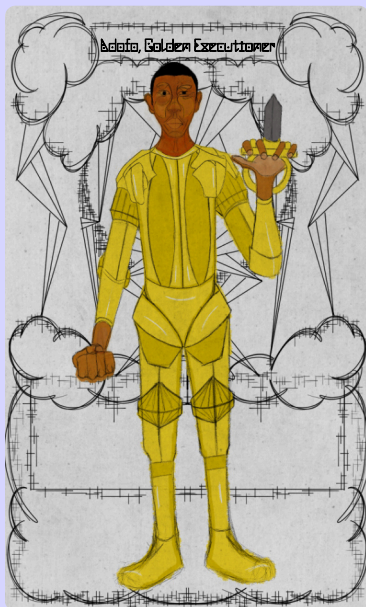
the fiercest fighters of the Disc known for strong fighters and fierce battles. They emerged on the prairies of the Disc and they roam freely, always looking for a battle to prove their might. The Za family of the hira enjoys a reputation in the Fonlands as the strongest of the kin.

Kokou, Fire Warrior

Shortly after the naming of the Disc, the High Red Flame emerged to situate itself in its eventual place and as it rose, Kokou fell from the flame and landed on his feet on the Disc. Kokou is the burning flame of the warrior, the embodiment of the flame of rage. Kokou is fire.

Smiting Champs

4Warriors



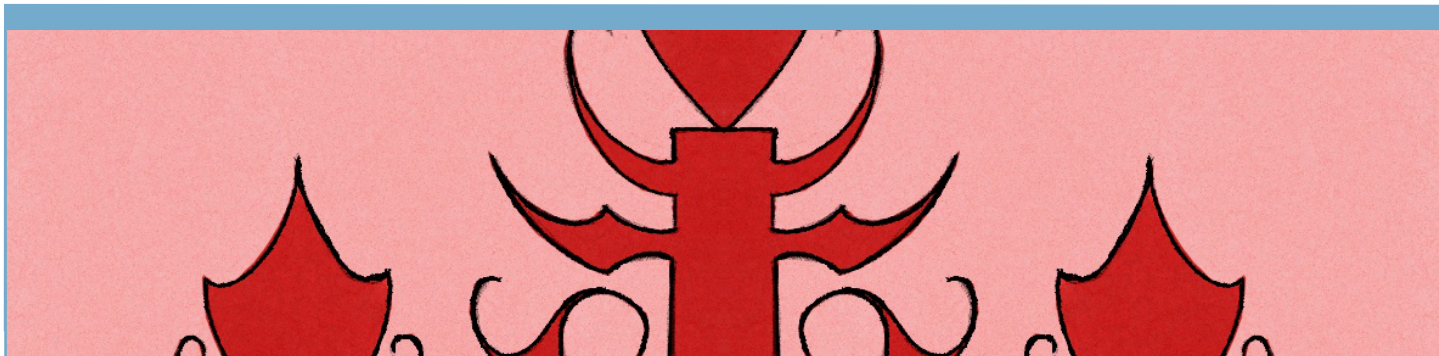
The PRL Serial with all the action involving the stars of SMITING.

It all started with **Smiting Exhibitions - The First Four Decks of Smiting** when the former Master, current Arcane Wizard, Issac Washington traveled to the Discs of Xevioso, Gu, Jo, and Legba to challenge the first four decks ever made to play the game to a match against enchanted decks generated from the multiversal structure by the Smiting Chamber. Then, we met the current lineup of the **4Warriors** (Adofo, Golden Executioner; Nwa Wa, Zombie Warrior General; Mulweri, Tinyeleti Warrior; Djallon, Ram Warrior). The 4Warriors joined the effort in

The Expedition to the Talj Junction - One-Shots that introduce the new recruits from the multiverse to battle the Pito in Talj.

The Expedition to the Talj Junction - Wielders of the Gold follows the heroic exploits of the users of Pattern Magic, including Xevioso, Alia, the Hyperion, and the Halfyn Heir. The Expedition to Talj ends in the tragedy of the Talj Rip, resulting in the end of the Talj Junction. Some beings of the existence known as Talj survive the destruction of their universe and the **Refugees of the Talj Rip** find a home in the Fonlands.

'Young' Vodun Chronicles: Gu's Confidant



BY MAXWELL ROBERSON

“You will say this card is cheating, but you are really just being a sore loser,” Gu prefaced his next move, holding two fingers and his thumb up as the card he referred to floated in the space above his fingers

“If it is controversial don't use it,” Kokou said. He was angry even though he was winning the game the two played, that didn't yet have a name.

“That's the point of playing, to see if it works,” Gu grumbles and he glares at Kokou. “You're too obsessed with winning.”

“I don't do anything unless I can win,” Kokou said, “you know that.”

“I know, but you like to win by the established rules and Xêvioso and I are still hammering out the rules. Xêvioso said this card shouldn't be allowed.” As he said this, Gu moved his hand down and the card revealed itself as it settled onto the grid. “Ogun is an important Warrior card for the game of War so it should be allowed for this new game we've been figuring out.”

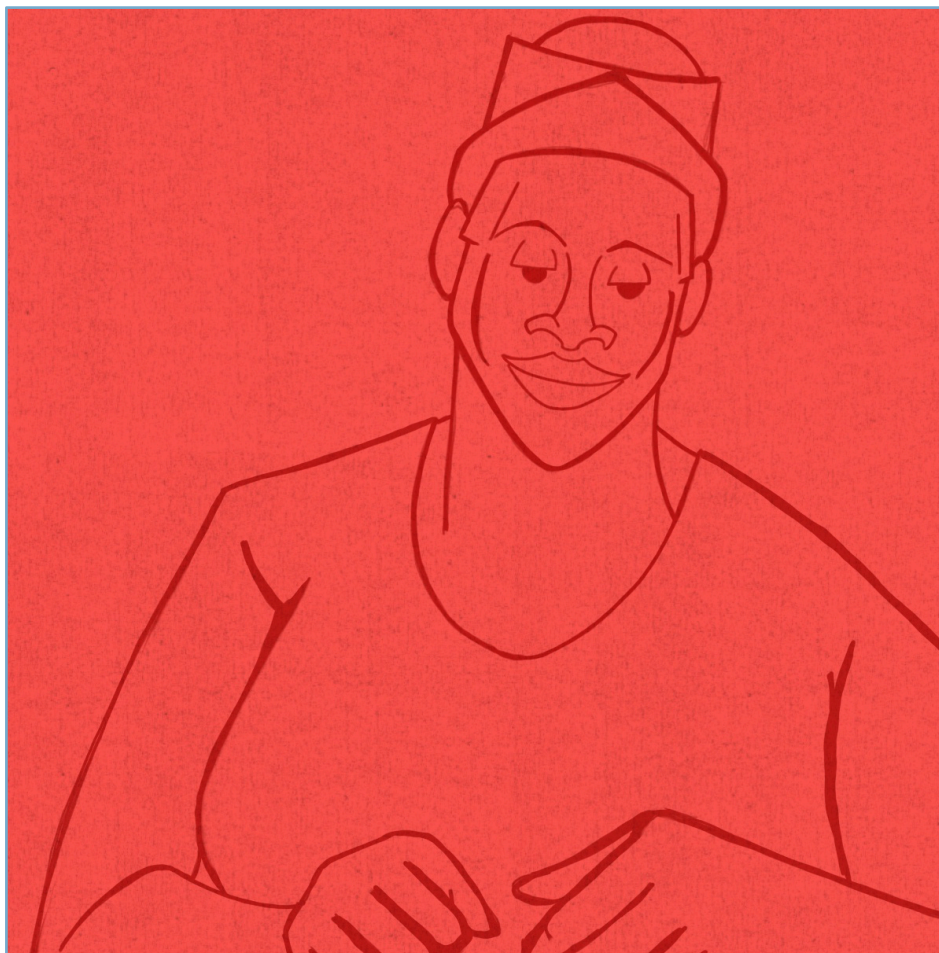
“You can't have your twin, I don't have a Xêvioso card,” Kokou said in protest. He was using the deck

of cards that Xêvioso created for the game Peace.

“Ogun is not my twin,” Gu protested and he flipped the table where the two played, which was impressive considering it was a table made of solid steel and was heavier than the Vodun.

Kokou had stood, they were both young and spry then, so he had moved as quickly as Gu had flipped the table.

“You are so touchy about that,” Kokou laughed, but his face was screwed to one side in rage. “I wonder why that is? Could it be the Vodun is sensitive about his title? I



can show you that being the Vodun means very little except being the first. My fists love to teach lessons.”

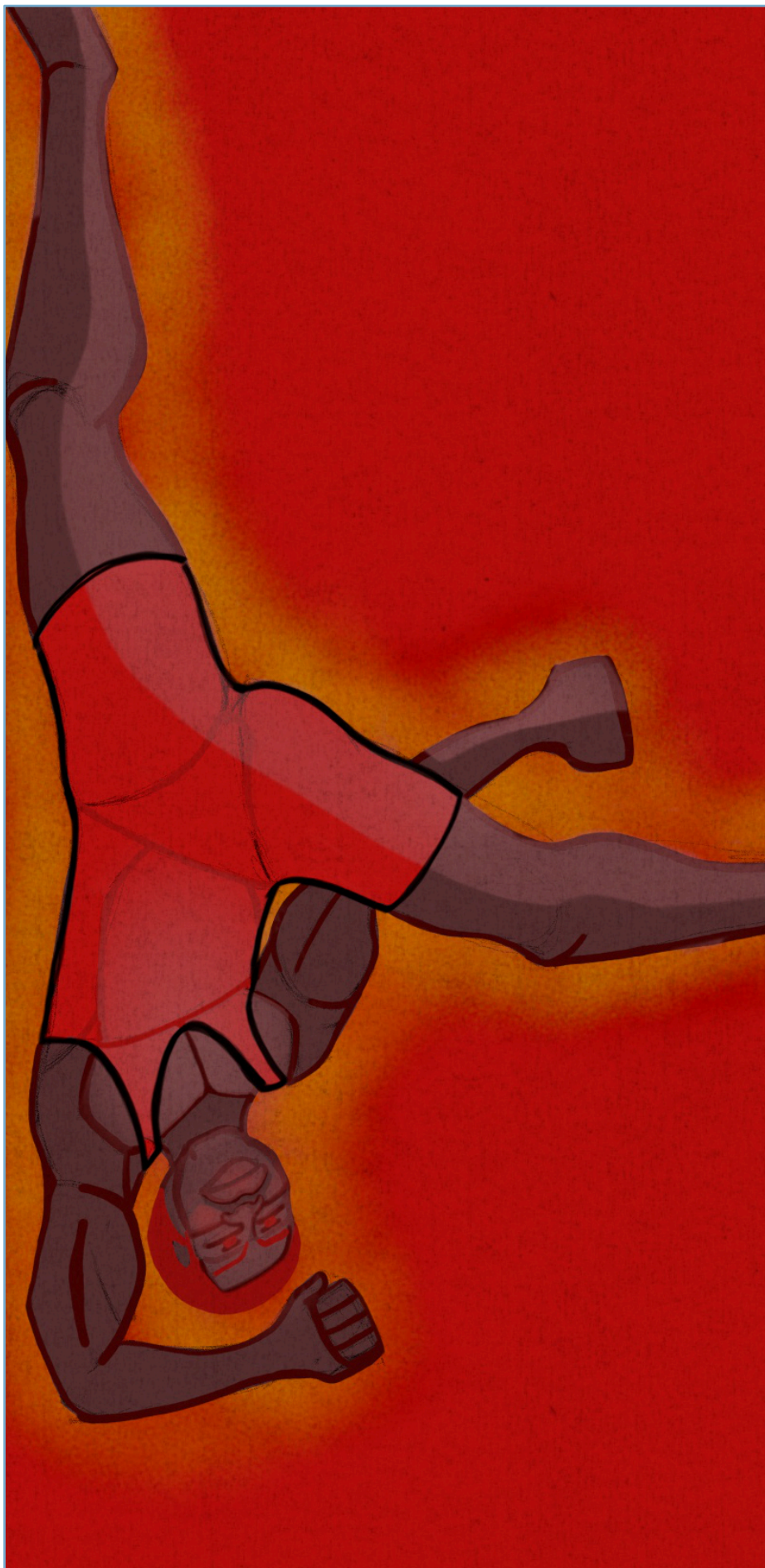
Gu sprang on Kokou, who also sprang at Gu, and they tumbled out of Gu’s workshop, onto the prairie that had been peaceful with a calm wind moving the tall grasses. Kokou’s head was covered in flames, just like his fists, and he traded blows with Gu that hurt them both, but neither wanted to be the first to relent. Some gathered to watch, some were trampled in the chaos, and the battle continued for many risings of the day source of the Disc.

It seemed the two would fight forever until the Great Serpent appeared. The kin of Great Serpents exist on every Disc of the Fonlands and they are mostly reclusive, like the inkanyamba who swim the rainbow that encircles the Disc of Xêvioso, Grootslang in the caves of the Disc of Sakpata, Damballa in his serpent form on the Disc of Jo, the great water serpent Adumu of the Disc of Agbe, Indombe of the Disc of Gu, the ninki nanka who inhabit the swamps in the overlap between the Discs of Agbe and Agê and the ninki nanka of the volcanoes in the overlap between the Discs of Sakpata and Gu, and Aido Hwedo, the serpent upon which the Discs of the Fonlands sit.

The Great Serpents are powerful wielders of arcana who speak the language of the trees and have their own language that is almost as ancient. There are spells unique to the language of the Great Serpents.

Senghor landed in the prairie that was very disturbed by that point. The grasses that remained were in patches, scattered around dirt and rocks, and Senghor coiled his body in the dirt as a ball of dust raged a few feet away.

“What are you doing!?”



Senghor yelled and his voice was distinct; both Gu and Kokou recognized it and stopped instantly, the clouds of dust settling around them for the first time in many days. They both breathed heavily, both bruised and broken in places, both staring at Senghor.

"Where is my armor, armorer!" Senghor yelled. He had large red wings attached to his body below his long neck, with gray and red scales all over his back, and four short legs, short relative to his large size, but he could fold them against his body and slither around like a snake.

"What are you talking about?" Gu yelled in response. He was angry, but curious, the fight with Kokou had completely consumed him and part of him worried that he had forgotten some important business with a Great Serpent, which he did not want to do.

"You promised me armor, armorer, you said twenty risings, and it has been twenty one. Where is the armor?!"

Because Senghor is the Great Serpent of the volcanic ninki nanka, he is a Fonlander to be feared and respected. He wields great arcana, specifically Chaos magic, but he is a wise wielder of the Red because of the influence of Passive magic in the overlap between the Discs of Sakpata and Gu. When he screamed at Gu, it rumbled the damaged prairie and sparks of fire like flame throwers occasionally exploded with his words.

"The armor for the runt ninki nanka with no scales," Gu said to himself and he let his head drop to his bare chest. Then he looked at Kokou with sad eyes. "I yield."

Kokou celebrated as much as he could with his damaged body and the onlookers applauded him. Those who paid close attention to the statistics of battles on the Disc noted that Kokou was now one up on Gu in their total confrontations, though some realized that Gu had only taken the loss because he had disappointed

a Great Serpent, which was a much worse mark on his reputation to many in the Fonlands.

Gu was boiling with rage, at Kokou, at every Fonlander who watched his walk of shame to Senghor, at Senghor himself for interrupting the fight, but even Gu had to show respect to the Great Serpent Senghor. Gu knelt on one knee at Senghor's feet. The Great Serpent was large enough to dwarf the Vodun.

"Accept my humble apologies, Great Senghor, I was challenged and my duties as Vodun required me to humble Kokou..."

"I trusted your word!" Senghor yelled and his breath was like a blazing oven. "I would see this runt survive to its adolescence and it will not without proper armor. You promised twenty risings, and my runt has earned its reward. Breaking your word causes me to break mine, and now I must offer the runt something else, something that may be too soon to bestow. This runt was to have your armor to prove its worthiness and if it survived to adolescence, it would become a Great Serpent, my heir in the volcanoes. But you have ruined everything! Know this, Vodun, you and I are no longer allies and I will not speak well of you to my kin."

"Senghor, I can make the armor before day's end..."

"You offer my heir armor that is thrown together in a hurry when it needs protection now more than ever? You are full of insults this day." Senghor had dipped his head low and he glared at Gu. "We part as enemies, Gu. You have my respect as the current Vodun of this Disc, but I would not mourn your death."

With that, Senghor departed, flapping his large wings that sent gusts of wind into Gu's bowed face and sweeping over the destroyed prairie. As Senghor took off, Za Mane of the Hira, a kin of Fonlanders who looked like buffaloes, trotted over to stand next to Gu who was still kneeling with his head down.

"Kokou is cheap," Za said, "he will take this win to break your tie and rub it in my face. When he recovers from his wounds, of course. He didn't have much left in him, I could tell, Senghor gave him that win, and I don't think it counts. We're both still tied with you."

"Even if you both have a tie with me, Kokou still has more victories than you," Gu said, never raising his head.

"But we are the only Fonlanders in a tie with you, the number is irrelevant. Even if I only bested you once, that is still impressive, though I have beaten you more than once."

"Three times, and if I remember correctly, you had questionable victories as well," Gu said to his own chest.

"You do not remember correctly!" Za roared and Gu looked up for the first time.

"I know you are tempted to challenge me because I am tired from the fight with Kokou and I'm angry with myself over Senghor, but I can assure you that I have ample energy to give you a fourth defeat and take away your tie. Now, leave me alone, I have to go make an amazing armor and hope that there is still time to repair my relationship with Senghor."

Za Mane was angry and he breathed fire, reared up on his hind legs to demonstrate his frustration at being dismissed so casually. He made laps around Gu who just hung his head again, and eventually Za left him alone.

When Gu was back in his workshop, he cast a spell on the space that he had learned from Xêvioso, a time loop spell that would allow him to work for as long as he needed, but time outside of the spell would move extremely slowly compared to time inside of it. After casting the spell, he noticed Sweetgrass was inside of the workshop.

"Why do you do that?!" Gu

yelled when he noticed her.

"Do what?" She walked to sit on top of a wooden work table. Sweetgrass was a master artisan in grass weaving and other arts, but she didn't do blacksmithing like Gu. They have been frequent collaborators since Sweetgrass first entered Gu's workshop to ask him to fashion handles for a basket she'd made. Gu found her annoying at first because even though she was very kind and pleasant, truly the embodiment of her name, she was not intimidated by his displays of anger. They had never fought, but Sweetgrass kept a tally of her victories against Gu; a victory to her was any interaction with him when he told her to leave him alone but they ended up talking for longer than Gu had meant then to. She eventually lost count of her victories.

"You sneak into my workshop and hide, presumably to startle me like you just did," Gu complained.

"I didn't sneak, I've been waiting here for you," Sweetgrass said defensively with her hands up. "And I wasn't hiding, you're just not very aware of your surroundings. I've come to your workshop while you were working and watched you working all day long with you never noticing me. You really need to pay more attention."

Gu kicked a metal table that was near him and it smashed into tools and projects in varying states of completion. If he had been paying attention, he would still have a friend in the Great Serpent.

"Something happened?" Sweetgrass asked gently. "Why'd you cast the time spell? Tell me all about it while we work, I brought grasses for drapes I was commissioned to make and need you to make a rod for."

Gu pretended that he was just going about his business, like he hadn't heard Sweetgrass, who was already working on her weaving. He set to work to complete the armor for the runt ninki nanka, and eventually he told Sweetgrass all about the fight

with Kokou, the deadline he had missed for Senghor, and the insolence of Za Mane. She mostly listened and chimed in to laugh or be angry with him. She told him about her disagreement with the Onini pythons who were normally her best customers for tall baskets, but their current leader was trying to stiff him out of her compensation, which Gu vowed to see to personally.

"You shouldn't worry about Senghor," Sweetgrass said. "The Great Serpents are...great, but they hardly interact with other Fonlanders. Don't get me wrong, it would be best to have Senghor as a friend, but I can't imagine you'll really ever need to call on him for anything. And if you do, enough time will have passed that he will have forgotten this."

"He was trying to anoint an heir and I ruined that," Gu said with anger at himself. "He won't forgive that easily or quickly. But hopefully you're right that it won't matter. I know that this armor is too late, but I must complete it and deliver it nonetheless."

"Because you are a Vodun of honor, even if you let stupid things derail you. You should really get your temper under control, you only make yourself susceptible to less powerful Fonlanders who are excellent schemers. You're lucky that I'm not a schemer whispering poison into your ear."

"How do I know you're not?" Gu laughed and looked up at her from his work for a moment.

"Even the Vodun of war needs someone to talk to," Sweetgrass said sincerely, "and it is my great honor to be that someone for you. You have taught me a lot about making things and I'm grateful to you for improving my skills. And you've taught me that I am more than I give myself credit for. I am a master artisan because of you. So we use one another."

"I don't need anyone to talk to," Gu said defiantly, but Sweetgrass could tell that he didn't really mean

it.

"Can you kill the Onini leader or did you intend to solve the issue another way?" Sweetgrass asked after a moment they worked with the sounds of their work filling the space.

"I'm always surprised by your viciousness, but then I remember that you are a child of chaos like everything else of the Disc. I will not kill them but we can make sure that they are humiliated to lose their title, maybe even be shunned. I am not above killing, of course, but I do not dispense death outside of war and I do not war with your enemy, I am only doing a favor to one who has consistently shown me kindness."

"Understood," Sweetgrass said with a nod. "It's not even about the payment, I don't need the food they trade, it's not that good anyway, but the way the leader rebuffed me was pure disrespect. He doesn't deserve his position, he is not a good model for any warrior."

"We will humble him together," Gu said and he smiled at Sweetgrass who looked up from her work to smile at him.

They worked for a long time until the armor was done, and they said goodbye after Gu fashioned the rod for the drapes Sweetgrass had made.

"I will meet you at the Crimson Savanna in five risings," Gu said. "Be well until then."

"Are you nervous?" Sweetgrass asks Gu. She is with him in the Smiting Chamber and they watch Jo on a scrying portal as she engages their enemy. The two sit on the high ledge that overlooks the heptagon where Sakpata and his team are working in the mists.

"She seems to have the situation well in hand," Gu says with confidence. "She's doing much better than that wizard. He should train more instead of changing costumes."

"I heard he held that thing still for many risings," Sweetgrass protests.

"Cheap wizard tricks, I used to do it in the workshop all the time," Gu says.

"Do you think we are prepared to resist this? I've never seen the Fonlands like this before, everything closed off, Fonlanders lining up in ranks like soldiers. It all feels so serious."

"It is serious and I am nervous," Gu admits but he doesn't look at Sweetgrass. He stares at Jo on the scrying portal. "This whole thing that we're experiencing is just one part of it. Sakpata down there has been to thirty-three different realms that the enemy has taken, the others are in the enemy's home. This is as large as a web on Legba's libraries. Winning here is just a battle in a sprawling war and we cannot lose on any front or the enemy will overwhelm us. We are not outmatched, but our enemy is adaptable so we have to be unpredictable. The moment we are found out, we lose the game."

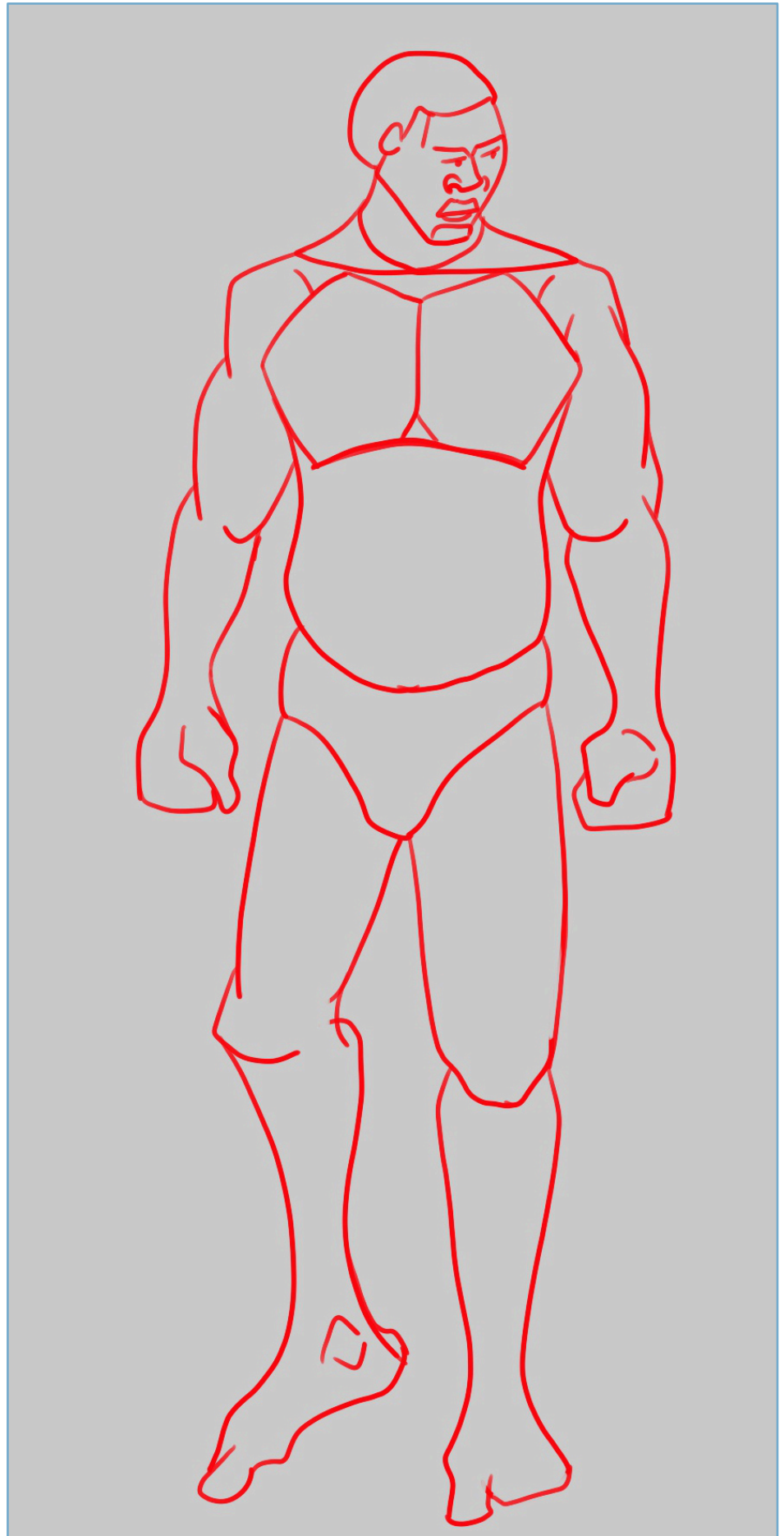
"But you can't lose, can you?" Sweetgrass asks with concern that she has trouble hiding. "You're the Vodun of war, nothing can beat you at war, not even this."

"I am a superior strategist, but I have never faced an enemy like this one. I won't lie to you, Sweetgrass, no one knows how all of this will end, not even the diviners because this enemy is so unique and unexpected. But that means there's hope to survive it, and all we need is hope. Hope and the awesome powers that we have collected from across the multiversal structure."

Sweetgrass puts her head on Gu's shoulder.

"I have hope," she says.

* * *



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