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**A SMART REASONS TO GIVE YOUR SUPPORT.
SCHEDULED FOR 2023**



Earning the right of passage into Clover Street is the tip of the iceberg. To earn the privilege to meet the Wizard, Darin must go through a series of tests to meet the demand of the ionospheric war Clover Street is waging against earth. The most important and deadliest of such tests is voyaging the valley of Death Wire Roses.





The lethargy to an act is perilous not in the act but in the offspring penitent in the reaction to the act. While catastrophe owns the imagination for life, for energy, tragedies are lethargic.

When Darin Dale went from being the apple of his parent's eyes to being an orphan in a moment of perilous car accident, he felt his life was a dream within a dream. When he became a member of the disreputably run orphanage in Gauley, he was inconsolable.

Making friends he wasn't sure he could trust was of little consideration. But Carrie Lewis, the orphaned girl who sometimes came in for the horrible food at the orphanage whenever she got caught stealing bread in the open market felt she could make him a friend to survive the street with. She wasn't going to give up easily, and life was harsher without the streets. Nobody was willing to adopt a kid his age. His life seemed laid out for

suffering, misery and loneliness. Soon, he found solace in the new offer of friendship, alongside a solemn pact to survive the harsh streets together against the odds.

They lived however they could, as freely as they could. They stole whatever they could, however much they could. They ate at the orphanage less frequently as Carrie's skills for stealing became better. Soon, he met new friends neither he nor Carrie could trust. They were necessary accomplices. Time went by swiftly. He and Carrie were hardly introduced to any real danger.

But the night after Christmas was different. People carried “goods” as Carrie chose to call it. She was determined they should get some of those “goods.” They deserved them as any other child during the seasons. It was time for Darin’s training to begin. He couldn't be doing all the lookouts and distractions forever. It was time for him to grow up to be the street thief he was destined to be. Street skills, she reasoned

with him, were inevitable for street life. He had to train.

As most nights on the streets of Gauley, the night, cloudy and moist could hardly wait for some trouble. They barely waited.

Carrie could smell the mark a mile away. The gentleman walked up Alley Street drunk, wobbly on his feet, holding a bottle of alcohol. While pretending to dumpster dive where they had dumpster dived earlier, “That's a good easy catch I got for you there, that drunken fellow,” Carrie whispered to Darin. “We should do it before gully-guts beats us to his money.”

But Darin was very much weak in the knees again. Carrie picked him up by the collar and threw him away from the dumpster in the corner towards the drunk man. “Do it before someone gets here and catch us.”

Darin stood up from the indignity of his lack of skills slowly, stepped out of the

corner and walked cautiously towards the drunk man.

The man stopped in the middle of the road as he saw Darin, squinting, trying to decide whether the body in front of him was that of a boy or a dog. Left to right, right to left he moved, unsteadily, yet, unable to remain calm.

Darin came to a stop with an overwhelming sensation of guilt at the thought of a crime he was yet to commit.

"Hey, soft-boy, how difficult can this fool be?" he heard Carrie call behind him. "It's drunk man or back to the orphanage to eat more crap!"

Darin quickly decided as he had done often that he had to be a thief. He was no longer a boy and like Carrie, must learn to fend for himself. The parents who taught him not to be a liar and a thief abandoned him for death. Whoever said it was a good idea for drunk men to walk home by themselves?

On the streets of Gauley on a night unkindly fairies carried "goods"?

“Mister,” Darin called.

The drunk man remained in the unstable yet unyielding position, staring at Darin.

“Mister,” Darin called.

“Where’s your mother?” the man asked.

“Do it!” Darin heard Carrie encourage.

Darin was unmoving, scared and undecided. What if the man fought back despite being drunk? What if the man had a gun?

Then, behind him he heard it, a disappointment and escape all the same, the voice of Hooligan T, Hoot, in short. Chute, Carrie often called him behind his back, joking he should have been thrown down the chute as soon as he was born.

Darin hated and feared everything about the devilishly mannered Hoot who had

been orphaned on his birthday and would relentlessly joke that every day in the orphanage was his birthday. He believed he had some innate right to whatever he wanted and could criminally obtain. He feared it disturbingly that his future may look like Hoot's, feared it depressingly that his hopelessness in the moment could take him to a derelict looking inescapable future like Hoot's.

“If it’s not the Rickety Little Cat trying to storm a drunk...” Hoot said as he came to a stop behind the drunk man, having followed the open target as well, ignoring Darin's presence as the predator.

"You've got to be freaking kidding me! Stealing my marks again Hoot?" Carrie yelled as she stepped away from the dumpster.

Hoot shrugged. "It's not stealing if you get to it first. Learned a few little girl?"

“Should I finish it?” Raphael, one of his two thug companions asked as he approached.

Hoot spoke harshly. “Are you asking?”

“Run!” Darin shouted at the drunk man.

Hoot laughed. "Oh little girl, why would you go out and get yourself a good little boy in a world of strong men?" He reached for Darin, grabbing him by the arm.

Carrie stepped away from the corner into full view as Darin began to struggle against Hoot and walked towards the crime scene. “Hoot we agreed...”

Hoot pulled Carrie backward with his other hand as she got near him.

Carrie struggled against him.

“Calm down little witch,” Hoot said. “We agreed that I will protect you, that you will pay me every week. I never made any such agreement with Rickety Little Cat.”

They watched as the two thug companions for Hoot pushed the drunk man down, beating him while he cried for help. They robbed him of his wallet and liquor.

Hoot released Darin and Carrie. Holding them was uneventful as they could hardly help the man they intended to rob.

They were left to console the unfortunate man, Carley snapping away at Darin. “You’re such a failure right now. You should have done him the favor and robbed him. Now he’s robbed and beaten.”

They left him by the Alley Street roadside to sleep off his drunken helplessness and had walked a few feet before Carley made another calculated pawn.

“Okay, we run the Nun plot...I’ll be the Nun.”

Darin frowned, figuring being the nun might be the easier of the pawn. “Why

can't I be the Nun? They're always covered. Nobody the wiser."

Carrie shrugged. "Well, because you have to be a woman now, Duh!"

"But the position is a ploy, a pretend benefit tale made on behalf of our crime," Darin argued.

Carrie nodded. "Absolutely yes. And you're the thief in the making. I must play the ploy."

Darin was reluctant to mind the plot. "But isn't the play higher than the ploy? Which is higher Carrie; the play or the ploy?"

"They're both plays," Carrie replied.

"But which is the ploy?" Darin asked, studying Carrie. "If they're both plays, aren't they both ploys?"

Carrie yelled at Darin. "You play first. You're starving, you ask, you beg, whatever. I'm your sister. We've gone three

days without food. I believe God has plans for us, we can fast for three days and the lord will bless us eventually. It's better than straight up mugging. Can't be difficult much, like the drunk."

"The one who plays first is the ploy," Darin commented.

Carrie almost gave up then but reconsidered the potential in Darin. "I don't care what they are Darin. We're doing it! And you're doing your training. We have to survive the mean streets of Gauley. And its best we both make sure we do together. We do it!"



Glory may be cheap, without distinction, showing up in wayward ways as

unpredictable aftereffects in new things,
new occasions and new times.

The glory to Wayward Square was in the display of its elite automobiles, the brightly colored cars with faster and faster horsepower without any horse in sight. When the blue Double Phantom XYZDPX 850 of wooden and metallic alloy body pulled close to them, it was just another ordinary day in a phantom paradise the orphans could take for all its phantom worth. They hated Gauley for the hard life they endured, but it was their home.

While the automobile dropped an expensively dressed woman off in front of the Opera House, Carrie pushed Darin forward. “Better get it this time!”

Trembling but determined to make the best of his fate, Darin stepped out and rushed after the woman as she rushed to get up the stairs of the Opera House. Hanging on to her clothing, “Help me Madam, I’m

hungry, ” he cried in a voice hardly recognizable as his.

Startled, the woman struggled to get Darin off her. “What are you doing? What are you doing?”

Gathering up courage larger than and against the dictates of the current crime plot in the moment, Darin reached for her purse.

Instinctively, before the woman could cry thief, Carrie was beside her. “Madam,” she called. “I’m so sorry. This is my brother. He’s an orphan. He can be wayward sometimes.”

Agitated, without any intent to hide it, “He was trying to steal my purse! ” she exclaimed.

“I’m sorry,” Carrie replied, pulling Darin away from the stranger. “We’re both orphans and we’re hungry. I’m a nun in training and I told him the lord need not let

us beg. He's just trying to beg for some money for food."

"Isn't that what the orphanage is for?" the woman asked, turned around and walked away alongside their expectation for empathy, pity, or charity.

Darin turned to engage Carrie's eyes, expecting some display of anger and disappointment.

But Carrie was smiling. "You're graduating your training with that purse grab. I'm so proud of you. We'll let this one go easily. It's more trouble than it's worth."

"Not for them," he replied as he saw Hoot, Raj and Rapheal rushing up the stairs of the Opera House.

"Another failed job?" Hoot commented as he passed.

Carrie shook her head, alarmed at another seeming deliberate coincidence.

“Following us, baiting with us, are you Hoot?”

Hoot shrugged. "Why make me work so hard when you are quite good at scanning for the right victims? My boys are not so smart at that.”

Carrie laughed, sarcastically. "You must be kidding. Your boys aren't smart at all."

Hoot gave no response as they watched Raphael and Raj get to the woman. Both pulled the woman backward harshly and snatched her purse.

"Help, help, somebody help me," the woman yelled.

Raj pushed her, intentionally falling her down the steps to shut her up .

“Help! Thieves! Thieves!” the woman screamed as she tumbled down the glamorous steps of the opera house.

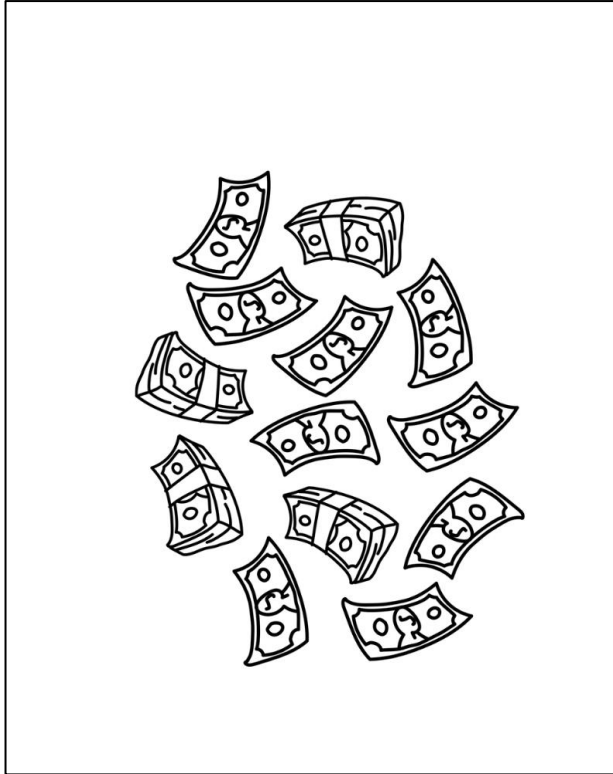
Carrie tugged at Darin's arms. "That's our call to run."

Darin was a little hesitant, wishing to witness the inevitable end of the encounter between the woman and Hoot's crew.

The woman was eventually silenced by her injuries, and as they watched her body roll down the large public stairway one angular disproportionality after another, "Not asking anymore," Carrie said, tugging at Darin forcefully.

Darin complied as the growing crowd who had mostly ignored the woman's cries, now rushed towards the boys with echoes of "Thieves! Thieves!"

They hurried from the scene with reasonable distance away from it, having earned nothing but trouble and fearing for their lives.



"A public fall system or is it fail system,"
Darin commented.

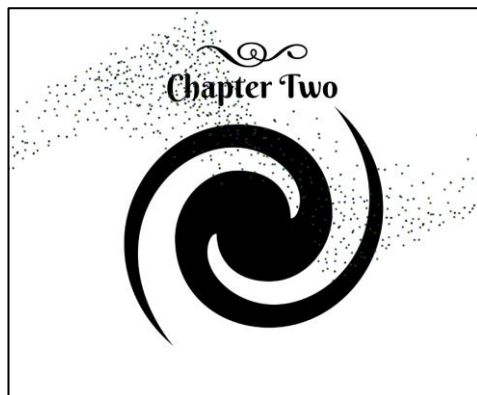
Carrie nodded. "It didnt work out well
either way."

They soon heard the sound of running feet before Hoot, the muscled teenager, pulled ahead.

Raphael had gotten away with the stolen purse worth nothing more than the ticket to the Opera and some candy bars. Raj had fallen and banged his head on the lower concrete floors. Disoriented and confused, the mob got to him faster than he could run. His screams as he was being beaten despite his injuries, could be heard as the others fled.

Carrie concluded the incident. "That drunk had better fun than he did. He's gonna be gone a long time. Hoot will replace him in no time."





The Alpenhorn knows pasture as sound knows air, an expression with the knowledge of intimation, insinuation, a percolating art undiluted, unchained and unchanging to the medium. It's home to the poorest in society, those who are resigned

to life as occupants, as victims of the savage class system governing them. They are also resigned to being punished for their derelict states in life.

They are silently reserved to their states, quietly observed for it. Part of the resignation was their need to obey larger than life commands meant to keep them in their place. Their curtain call late at night endured the general fact they were not to roam the streets at night or death may be the last call they hear. Their death was one less thing to worry about, some event nobody hardly cares about.

They fight their fates, they fight the street, they fight the laws meant to keep them down. They fight reality. They fight the myths. And all operate to restrain them through sound, the sound of the curtain call ensuring their death or danger mean little to nothing. And sound, the traveler, must maintain its own measure of worth within

air, as with it, it has none. Those who disobey run the risks.

Yet life, like a blow of the wind, is a measure of happenings. And the worst things happen in some places more than others. The derelicts live in the quiet desolation of the “Derelict District,” DD, in Alpenhorn, in the cluster of abandoned buildings known to those who care to know. And clustered they were, in front of the vastness of the Alphapecia forests which provided a different mayhem of it's own.

On one side of DD was the great economic division that kept them out of comfort, ensured they stay away from it. On the other was Alphapecia where it is rumored people go to die by some unknown mythical hands. They largely stayed away from the privileged areas at night and they were left mostly to their doings with the exception of the fact that the Gauley authorities could come whenever they

wanted. And they usually did if they want to catch a criminal or simply pin a crime on a derelict.

Darin wasn't able to understand it. "It's unlive-able, unkind, unkindly, criminal, unfriendly, unsalvageable, irreparable, and incorrigible. The list can go on forever. Why can't we just live at the orphanage, and still do some of our crimes? It's safer and more secure."

Carrie scoffed the suggestion. "If I have to endure their rules and regulations again, I will do something unforgiveable. Or those stupid rules will kill me."

They lived in DD with Timothy Nate, a disgraced professor and scientist improverished by his love of pleasures over the harsh responsibilities of ensuring knowledge. He was not thrown into abject lack over it, as his intelligence and tenure sustained him for too long, but his

carelessness cost him everything except his pleasures.

He was willing to live below measure as long as his intellect was intact. He had taught Darin things the boy never thought he would know, opening his mind to possibilities his parents could not have afforded. And by the nature of his history, he also knew things most, if not none in DD knew.

He and Carrie called him Uncle Nate, to fool others in DD they were more secure than they were. But a die-hard alcoholic was hardly some hard core security. Neither was the orphanage. He always wondered what Carrie had over Nate to put him into compliance however much he seemed willing.

Yet he couldn't deceive himself. Neither could Carrie. DD wasn't a home. They were derelicts, homeless by nature and that wasn't a misnomer. It was a place to lay

their heads at night. Come the sway of the authorities appearing, and they were off like scattered gatherings of sands in the wind to hide in some definite cemetery or purgatory between some horrible indefinite worlds. Darin's fear was in being in DD for the rest of his life. Carrie's was that if she hadn't escaped DD by the time she was twenty five, she will do something absolutely unforgiveable.

There was the silent understanding in Alpenhorn that space was to be respected. It was such that the cheapest element was the most luxurious. There was plenty of space. With the slow pollution and congestion of the air around them, it seemed they breathe in a much different air than the rich people on the other side of town. There was little hope to speak of.

Late the next evening, Darin and Carrie entered the hallway by the building bearing the bold dark mark that pronounced they were under the space designated for Hoot.

There, he found an envelope marked “Darin Dale,” tucked by the eastern corner.

It was oddly situated, oddly placed and it had his name on it. Was it a frame? Was it some definite coincidence placed at some indefinite glorious corner for a meager indefinite mark like him? Could it be some silent armory, a chemical capable of deforming him for eternity, defaming his much deficient youth into a different form of poverty. Fear was rampant in Alpenhorn, so was the expectation of harm or death.

He heard the metallic sounds of Hoots door opening, realizing Carrie's intent wasn't merely a walk-through. She hadn't noticed the strangeness by the corner, and his reservation at the possibility of being noticed was quickly lost. He picked up the strangely placed yet familiar letter and began to read.

It read like a riddle folded into a message.

To find a way to another world where orphans live without troubles, bubbles, or toggles, on Clever Street there is a hole beyond a pit, a line that runs across, and a post that stands it's height. Never cross the line to turn your back to the post.

Carrie and Hoot exchanged harsh words and all was the same in the background in DD. The strange end was in his corner. What he read felt like a grievous exposition to a ridiculous joke more than a mind juggling puzzle. Was someone trying to make him the butt of a joke? Was Nate giving him a surprise test for those lessons he knew he would one day need?

He was soon lost in some strange wonderment quite a juxtaposition to his current conditioning as he allowed himself to have alternatives to his current implications. Was there some special way out for him? For Carrie? Wasn't that special place where orphan boys were rumored to go to die called Clover street? Could it

possibly be misnamed? Could it be Clever street? While lost to his dreams of escape and restoration into some unknown world, there was a sudden almost deafening silence. And he heard the clanging sounds of the doors of Hoot's self-assigned architectural structure close.

"Darin!" he heard Carrie call behind him, invoking an earnest sensation of fear. Was Hoot doing what he thought was ever impossible, dragging Carrie in to harm her? He tucked the letter into his pocket quickly and spun around. Like some sharp shooter's sense of acumen, red dots marked the spot. And he was the spot.

His anxiety was acute and instant, filling his every nerve ending with dread, invoking the sense he could lose his breath on his volition with a second's momentary sensation, if it wasn't taken from him faster. His recognition of the Wizion was instant.

It was gigantic, filling space with the utmost alter-realistic command. "They pick your worst fears and they make you experience it," Nate had told him.

He hated snakes, held phobias of them coiling themselves around him and strangling him to death or fanging him with toxins that could further deform or kill him. His deformity was slight with his broken knee, leaving him scared and sensitive from the accident that took his parents.

Mainly ionic in nature, Wizions were essential clamorings for life, that is, appearances of mass that are larger than life. They occupy space with little realistic material mass integrity, but increasing overwhelming appearance of reality. Triviality of material mass aside, Wizion's presence can always be felt.

This snake was larger than life, much like the unpayable debt his parents left behind. They had parties like their last day was

indefinitely their last day on earth. And all he wanted to do in the moment was close his eyes and wish it all away, the past and the moment. The relativity of causality between the two was inevitable. His parent's deaths, he was certain of it, put him in the current condition.

Sensing his instincts while psychologically restraining her larger than life giant-insect Wizion from a reasonable distance, Carrie consoled him. "Darin! Do not close your eyes! It will penetrate your thoughts faster. And do not think! It would formulate your conceptions quicker. Trust me, it'll pass if you don't allow it to kill you."

But Darin couldn't help his thoughts as Nate's lessons of survival and strength came rushing back to him. Despite drunk-teaching his lessons, Nate was good with the expression of his thoughts, opinions and ideas. He had surmised the Wizations were not the handiwork of some unknown Wizard but rather an experimental

exploration of ionic potentiality imposed upon the people of Alpenhorn so the science elite in Gauley never have to pay their experimental subjects.

Nate had warned of his predicament if he ever experienced the Wizions. "If you are caught outside when they manifest, all corners become dark, you can't see much of anything except the ionic environment disrupting the space of their manifest. The people inside will know these as signs the Wizions will wage war against us one day and are merely using us to practice at the moment. Nobody will come out to help. You are your own salvation."

He had also told the history unlike any other person could in Alpenhorn.

Once upon some unknown time, or no time at all, as Nate had to scrape the reasonable aspects of the unreasonable fable together to make it tellable, there was a Wizard who was once considered the greatest scientist

on earth. He was of great fame and respect until he made one fateful and horrible mistake before being disgraced and abandoned. Cultivating a toxic and rebellious heart, he decided to go into exile.

He pledged revenge on all those who dared define him by his shortcomings over his strength. And his strengths were plenty. He had designed the Wizations with great malice to menace his enemies. Anyone, especially the vulnerable lots of DD, the fable told, was collateral damage.

The elite streets of Gauley were supposed to bear the brunt of this fabled anger eventually but thus far had managed to protect themselves. The Wizations, ions believed manipulated only by the Wizard, can interact with wires especially where there is electricity in Gauley. But while affected, the elite had hardly been infected.

The main electric source hadn't been able to sustain them. An elaborated

architectural scheme had been sequenced as consequent backups to the main power-outage and every consequent backup was automated into process for every outage to manage segmented seconds of outages.

The process was repeated until the Wizions were time-depleted. Time limited, the ionic invasion had never managed to outperform the smaller generators. The big generators always go out. The small generators, being artificially sequenced, were also running out of quantum time. To further prevent monetary and artificial architecture wasted where there was little time and money efficiency and little tact, they were simply buying time where it must eventually run out against them.

This was hardly telling that it needed not be told that the Wizion would one day penetrate the sequential barrier. The troubling question on Nate's mind was how soon such was possible.

The harshness in the reality of the real effects of the Wizions can only be felt in DD with the frequent outages, the unpredictability of appearances, health risking fears, accidents, psychological ills, self loathing and such that ensure the morbid quality of life they sustain is further worsened.

Carrie, the only help he could afford at the moment, still minding her own Wizion, shouted words of encouragement. "Don't let me down Darin! Remember everything Nate taught you. He taught you a lot. They are there but limited by time and the deterministic framework that came with them. They'll decay."

Darin struggled not to close his eyes. He could barely restrain the disturbing thoughts of his less than ordinary way of life. But his unstable stare can only hold a while. He found himself staring into a pair of darkly embedded eyes. Some abyss of

ionic composition, binary compilation or something worse?

The fear in him grew, some abyss awaiting it's awakening, like whiskers brushing for life and expression, concealed, yet, out, vulnerable and in the open. And while he could no longer detach his eyes from the monster it seemed he was slowly becoming, he could hardly contain his urges. And the next urge consumed him overwhelmingly.

Sensing the possibility of the brewing urges, Carrie urged against it. "Dont you dare! Don't you dare run like a chicken! You'll lose your coordination, fall down and break your head in two! Don't you dare Darin!"

And for a few seconds Darin sustained the glare of the embedded abyss, his eyes against the biggest of eyes, every ion involved with the Wizion becoming eyes,

all glaring at him, holding his eyes with intense sense of intimidation.

His sense of strength was shaky holding his resolve against the overwhelming sensation of void bringing back void, emptying his fall without escape velocity possible. The seemingly endless sea of eyes was breaking him down, the jarring landscape of void was becoming him.

But his resolve against the resolve of the Wizion was highly mismatched as the resolve of the abyss that covered him can only be sustained by his abyss. With a hiss it brought down it's giant head.

There was the quickening of Darin's breath as if his heart will pump out of his chest. He gasped for air where there was plenty. "I heard the hiss," he told Carrie solemnly.

"That too will decay, don't be a coward now," Carrie replied.

But the wetness was building in his loin, wating for some bodily escape against his fears. Something was going to embarrass or kill him and he wasn't sure which was which until the Wizion extended it's fangs downward.

The wetness could hardly be contained before he fled, taking his chances with a quick decision.

"Darin!" Carrie called behind him as he dashed against the corner on full sprint.

He silently wished she would follow him. "Alphapecia!" he shouted without looking back as the WIZion towered over him.

"Why?" she asked behind him.

"There are no wires there," he replied with the hope Carrie would follow his instinct against her current instincts.



Like some sudden induction of a brain fog, he felt the rush of the forest with more of a sense of solace than the dread he had been fed to believe in, the dread he expected. It was a bitter-sweet taste of suspended relief. It was nevertheless relief. The Wizion was nowhere in sight.

And for the first time since he was orphaned, he realized the night had accumulated fog. The forestry around him was crowded, neglected from the great dread associated with it. Standing there shrouded by fog and fig, separated from the rest of Gauley, he wondered if his Wizion event had been a deliberate attempt at getting him into the place he was in at the moment. Was the unwired flight from the Wizons a test of his intellect? Was Nate testing him and Carrie merely pretending not to be in on the trick?

Darin understood entry into Alphapecia simply as an alternate world where Orphans die and are never seen again. It

was rumored to be enroute to Clover Street. Yet, the note addressed to him talked of some place where orphans have better lives on Clever Street.

He trekked forward a while, finding nothing of implication or indication towards a lead on Clever Street. He was lost again, clueless until he remembered one of the clues in the note he had been given.

...on Clever Street there is a hole beyond a pit

Where was he to look for a pit to get to some hole? Wherever was a street to be found in Alphapecia? Where was Clever Street?

"Darin," he heard Carrie call behind him and spun around to watch her make her way towards him.

"You stood by me," he said excitedly, emotionally.

She held his eyes and smiled. "I promised I will do just that when I pulled you out of the damned orphanage. I always keep my promise."

He pulled the note from his pocket and gave it to her to read.

And when she was finished, she held an astonished expression as she stared straight ahead towards the area behind him.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

She pointed towards the area behind him. "That's Clever Street."

In line with foliage of strangeness and hysteria, it was shrouded in mystery folded into webs of spiders, dusts and oddity- a street sign named "Clever". It seemed a part of the whole, once some part of Gauley before it was largely forested. A glorious part or some part of Alpenhorn?

The letters "E, V, E" were discernable from the street sign but with the expert eye like

Carrie's which could spot a theft mark a million miles away, the word "Clever" didn't have to be apparent to be readable.

There were webs, interwoven, convoluted, distributed unevenly, haphazardly, covering the foliage surrounding the sign-- a den of spiders!

Carrie clutched at Darin's arm as they approached the sign. "Are we sure about this? Everything here is creepy."

Darin held his hand over hers, calming her nerves briefly. "You called it Carrie, is this Clever Street or not?"

She hesitated briefly as they stood and stared at the covered street sign. "We have to be sure."

Darin exhaled. "Someone is going to have to go in there and check to be sure."

Carrie turned to hold Darin's eyes, raising her eyebrows.

He hesitated briefly, holding her eyes unwaveringly. "I'm going to have to go in there and make sure we have the correct street."

She waited as he burrowed into the den of spiders which could also be home to snakes, scorpions and toxic plants, wishing the trip was faster than it was. When he finally came out, he was covered in cobwebs and dead insects.

"Is it Clever?" she asked.

He ignored her question as she stared at the kcridicule that was him compared to the boy that entered the den. She soon helped get the debris off him before he gave her an answer. "It's Clever no doubt."

He stared down the road with no clear pathway, covered in leaves, shrubs and twigs. How was he to find a pit?

He walked across the road and began to dig his feet into the ground around him as he moved.

"What are you doing?" Carrie asked.

He stopped briefly and held her eyes. "On Clever street, there is a hole beyond a pit. Are you gonna help me find the pit?"

She too, began to dig her feet into the ground alongside him. They did that for a reasonable unrestful while until Darin dug his feet into one he couldn't easily retrieve his leg from.

He felt the forward projection of his body, closed his eyes and lingered briefly on an uncaused edge, encased in it, floating briefly, as if something had pushed him and his world into another which didn't seem like the last world he was consciously in. And he, a suspended stranger in it, resolved to restraining himself against a fall dependent on a push against it.

But the force for some alternate world was overwhelming pushing him into a much different forested scenery as he opened his eyes, and found himself staggering backward against a leveled ground, looked back and couldn't find the pit he arrived with. Had he travelled through a hole?

"Darin!" he heard Carrie call but could not see her anywhere in the vicinity nor could he see the familiar surrounding he left her in. Was it magic or the dimensionally induced whimsical abilities of science?

"Carrie, put your leg in the pit," he yelled.

"I'm doing it but nothing is happening," Carrie yelled back.

He was at a loss. How was he able to get through while Carrie couldn't?

He attempted to calm her nerves. "There must be a way because I came through it."

Carrie exhaled. "Yes Darin, but, you were also the only one invited."

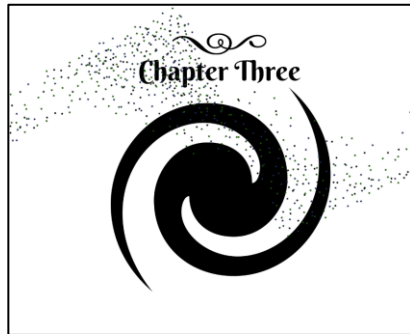
Darin closed his eyes, pained he couldn't have Carrie with him at the moment. He spoke in a soft calm tone. "Carrie, I need you to stay where you are. I promise I will come back to you no matter what, whether I find a way or not...just don't give up on me until you are sure I'm not coming back."

"Where are you going?" she asked anxiously.

"Nowhere really...just have to find answers," he replied.

He took a few steps back, studying the suspected area of entry, an interwoven spectacle of leaves, twigs and creeping stems. However did he get across? Some spectacular air suspension system or some special terms of natural green specifications?

He spun around in frustration, going round and round until he stopped to catch his breath. "How is anything here supposed to go anywhere better?"



“Now that’s how you start a contracting conversation.”

Dressed in a tuxedo, short goatee, and short curly hair, the voice he heard was that of a very short man. His walk towards him on the narrow path was unmistakably confident, like a cool breeze on a cold windy night. He had clear rounded glasses devoid of its elongated arms but hanging by strings, which ran from the bridge of his nose to the ear. And the main defective feature on him was that his nose seemed a little bit too long for his comfort; too long, in fact for Darin’s comfort, who saw it grow bigger and bigger as the man got closer to him.

A dwarf with the longest nose he had ever seen. Was he dreaming it all?

As the man came to a stop, he smiled. “Hi, my name is Stomp Herbert Rose. I am under the dutiful command of the great Wizard Henry Holy—”

But Darin was yet busy staring at his incredible nose. "Is it plastic surgery? A well done plastic custume, make-up of sorts? It doesn't look natural. But if it is, it is incredible!"

The man restrained himself from speaking.

Darin raised his eyebrow, studied the man before he spoke again. “A Wizard? Is this a trick? Am I dreaming?”

Herbert Rose was silent for a short while, studying the boy as well, before he spoke. “If you may tonight Master Darin Dale, I will like to show you how to get to Clover Street.”

Darin frowned. "Clover Street? I thought you said Clever Street? And why aren't you answering any of my questions? Mr....May I call you Rose?"

"You may call me Herbert Rose. Just Herbert Rose."

Darin exhaled. "Herbert Rose, are you going to answer any of my questions?"

Herbert Rose hesitated briefly. "In procession yes. Henry Holy is a Wizard. This is only a trick if you eventually find it able to deploy, demote or derail your wits. And no you are not dreaming. If you feel you are, you can pinch yourself several times and follow your tail in a spin."

Darin shrugged. "I already tried. That goes nowhere."

Herbert Rose shook his head. "No, Master Darin everything around here has some implication. Your spinning summoned my

reckoning of your presence here. So, it did achieve something."

Darin pinched his arm. "Ouch!" he exclaimed, feeling his pain more amplified than normal.

Herbert Rose smiled. "Do this several times and follow your tail in a spin."

Feeling the air around him a little too spooky, his consciousness unreserved against it, he shook his head. "I'll rather not."

"You must Master Darin or you may never get to Clover Street," Herbert Rose urged with a note of pity to his tone. "You have started the test and you must finish it. Clover Street makes no spells, but our procession matters."

Darin frowned. "Procession?"

Herbert Rose nodded. "Yes Master Darin, Procession, a process in which events and consequences must be observed in distinct rather than common variant ways for the laws in accordance in the universe to be observed. A common cold is a problem and not a smart solution for instance. In fact, it is not a solution at all for the commoner."

Darin deepened his frown. He felt a concentration of charges in his fingertips; the air was charged, cold and embittered. "Procession? Like ionization?"

Herbert Rose nodded. "Procession, like ionization potentials and ionization Master Darin. The one and the other are procedurally relative and must correspond accordingly."

Darin knew it instantly. Whatever Clover Street called procession was not just working by and for itself. There must be some sort of punishment for not finishing

the so called riddles. Herbert Rose had advertized it only too well.

He decided to make a spectacle of the procession while inevitably drawn to obeying it, pinched himself rather dramatically, and felt the trigger of pain run down his body. "Ouch!" His expression of pain was rather dramatic as well.

Herbert Rose had his eyes fixed on him, indicating he had to finish the pronounced ritual in procession.

He began to spin, around and around. The air stung like the aftermath of a whipping, reaching across inch by inch of his body, an uncomfortable steaming sensation. And it was while in this sordid spin of tail against tail that he discovered a nagging problem in the procession of his spin. He could not stop spinning. And as much as he wanted to stop because of the pain, he

could not stop spinning. He cried for Herbert Rose. “Herbert Rose!”

Herbert Rose's response did not calm him. “Just remember you’re not falling. You’re learning!”

“Herbert Rose!” he called again in a pained tone.

Herbert Rose stayed in the same position, poised, his attention most deflected. He could feel the seismic deregulation induced by Darin’s spins slowly growing in strength.

“Drive your leg into the soil, ” he heard Herbert Rose say.

But his moment of great disorientation needed certainty and he made him repeat the statement all the same. “What?”

“Drive your left leg into the soil," Herbert

Rose repeated, hesitated a few seconds before he instructed, "And clench your teeth!"

While Darin wondered which direction was left in a spin, he could not wonder which of his leg was left. He drove his left leg into the soil which caved against the force of the spin, meeting his leg with sensation of charges dissipating into the ground. And his clenched teeth helped his body overcome it.

He held Herbert Rose's eyes fully again, pained and clearly humbled.

Herbert Rose spoke sternly. "Pain gives birth to life Master Darin. With pleasure you must always suspect you may be experiencing the beginning of a dream, the end of a dream or some phasic point in it's procession. Are you dreaming Master Darin?"

Darin shook his head, feeling his every nerve ending unbelievably awakened. “No Herbert Rose. I’m not dreaming.”

"And procession matters," Herbert Rose stated.

Darin hesitated briefly. "And procession matters."

“We have to get you to Clover Street,” Herbert Rose announced.

Darin hesitated. “We find the straight line that runs across.”

Herbert Rose studied Darin briefly. “To find the line you must solve the riddle. You can just find the pole that stands its height instead.”

Darin exhaled, holding Herbert Rose’s eyes, thinking. “Take the coward’s way?”

“It’s a way,” Herbert Rose replied.

“It’s a coward’s way,” Darin replied.

Herbert Rose hesitated briefly. “I must warn you master Darin. Once we start—”

Darin nodded. “I know. I must follow procession.”

Herbert Rose nodded. “Yes, but with the line that runs across, the solutions are not in a place, they are in the words. The riddle is first and mainly in the words. The action is the way. The way of the riddle is wiser than the way of the pole. And the wiser way is intense.”

Darin hesitated briefly, thinking. “I’ll go the riddle way...but wait...there’s a girl.”

Herbert Rose shook his head. “Isn’t there always Master Darin? Isn’t there always?”

Darin was adamant. “No, this is different.”

Herbert Rose nodded sarcastically “No doubt it is, but you can always come back to a girl Master Darin. It’s now or never little one. It’s now or never.”

“It’s now,” Darin replied with renewed commitment. “But consequences be damned, she's been with me through hell. I'm not leaving without her.”

Herbert Rose exhaled as he held Darin's eyes thoughtfully. The boy seemed genuine. Such, he contemplated his need for explanation and the nature of such briefly before he spoke. “This may seem like some form of archetypical, even archaic sort of prejudicial stipulation but there is a very good reason girls are not allowed on Clover Street.”

Darin narrowed his eyes, twisted his mouth. “You don't say Herbert Rose? Please do tell me a few of those reasons. I'll

like to know."

He hesitated. "Girls are prone to depend on boys for this and that. They need boys to do most of the thinking for them. You do understand why they will be more of a liability than welcomed guests, don't you Master Darin?"

Darin shrugged. "I understand that is exactly archetypical if not even archaic."

Herbert Rose exhaled. "Okay Master Darin, if you insist. There are only very few spots for girls on Clover Street and it comes at a price. Boys and girls are never kept together. Which means you will not be seeing the girl as often as you like. Something may be decided on her stay. Always remember she is extra baggage. And for extra baggage you must always pay a price. Yours and hers."

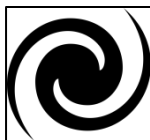
Darin narrowed his eyes, thinking. "Always?"

"Always."

Darin hesitated.

Herbert Rose held Darin's eyes earnestly. "Master Darin you have your deals and your deals have you. No matter what, you pay a price. If you decide to pay twice a price, it must be your choice. You decide and I bring the girl or let her be."

"I will not leave Gauley without her Herbert Rose.



It is such the case that if there is no processional standard for life, there can be no dignity for such. It had been understood Herbert Rose was to explain the process

without the presence of the girl.

Herbert Rose held Darin's eyes intently. "An orbital circuit must have its stratum in place, in space, for it has no ken of view without it and it may become feed to birds of prey."

Darin frowned. "What does that mean?"

"A small token of advice for you to consider on such occasions that such may be relevant."

Darin exhaled, unwilling to press the issue. "Okay."

Herbert Rose held Darin's eyes. "There is no straight path to Clover Street. There never was. There was no path to Clover Street until Henry Holy made it his home."

"A manufactured path?" Darin asked.

Herbert Rose shook his head. "A manufactured world."

Darin exhaled. "With goblets of fire, ogres, talking animals, talking ghosts..."

Herbert Rose shook his head. "Nothing like that Master Darin. Our world isn't possible without science."

Darin restrained his urges to speak his mind about his fears at the moment. "Tell me Herbert Rose, however can I solve this riddle that can get me to Clover Street so I may meet the great science Wizard Henry Holy?"

Herbert Rose took to a slight bow and smiled with relief. "Doing that will be such a pleasure as it is indeed what I am here for. It is a scientific journey and our approach must be mindful with due diligence."

Darin was unsure what he was agreeing to,

but he agreed. "It must be."

Herbert Rose softened his smile to acquire a more serious expression. "That it must. Sometimes life has no such thing as soft or hard palette. There just is survival not of the smartest or fittest but rather consequence of some confluence of coincidences. There are no such things as guarantees but there are possibilities. You will be making judgements based on possibilities, and not reality to get to Clover Street. You must always remember that Master Darin. To figure out where the scientific magical influence resides you must first find out what the natural reality should be for the very same thing or the very same process you are considering. Then you try the artificial version to find your way. True, is not the way. The opposite is."

Darin frowned. "Lies?"

Herbert Rose shook his head. "No, make-belief is. You already have the riddle. Just a few more things I can do to help you. You get three chances and three chances alone to solve the riddle. If you have any questions during this process, you get three summoning leeways and three alone. If I cannot answer your question, I will tell you so. If you use these chances up and the way from Clever Street to Clover Street is not found within these limits, then the journey is forfeited and there is a price to pay. In your case, because there are two people enroute on this journey, there will be two prices to pay."

Darin contemplated what paying these prices truly meant briefly before he decided he was in too deep, in, way over his head. Some unknown peril was an adventure compared to the horrors of having to learn to be a criminal orphan to survive. That thought truly scared him and Carrie was decided he had to learn. There

was also the horrific thought of the possibility of ending up like Hoot. "Nate says everything has a price," he replied simply.

Herbert Rose nodded in agreement. "Nate is correct. Never make a wager with a price you're not willing or able to pay. So, a word or two on how this so called magic actually works. While the medium and the means may be provisional, like gravity, electricity and electromagnetism, you have to believe in what you're doing to do what you are doing. Sometimes, like gravity, you don't have to believe and in that case, you are simply not doing anything. That's how scientific magic works."

Herbert Rose went beyond the expectation of his small height, picked Darin up, threw him in the air, caught him and placed him squarely on his feet in front of him.

Eyes wide, Darin wobbled slightly in the

effort to stand his balance. “What are you doing?”

Herbert Rose smiled. “Getting ready to help you ride a Treehopper.”

Darin frowned. “A Treehopper?”

“A travelling tree,” Herbert Rose replied.

“There are no travelling trees. Trees have no ability to travel,” Darin said.

“Never say never Master Darin,” Herbert Rose said. “Now is the time to learn the lessons about your travel well.”

Darin reconsidered the gravity of his words. "Never say never..." he contemplated before coming to a realization. "What kinds of Treehoppers are there Herbert Rose?"

Herbert Rose held a sharp developing glint

in his eye. "That's the boy of great expectations. Now listen carefully. There is the Cloghopper with which you must go down, way down. And there is the Clodhopper, with which you also go down, way down and with which you must bring up mass, animal mass, sufficient mass, reasonable mass to leverage the trip. You may ride and choose as you may. Whatever you may, down you may go or down you may go for up the Treehopper cannot go."

Darin deepened his frown. "But why not?"

"Because you never cross the straight line that goes across; you can never cross it," Herbert Rose replied.

Darin deepened his frown. "How do I travel if I can never cross?"

Herbert Rose hesitated briefly. "First, the tree is not down in opposition to up. It doesn't run down. It doesn't run up. It runs

across on a straight line. There is nothing easy about this straight line, however it may appear as if it is of natural procession. The tree cannot be up and you need a force greater than yours for you to be up to sustaining it up. It can not be down and yet be drivable. There is no magic to the power of Henry Holy except that which is taken from nature. You must travel the Treehopper by going against a natural source. You must obtain procession by using the sun's gravity to travel. You can only travel below it with a choice of the Cloghopper or the Clodhopper."

Darin mumbled his words as if he were a toddler fighting for understanding. "Down the Cloghopper goes and down the Clodhopper goes. And with procession they both go."

"Do you know what happens if you go above it without the set conditions, against the rules of nature without set

preconditions?" Herbert Rose asked.

Darin studied the seriousness on Herbert Rose. "What?"

"It comes apart, bodies, parts, heads, feet, all over the place," Herbert Rose replied.

Darin held his breath briefly before releasing it, reluctant to give in to the fear he harbored. "And that will be all?"

Herbert Rose shook his head. "Not quite. Just one last thing. You must find the crescent surface on Clever Street to get the Treehopper that travels to Clover Street. And you must find this crescent surface on a lean."

Darin exhaled, feeling the heavy burden of the path he chose. "Can I just go back to the post?"

Herbert Rose shook his head. "You must

finish the process with a Treehopping procession Master Darin. You cannot go back to the lamp post which stands its height for the turn of your back or against it. That's for cowards now, as the Treehopper has no height; it runs across. You must proceed with the danger you have chosen.”



A clock has its wages, not in gold, not in sapphire, but as its very continuum, in the intimacy of it's space-time event illusions.

Carrie's acceptance was easy. She didn't

want to return to the streets of Gauley without his company. She was sure they were more than companions. They were comrades. And comrades go through hell together.

They took Herbert Rose's Hopper to a field, a field of green grass frequently situated with hooks. The intermittent locations of the hooks gave the indication of random placements but Darin's quick study of the area gave him a regulated impression of such placements.

"The field of eaves," Herbert Rose announced.

Carrie frowned. "Looks like a field of green grass and hooks."

Herbert Rose shook his head. "If it were a field of green grass it will be a plane with respect to procession in our events."

Darin frowned. "And a natural space. It looks more like a field of green grass, green leaves and question marks."

Herbert Rose nodded. "Quite more observant Master Darin. Are you asking a question? "

Darin considered the validity of his statement. "But eaves have heights."

Herbert Rose held Darin's eyes. "No, that won't be your first waste for a question. Then you understand why this cannot be a plane or a field of greens. It becomes your effort to find out what it is and create a useful procession."

And with that Herbert Rose hopped in space and left them alone.

Darin paced the edge of the field of eaves.

"Am I allowed to help?" Carrie asked.

Darin stopped to hold her eyes. He shrugged. "I don't know what the price for success is but I pay two prices for failure. So I don't see why not. If you can help, do so."

He resumed his anxious pacing.

"What if they are question marks?" Carrie asked.

"What if they are question marks?" Darin repeated, almost in a soliloquy, before coming to a stop. "Then they will be proof they are artefactual structures to derail natural tendencies towards magical impulses. They will be...they will be...impulse generators. Then the hooks or question marks are sensors. They instigate and produce output by position and location." His eyes widened with new enlightened delight. "This is the vessel of travel to Clover Street!"

Carrie's jaw dropped. "You're kidding! There is no vessel here. Is it invincible?"

Darin walked a reasonable length of the perimeter of the field of eaves and came back to where Carrie was. "They have markers, computational degrees markers in thirty degrees increment. We only have three tries."

Carrie exhaled. "Well, that makes twelve possibilities then."

Darin nodded. "Indeed it does. For every four possibilities, we only have one try."

Carrie exhaled. "One twenty degrees of possibilities, thirty degrees trials."

Darin nodded. "For every possibility we reach outside the ninety degrees quadrant mark. And we can only go down."

Carrie narrowed her eyes, thinking. "I say we break that in half, we try the sixty degrees mark."

Darin exhaled. "Then we must carry Carrie. That will mean we'll be Clodhopping."

"We have three choices now do we?" Carrie asked.

"You say we try the sixty?" Darin asked.

Carrie exhaled sharply. "I say we try the sixty."

Darin grabbed Carrie's hand and pulled her towards the Northeastern sixty degree mark in the first quadrant. "Whatever happens, do not let go of my hand." He pulled the hook for the sixty degrees mark and they stepped into a wave of electric and optical current, a colorful picturesque illusion came alive, some sideline heaven

waiting to complete itself, to be completed. He pulled Carrie's hand as he moved to move both of them into the scene and they experienced another shift, an emptiness in space like an implosion against it's own impulse, against space.

They were back in the field of eaves and immediately thrust back into space to view an angular aspect of the initial picturesque view. A second attempt at movement repeated the same sets of events with slight degrees of differences.



"We're stuck," he heard Carrie yell.

On their third attempt, he agreed. He didn't make a step for the turn that took them to the same familiar space nor the turn against one they couldn't travel. He stopped at the picturesque world. "Talk about picture perfect. Going back and forth is hopeless. We're never going to your Clover Street now. We're stuck in some hellhole worse than the orphanage. You said we had three chances, how do we get those stuck inside

a loop?"

But Darin's thought was momentarily on something else. "It's a crazy thought for a segmented stillife, an incremental, decremental degree of the same exact unmoving space."

"It's hopeless," Carrie repeated.

Darin exhaled. "It's not hopeless. Although I'll hate to do it, Herbert Rose said I could ask for help three times and three times alone."

Carrie widened her eyes. " Just three?"

But Darin barely heard her. He was busy screaming, "Herbert Rose!" at the top of his lungs.

Herbert Rose was on the sidelines with them in little time.

Darin and Carrie exhaled with relief at the sight of the small man.

"Help, we're stuck in a loop," Darin pleaded.

Herbert Rose smiled. "It's not a loop. Now remember Master Darin, you have three times to count if you ask me anything. Any time you ask me anything, you lose count."

Darin held his breath briefly.

Herbert Rose smiled. "Procession first Master Darin. The dictates of questioning in this case must be reckoned. There may be no direct questioning for the purposes of solving the problem you're faced and any question asked must be put into consideration by me for the purposes of proper procession."

Darin studied Herbert Rose, thinking, ensuring the formation of his words were

not questioning or with any questioning intonation before he spoke. "It will definitely be wrong to ask to get out of this current predicament."

"That will be a ridiculous waste of questioning Master Darin," Herbert Rose replied. "Now, without further ado, what is the nature of your quest?"

Darin exhaled. "If I am not in a loop Herbert Rose, what am I in?"

Herbert Rose did not hesitate. "It's a manifold."

He wasn't sure what a manifold was, especially under the circumstances, so he held Herbert Rose's eyes with a scowl for a few seconds.

Herbert Rose took the boy's hostile bait. "Let's explore things this way. You know what happens when you fold a piece of

paper for instance or a piece of anything in particular? It overlaps and the intention is indeed for it to overlay with pieces of itself to make pieces of itself intensify as the same as some formative, summative consequence of angular magnification, modular programming and processing. It is always the same thing. The singularity rather than the intensity qualifies it. You can call it repeat-delay, a science enabled intentional fragmentation of time-space event rather than natural instantiation. You must experience this because you are journeying to Clover Street, and you made the wrong choice in mode, so your modular sequencing is off. You must make the correct artefactual choice."

Darin held his eyes with understanding.

Herbert Rose spoke. "The most important question is for you Master Darin. How do you get out of a repeat-delay-space-time-event manifold loop?"

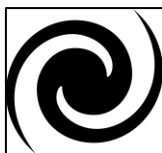
Darin contemplated the question before speaking. And when he spoke, did so in a low resigned tone. "Herbert Rose, thank you, you may be excused."

And as Carrie watched Herbert Rose hop space out of sight, she lamented the decision. "I project, since I am a part of this with some price to pay however much, we need that dwarf more than we need anything else."

"He's not a dwarf. He is a small man," Darin replied.

Carrie shrugged. "Small or dwarf, we need the man's help."

But Darin was adamant. "I can't question myself or you in front of him or I will lose count and he made it pretty clear. I have to figure things out myself "



Time has no intensity and it's measure has no count. Its victim it passes without a blink or a whistle, a crease or a wrinkle.

"We cannot afford to make guesses anymore," Darin said after some elongated silence for thought. "We need the hard math to make any move."

"That will be your forte," Carrie commented.

"The very reason I am probably standing in this dilemma," Darin replied. "We must accept the Clodhopper failed because we have no actual natural reality to sustain the upper weight with the lower pull."

"We failed," Carrie agreed.

Darin nodded in agreement. "No doubt we did. Now, we must act like intelligent people and think before we act, make preparations for an expected journey rather than guesswork chances. According to Herbert Rose, we need to find the natural reality to figure out the magical possibility. This manifold is not a coincidence within the system, the possibilities for it must already be embedded within the thirty degrees chances within the field of eaves. But how are they being created? What is creating them?"

Carrie exhaled. "If the manifold is not supposed to take us there, it must be outside."

"Manifolds in this case are external manifests, residual fragmentations of some unworkable sequence to fit the aims of the eventual model," Darin agreed.

Carrie widened her eyes. "The outside

failures!"

Darin nodded. "Indeed the failures outside."

"Like parts and parcels similar in aims to fit what prescription?" Carrie asked.

Darin scratched his head. "An existential equation for the projected world, Clover Street. It is oddly situated rather than differentiated.

"Whatever can be the equation?" Carrie asked.

Darin hesitated, thinking. "It is whatever equation is allowing Clover Street to sustain an inclination. It must be trigonometric. There is only one I can think of under the circumstances. The Tangent of forty five degrees is one, and the forty five degrees sectors make up eight equal folds. If we can find the real value of cosine forty

five degrees and sine forty five degrees which must be equal to one, we may know how we may be able to sustain an angular suspension for the suspended world the wizard is sustaining from his field of eaves."

Carrie frowned."What's wrong with the equation?"

"It needs an inclination. Their objective is an inclination, the hypotenuse which is a straight line to be made."

Carrie deepened her frown. "But it is still a straight line, isn't it?"

Darin was adamant. "But it doesn't go across. It never goes across like any natural time-line would. It mainly meets three edges, three points, to make possibilities happen. The natural potentialities for hyperplanes is a different subject matter for a different day, but believe me Carrie they

don't go across."

Carrie exhaled. "I believe you. I am almost certain we've solved the riddle. The natural reality owns the straight line across."

Darin nodded. "Indeed, we have found the artefactuals."

Carrie agreed. "I believe we have."

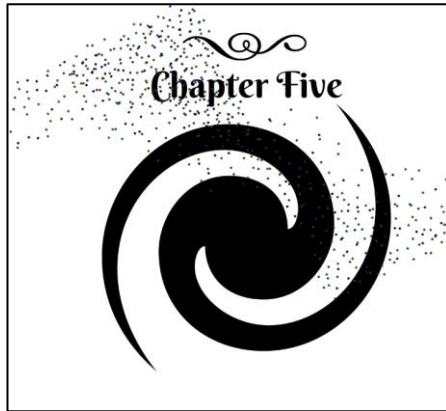
Darin gained silence to further elucidate his thinking.

"Share your thoughts," Carrie encouraged. "Maybe I can help."

Darin exhaled as his eyes met hers again. "I'm afraid we're gonna have to use up all our choices and questions to get another chance to Clover Street."

"That is bad," Carrie commented.

"Very bad," Darin agreed. "But quite frankly, we don't have a choice."



It is the hallmark of trials to culminate in possibilities, that of creativity in misdeeds.

"You look quite capable Master Darin," Herbert Rose said on his second return to

aid their plight.

"I'm ready to usurp my chances," Darin announced.

"It will be unreasonable not to," Herbert Rose replied.

"I bet my questions to you must be by measure of calculable relevance," Darin said.

Herbert Rose smiled. "That can't possibly be a question Master Darin. I bet it as well that my answers to you must be by measure of indirect relevance."

Darin raised a cautious eyebrow. "Understood. Herbert Rose, what is the Cosine of forty five degrees?"

Herbert Rose smiled. "The Cosine of forty five degrees is the same as the Sine of forty five degrees which is of direct relevance to

the Tangent of forty five degrees."

Darin smiled as well. "Yes, the Tangent of forty five degrees is one, which ensure Cosine of forty five degrees and Sine of forty five degrees must be the same from their relative equation. Whatever the real value of the Cosine and Sine of forty five degrees is, cannot be of direct relevance to my ability to make choices and take chances in this case, can it?"

Herbert Rose sustained his lengthy smile. "You are correct Master Darin, there is no direct relevance, just a simple mathematical question. The Cosine of forty five degrees which must be the same as it's Sine is zero point seven one in two decimal places and zero point seven zero seven one in four decimal places."

Darin smiled. "Thank you Herbert Rose. Now, the second question I surmise, will usurp a chance as well."

"Your very third and final question Master Darin," Herbert Rose commented.

Darin nodded. "Indeed, now to the question. I have found a way to get out of this manifold Herbert Rose and with this question being of indirect relevance to the last, I don't quite know how to implement it. How can you help with this implementation indirectly?"

Herbert maintained his smile. "That is hardly any further relevance when it is already discussed. You did surmise correctly Master Darin. And it wouldn't be of direct relevance to remind you that the very definition of Tangent relates the opposite with the adjacent."

Darin's smile stretched the limits of his jawline. "It's been a great relief having your help Herbert Rose. Thank you. You may be excused."

When Herbert Rose was gone, Darin faced Carrie again. Confused at the symbolic intent of the exchange of words. "What does that mean?" Carrie asked.

Darin shrugged her concerns momentarily. "It's nothing really. He just told me several things I needed to know."

But Carrie wouldn't relent. "In what language?"

"He told me for instance, without directly telling me, that the number I should consider from the real value of the Cosine and Sine of forty five degrees is seven."

"And this tells us what exactly?" Carrie asked.

"That there is a high probability the manifold is happening in seven folds, further affirming my instincts that the

possibilities do not work on combinations but rather permutations. These are permutations, rigors of artefacts. And if we, for instance assume an uneven two leap and take five in seven possible ways on permutations, we get..." he said and hesitated briefly to do the mental calculations. "... we get two hundred and ten. If we take this assumption seriously, which we should, we divide two hundred and ten by seven and we get thirty. I believe we should have used the thirty degree mark."

Carrie held his eyes. "I'm sorry I took us on a wild goose chase of twice that amount.

Darin shrugged. "Every failure is a learning process for those who wish to learn. Nate always said that. The other things we spoke in foreign tongues about is the Tangent of an angle. Once we get back on the field of eaves, we must get to our third chance by using our second chance. It's the only way

out of this great mistake."

Carrie exhaled."And the journey of a second chance?"

"Must be endured not on a flat but a vertical, he replied. The vertical must be the adjacent or we are back to the same horror show. The field of eaves is the flat we have been using but cannot afford to travel on. By turning, we use the implication of a stance without the turn of a back. We turn the front we are on. I wish I can tell you it's not real like the Wizions are not real but Herbert Rose said it perfectly. It's make-believe. And to make this journey easier for both of us, I need you to believe in this make-belief."

Carrie exhaled, holding Darin's eyes steadily in agreement. "Now that's how you leap off into an abyss," she commented.

Darin was pleased. "Like hop on one leg

and hope to the heavens you can float?"

Carrie shook her head. "No, leave a world of bleak for a world of nil without committing to either."

Darin narrowed his eyes. "The front is in the gist. It's in not knowing which way is which, a time overlap in particularly no time or whichever time there may be in whatever at all could possibly have a relativity to time to create space."

Carrie nodded in agreement. "It will be adding up but not necessarily adding at all, an open floor."

Darin nodded. "Indeed, an open floor, the impulse magic in the supposition of the Clodhopper. The failure we have here, a sustainable weight overhead which maintain an appearance burrowing down in space as manifold manifest, burrowing as quantum space."

"Clover Street?" she inquired.

Darin hesitated briefly. "That will be the corrected Cloghopper manifest jump. Herbert Rose told me all relevant natural applications must be turned artificial. The thirty degrees mark on a suspended one eighty flat will have our two hundred and ten on an inclined flat as some artefactual build-up sustainable on some artefactual architectures. It is our last chance."



There is a toll to a lift, a toll to a rift, a toll to an edge, a toll to a wedge, a toll to a rigor so vigorous a scheme, yet the flat to a landing pays it all in a scoff.

The landing was as particularly rough as his pull on Carrie's hand in the direction

against the manifold. He was uncertain of his ability to travel anywhere if he lost her in some unfinished sequence, an incomplete dream of a yet unknown Wizard.

He hugged her as they landed at the price of a chance to face their last.

They readied for the last, anxiety and fear embodying them, their hope, their wish for success, uncertain, solemn.

Holding on to Carrie's hand firmly, Darin pulled the thirty degrees question hook southeast, and held on for dear life. With a sharp inclination, a weighted drift lingered briefly as if space was opposing their presence, their body familiar yet unused to such. Then there was the sharp declination, the drifting, a levitation without its custom space never having derived its custom mass. Darin closed his eyes for the while and wished for the best.

And when he opened them, they had landed again, on the field of eaves.

His heart sank and Carrie's sigh of disappointment was audible. The atmosphere was intense, dense, tense, with a sensational heavy breeze, thick with mystery. Was the breezeway some container of artificial air enabling them breath. Were the hopways containers of traveling they could hardly process obeying the rules of procession in quantum space? Were they forever lost in some world taking them on one experimental aimless journey after another?

But a sudden flicker in the skies which got their instant attention was quick to develop into a larger display of such.

"Wizons!" Carrie exclaimed.

In seconds, the message intended from the

Wizons was readable in the heavy night sky.

Welcome to Clover Street Darin!



Earning the right of passage into Clover Street is the tip of the iceberg. To earn the privilege to meet the Wizard, Darin must go through a series of tests to meet the demand of the ionospheric war Clover Street is waging against earth. The most important and deadliest of such tests is voyaging the valley of Death Wire Roses.

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