

## **Introduction:**

Welcome to Kraven, a city shrouded in darkness and despair, where the shadows whisper secrets and the streets echo with the footsteps of the oppressed. Within its high stone walls, a tale of power, poverty, and treachery unfolds, painting a picture of a society teetering on the brink of chaos.

Kraven, once a beacon of hope and prosperity, now stands as a grim reminder of the consequences of unchecked ambition and ruthless governance. Ruled by a royal family whose thirst for supremacy knows no bounds, the city has become a crucible of conflict, both within its borders and beyond.

In the shadows of Kraven's towering walls, a diverse tapestry of life weaves itself together. Here, amidst the poverty-stricken districts and the opulent palaces of the elite, a constant struggle for survival unfolds. The royal family, desperate to maintain their grip on power, spare no expense in bolstering their military might. As a result, a staggering sixty percent of Kraven's populace are either soldiers or enforcers, trained to quell dissent and crush rebellion at a moment's notice.

## **Session 1:**

You were introduced to the animal shelter. A seemingly grim and dark building, but in the basement there's lots of green, a summer breeze and it's very comfortable. Here every animal is taken care of and a room further is the emergency room. Here are two wood-elves (I said half-elves in session, sorry) that will help you if you take in wounded animals or if you are wounded. Varilna (Dwarf) is the owner of this place, but you'll be working for Filius (Human) the boss of the emergency team/field work department of the animal shelter. You were informed that the old field team went missing and that the animal shelter doesn't have any horses for travel. This makes field work more difficult. Filius asked you to go to the royal stables to ask for more, but they had none to spare. Here a servant of the king said that the king Krizna (Human) wanted to see you. One of his enforcers had lost his horse and he wanted you to go look for them and bring it back. You found a Tiefling on the road who was hurt by a horse. You healed him and heard some screaming in the distance. You went towards the scream and came upon a massacre. Many wolves and horses were killing the enforcers that the king had sent toward Vetri. Weird purple mist came out of the creatures' mouths and they had a weird purple glow in their eyes.

## **Session 2:**

The party knocked out all the wolves and horses and saved 1 of the enforcers. The creatures seemed to have been infected by some kind of magical disease. Eilena (Maya) used detect magic and found traces of enchantment (brain control magic) and transmutation (shape-shifting magic). The enforcer that survived told them that one of the other enforcers that had already returned to the castle had found a purple crystal which seemed to be the cause of this disease. The party returned back to the castle after this and got some money from the king. He told them the enforcer that had already returned to the castle was in the medical bay. When the party got there the enforcer thought that he had already given the purple crystal to an owl (hmm... weird). They went to a tavern to have a drink and Dawn (Joyce) earned some money performing and they learned that the tavern was celebrating its 3rd birthday this evening. After this the party was told to do some shopping and help Isor'In (a wizard from the wizard towers of Kraven) with a bird problem. They went by the Lucky Legacy which sells waste from the royal palace including magical items. Fugly (Jane) bought and drank a potion of flying immediately and Archimedes (Merlijn) bought a potion with parts of brain in it. After this they went to the wizard towers where they heard from one of the main wizards that a meteorite has landed somewhere south of Vetri that carries a lot of purple crystals. He didn't seem to know anything about a bird problem, but he told them they did have a lot of birds as familiars. He himself has an ostrich. The party then went to the office of Isor'In. He didn't seem to expect them yet and seemed to be getting ready to leave, leaving his office quite empty except 3 bird cages with covers over them. The wizard didn't want to tell anything about the bird problem and slowly inched towards the door. Stronk (Eme) stopped him after which Fugly got rid of the covers to reveal 2 raging parrots and an owl. The birds seemed to transform (Archimedes saw that they were dropping an illusion spell). Before the birds were completely transformed Isor'In cast the spell Suggestion on Stronk, telling him to protect him and ran away. The birds turned into small dragons (except you as characters wouldn't know what dragons are). Later on in the fight the ostrich turned out to be a larger dragon knocking out

Eilena and Stronk. The party knocked out 3 small dragons and killed the rest. Isor'In turned invisible and disappeared.

### **Session 3:**

Bob (Arman) joined the party and helped to heal Stronk and Eilena. The other wizard turned out to have been magically put to sleep. Everybody earned some money and the dragons were brought to the animal shelter to make them as docile as possible. They were offered free places to rest the night by the animal shelter in the tavern The Dirty Chalice. There was a party there and some of the party took literal magic mushrooms, turning them insane, invisible, into penguins, etc. The next morning they woke up to Archimedes (Merlijn) going wild, with purple eyes and a purple mist coming out of his mouth. He fled the scene and the party couldn't catch up with him. While this was going on some giant rats appeared being chased by the owner's (the owner of the tavern) cat which had grown tentacles. They killed the rats and knocked out the cat which they brought back to the animal shelter. On arrival they found that an employee of the animal shelter had died. Filias told them that the infected animals had attacked. The horses' flesh had fallen off and the wolves turned a bright yellow. Filias managed to kill the horses, but the wolves escaped. One of the horses was still alive and had experienced a different transformation than the other horses. It had turned blue and was grazing peacefully. At this moment a piece of paper fell out of the sky signed with the letter A. It said that the party should go to the Lucky Legacy. They found that Gobble the Goblin (the shopkeeper) was being attacked by some giant spiders and a very weird chicken without feathers. Before attacking the creatures they saved Gobble the Goblin who had barricaded himself upstairs and they found out that he might have a purple crystal. Jane went to his bedroom and found it. She found out that it had elements that didn't come from this world.

### **Session 4**

Valerie (Louiza) joined the party. The giant spiders that had attacked the Lucky legacy had broken through a window. The party followed their footprints which led to the castle window. With many attempts, they managed to reach the window and climb through it. They ended up in the king's throne room which was covered in bodies of different guards. The spiders were trying to get into a room, but there were also yellow wolves that were teleporting all over the place trying to get into the royal bedroom. The bedroom was guarded by the only remaining guards. Eventually the party killed all the creatures and saved the king who gave everyone 15 gp. He gave the party a number one priority job: To stop these weird things from happening. During this talk, Archimedes (Merlijn) flew into the throne room as if nothing had happened and some enforcers came to talk to the king. They had just returned from their trip to the meteorite.

### **Session 5**

The party eavesdropped (Archimedes used a spell to disguise himself and Eilena turned into an ant) on the enforcers talking to the king saying they haven't had a report of a spy of theirs in a while and that they assume that this spy has taken on a different identity. Besides that, the meteorite research site quite close to Vetri hasn't learned anything more about the meteorite and a lot of enforcers don't return from the site. The king requested to send back more enforcers, because he fears his own protection is not good enough. After this Eilena (Maya) and Archimedes (Merlijn) steal some gems from the royal guard since Maya is small enough as an ant to get inside. Just as they're about to leave a maid comes (haha, funny) through the door. She tells the king that someone called Niro'Si is missing. He apparently never got home from one of his daily walks the day before. The king seemed very worried about this. After the king was alone again the entire party went to talk to the king. The king requested them once again to search for some kind of cure. He recommended finding druids. He also asked them to go to the research site and find out how to stop the meteorite and its crystals to infect more animals. He went to write his signature on a piece of parchment so they could show it and get access to the research site and Vetri. During him getting this piece of parchment the party gets back into the vault, because Olivier (Nico) knows about a secret room behind the royal vault. They don't manage to see anything interesting in there, because Eilena is too small as an ant to get a good look. They make everything seem like nothing happened and when the king returned they convinced him to get a look in the vault. In the vault were all kinds of weird artifacts. One of them being a big cluster of purple crystals. The king says it's been there for as long as he's known. After leaving the group went on a shopping spree, bought some magical items after haggling down some prices (Fugly went on a 'date' with Gobble, the shopowner of the Lucky Legacy). Dawn (Joyce) thought that some clerics may also know a way to cure these creatures, but came to the

conclusion that there weren't many clerics in Kraven and that they weren't capable of that kind of magic. She was told that the best clerics would live in Cuspa. Fugly did some more research on the purple crystal she had and found out that something was inside the crystal. Something that almost seemed alive. She decided to smash the crystal with her magic dagger and it worked. Upon smashing (also haha, funny) a purple ball of light with many cracks on its surface arose from the crystal. It then turned white and then turned purple again before breaking apart in a cloud of purple mist. The session ended with Archimedes failing to resist the infection once again.

### **Eilena's vision:**

In the hazy distance, a flicker of movement catches their eye—a swift, elusive figure bounding through the ether. At first, it's merely a silhouette, barely discernible amidst the shifting shadows. But as they watch, the form begins to solidify, revealing itself as a majestic panther, its sleek fur aglow with the swirling hues of an otherworldly aurora. Its pulsating with a mesmerizing light that dances and weaves through the air.

As the panther prowls closer, its features become sharper, its presence more tangible. But just as they begin to grasp the sight before them, a strange metamorphosis takes place. The panther's form shimmers and distorts until, in a whirl of iridescent energy, it transforms into a humanoid creature with a similar skin to that of Dawn. A being of boundless power and enigmatic grace. In its hands, it cradles a crystalline statue, radiating with an inner brilliance that seems to defy explanation.

With a burst of supernatural speed, the creature streaks past a figure with clothing of a royal guard. And then, in an instant, the crystal statue erupts in a blinding flash of light.

### **Session 6:**

Archimedes (Merlijn) was missing, but the party decided to search for the druids anyway to find a cure. The animal shelter's emergency team provided a possible druid camp location. Before they left, Filias (the party's boss) gave them a sending stone for emergencies.

As they reached the spot where they needed to leave the path and enter the forest, it started to rain heavily. The party pressed on, but soon they saw lightning strike a tree, starting a fire that blocked their path. This fire was unusual, as it seemed controlled and always obstructed their way. Valerie (Louiza), who is resistant to fire, decided to go through it. Just then, Archimedes (Merlijn) flew in and landed next to her.

Valerie noticed the muddy ground shifting to spell out "Turn around." Realizing someone was nearby, they spotted several eyes in the bushes ahead. Suddenly, the ground gave way under their feet, and vines sprouted to entangle them. Most of the party managed to avoid the vines and falling.

Around ten bears emerged from the bushes, led by a large bear who transformed into a half-elf druid. She demanded the party leave. They explained they meant no harm and needed help, offering her a sphynx breed cat from the shelter. The druid was intrigued by Archimedes and by their blue horse, affected by purple crystals. After being convinced they were friendly, she agreed to help, but only if the party got rid of poachers threatening the animals in the forest and the druid camp.

To prepare for the attack, Archimedes suggested weaponizing the purple crystals. After much discussion, the druids agreed, though their version would only make people very aggressive. The party decided to poison the poachers' water supply with this at night. Dawn (Joyce) used her charm to enter the main tent. Archimedes flew over the market and living district, finding a strange creature in a cage, part eagle and part horse, born only a few days ago. He rescued it.

Fugly (Jane) entered a circus-like tent and freed magically enhanced animals, alerting the guards. The party escaped in time. The poisoned water caused chaos as poachers began attacking each other. Amidst the turmoil, the party heard babies crying. Realizing they hadn't checked for children, they went back to rescue them. They succeeded and killed everyone in the poacher camp.

The druids succeeded in creating a potion that would prevent infection and stop the disease from worsening, but they couldn't make something that would turn animals back to their original form. Archimedes and the blue horse took it.

### **Session 7:**

While the party was sleeping, they heard Flida, the druid leader, moving around in the night. Curious and concerned, they confronted her about her actions. Flida explained that she thought she had seen something suspicious and wanted to investigate on her own. The party, trusting her judgment, allowed her to go, but Archimedes (Merlijn) decided to follow her in secret. As he trailed her through the forest, he eventually lost sight of her in a strange area where the trees were twisted, and incomprehensible whispers filled the air. Unable to continue, Archimedes returned to the druid camp. The next day, the druids discovered that three of their members, including Flida, were missing. With the mystery deepening, the party decided to search for them, and Archimedes, recalling the eerie part of the forest where he had lost Flida, led them there. In this bizarre section of the woods, they discovered an entrance to an underground dungeon. Navigating through a series of traps and battles—facing a mirror monster that reflected their desires and mirrored their attacks, an illusory hole in the ground, hallucinatory water, and invisible slashing blades—they eventually reached a large, cavernous room. At the far end of the room stood an arch, and within it floated what appeared to be a lightning bolt, suspended in mid-air. The floor was covered in strange symbols and corpses, and at the center lay the bodies of Flida and the two other missing druids. Streams of purple energy were being siphoned from their bodies by three floating, slightly humanoid forms, each pulsating with an increasingly intense purple light. As these entities drained the life from their victims, their forms grew more defined. One appeared to be a human male fisherman, another a male tiefling, and the last, a small human boy with a branch pierced through his leg.

### **Session 8:**

The adventurers faced off against three mysterious floating, illuminating figures that pulsed with an eerie glow. As they attacked, the figures shifted into spheres of swirling energy, their forms reminiscent of the ominous spheres released from the shattered purple crystals encountered in earlier ventures. These spheres crackled with arcane energy, unsettling some of the group with their strange familiarity. After a grueling battle, Stronk, ever bold, approached the ancient archway from which the figures had emerged. As his hand made contact, a searing vision flooded his mind: a vast wasteland, scorched by unbearable heat. Determined to neutralize the arch's mysterious power, the party sprang into action. Fugly, always inventive, crammed the arch with spare clothing, hoping to disrupt its magic, while Stronk, fueled by frustration and the lingering horror of his vision, smashed the pedestal standing before the arch into rubble. The arcane energy surrounding the arch flickered but didn't fully dissipate. Venturing deeper into the dungeon, they discovered a forgotten library, its shelves lined with dust-covered tomes. Amid the ancient texts, they uncovered dark secrets about a shadowy faction known as the Ophidians. These enigmatic figures believed in "equality through chaos," . the true depth of the Ophidians' secrets remained elusive. With their minds swirling with newfound knowledge and questions, the group made their way back to the druid camp, their thoughts heavy with the weight of what they had uncovered. The arch, the spheres, the Ophidians—all threads in a larger, darker tapestry yet to be fully understood. (made way more dramatic with chatgpt)

Stronk's vision on interaction with portal:

Female voice: "Show me"

When your sight clears, you find yourself standing in an alien landscape. The sky above is a churning mass of dark clouds, tinged with sickly shades of purple and green. The air is thick and oppressive, filled with a familiar vile stench of seared flesh, making it hard to breathe.

Towering spires of jagged purple crystal rise from the ground. The crystals emit an eerie, purplish glow that casts long, twisted shadows across the desolate terrain.

All around you, the ground is cracked and scorched, as if seared by intense heat. Pools of bubbling, tar-like substance dot the landscape, occasionally releasing noxious fumes that add to the foul stench. The ground beneath your feet feels unstable, as if it could give way at any moment, plunging you into an abyss of darkness.

In the distance, you hear the faint sounds of wailing and screaming, a cacophony of torment that never seems to end. The cries seem to echo from every direction, carried by a harsh, hot wind that cuts through the eerie silence like a knife.

As you look around, you notice strange, twisted figures moving among the spires. They are shadowy and indistinct. These figures seem to be drawn to the crystals, occasionally reaching out to touch them with clawed hands, but they all seem to shiver in pain when they get close to them.

Suddenly, the vision begins to fade. The spires, the creatures, and the noxious air all start to dissolve, swirling away like smoke in the wind. With a final, gut-wrenching jolt, you are pulled back to reality, standing once more in the dungeon, your hand still resting on the portal. The vision leaves you shaken, the horrifying images and sounds seared into your memory. It has left you with only.

### **Session 9:**

After arriving in Vetri, the party left their animals at the city stables, adhering to the city's no-animal policy. Upon entering, the party's half-animal members were escorted to meet with the twin mayors, Gemma and Aven, as part of the city's regulations. After a brief discussion, the mayors granted them full access to the city. Gemma and Aven had already heard rumors about the party's planned journey to the meteorite near Vetri. They requested a favor: to escort a royal figure named Niro'Si—one of the missing nobles from the royal castle—on their way to Certo. In addition, they asked the group to investigate the whereabouts of a white crystal statue, last seen outside the Tempest Casino. The party ventured to the Tempest Casino, where they gathered information about the statue while participating in some games of chance. Despite the high risks, they defied the odds, winning a substantial amount of money during their time in the casino.

### **Session 10:**

The party followed a lead that pointed to the white crystal statue being located at the meteorite site. Just as they were about to set out, the ground trembled violently—a sudden earthquake rocked the city of Vetri. In the distance, panicked screams echoed as a section of the city wall crumbled to the ground. From the collapsed wall, strange purple crevices began to spread through the earth, pulsing with an eerie energy. The cracks seemed unnatural, corrupted by some unknown force.

Amid the chaos, a large, burned tree with fire erupting from its limbs emerged from one of the crevices, attacking the party without warning.

Shaken but undeterred, the party pressed on toward the meteorite. As they neared the site a winged figure appeared, soaring through the air. A dragon descended, landing with a heavy thud, the ground trembling beneath its massive weight. The dragon, bronze and gleaming with radiant energy, paid no attention to the party. Instead, it walked straight toward Niro'Si, as if recognizing him immediately.

The dragon spoke in a strange, ancient tongue, its voice low and resonant. Niro'Si responded fluently, and to everyone's surprise, Valerie also seemed to understand the conversation, a look of recognition passing over her. Though the others couldn't comprehend the words, the tension between the dragon and Niro'Si was palpable.

## Session 11:

The party arrived at the meteorite site after their encounter with the dragon and Niro'Si. Valerie translated the conversation that had taken place in the strange language between the dragon and Niro'Si. The dragon had been searching for Niro for quite some time, and Niro responded that he didn't want to be found. The dragon insisted that Niro had to return to serve the dragons, as the situation had grown dire with the increasing animal mutations. It warned that if Niro didn't help, his "kind" would be released—a warning that Niro seemed to dread. Niro told the dragon that was exactly why he was running. The dragon, however, warned him that the problem was worse than Niro realized. The Underdark was stirring and there had been discussions among the dragons about releasing even more powerful members of Niro's kind. If Niro refused to serve, the dragon warned that Kredus could suffer the same fate as Vircus, a volcanic island in the south. With those final words, the dragon flew off.

After realizing the weight of the conversation, the party surrounded Niro. Dawn restrained him, and the group began interrogating him. Under pressure, Niro confessed his deep connection to the dragons. Suspicious of more secrets, Archimedes cast *Detect Magic* on him, discovering an illusion spell concealing his true identity. Niro then revealed himself as **Isorin**, the wizard who had escaped during session 2.

Through further interrogation and the use of *Detect Thoughts*, Isorin explained that he had been hiding out of fear. He had once served the dragons, helping them prevent dangerous forces—such as the Underdark—from reaching the surface. The Underdark, he explained, was a place where dimensions collided, allowing strange creatures and entities from other planes to enter their world. Isorin feared what might happen if the dragons were forced to take action. His current goal had been to recover the **White Crystal Statue**, believing it could escalate matters and trigger the dragons' intervention much sooner. The artifact, he warned, was far too powerful to fall into the wrong hands. After a tense negotiation, the party agreed to explore the meteorite together with Isorin.

As they approached the meteorite, Stronk and Aluxio experienced a vision. Upon reaching the impact site, they found the meteorite to be hollow, with only a few scattered purple crystals remaining—the rest had seemingly been manually removed. Surrounding the meteorite were strange creatures that, though unnerving, did not appear hostile to the group. Scattered among them were the decaying bodies of royal enforcers and guards, as well as some wearing rings engraved with a single ouroboros (The party took some of these rings for later investigation) and the animal shelter team that you guys replaced.

Suddenly, the ground beneath them began to tremble. The meteorite itself shook violently, and the once-passive creatures turned aggressive, charging toward the party. Seeking shelter, the group retreated into a collapsed building nearby—a former research site where King Krizna's wizards and enforcers had studied the meteorite. Inside, they found research notes detailing strange mutations in animals and magical disturbances linked to the meteorite (see Lore Dump). They also discovered the bodies of wizards, some riddled with stab wounds and arrows. Among the findings was a half-finished **spell scroll of Dispel Magic**.

Isorin completed the spell and used it to dispel the lingering magic around the meteorite. As soon as the spell took effect, the creatures stopped their assault, returning to a passive state.

### **The vision of Stronk:**

You hear a familiar female voice say: "Yes, good. show me more"

Suddenly, he finds himself standing in a vast, desolate landscape. Before him, a rift tears through the very fabric of reality. an open wound, pulsating with a sickly purple glow that ripples through the air like heat waves. From within the rift, tendrils of thick, dark smoke slither outward, coiling and writhing like living things, as if whatever lies beyond is trying to seep into the world. A familiar stench of searing flesh enters his nose.

Next to him stands a figure. The person's skin is pale, unnaturally white, like freshly fallen snow. Their long, white hair is braided in intricate patterns, and they seem to glow faintly against the shadowy backdrop. Their face is turned towards the rift, expression unreadable, but Stronk feels a sense of weight from their presence, like they are intimately connected to whatever dark force is spilling through the breach.

The figure doesn't speak, but somehow, Stronk knows they are watching the same thing he is—witnessing something immense, terrifying, and unstoppable. The air around the rift grows thicker, as if the very essence of the world is being drawn towards it, consumed and twisted by the malevolent force beyond. There's a feeling of suffocation, of drowning in something unseen.

From the rift, shapes begin to emerge—indistinct, shadowy forms. Some are massive, hulking, and grotesque, while others slither and flicker like living shadows. They are formless, yet there's an undeniable malice about them. As they move, they seem to devour the light, leaving only darkness in their wake.

The figure beside him slowly turns their head towards him. Their eyes, glowing with the same strange, pale light, lock onto his. There's no malice in their gaze—just a cold, distant understanding, as if they have seen this all before and know exactly what it means. Their lips part, as if they are about to speak, but no words come. Only the sound of the rift, growing louder, more chaotic, drowning out everything.

## Session 12

After the chaos settled, the party resumed questioning Isorin. He revealed that he had assumed the identity of Niro'Si after the royal wizard's accidental death from falling down the stairs while drunk. Isorin then urged the party to locate the white crystal statue of a cat, explaining that he would try to prevent the dragons from escalating the situation and would seek a way into the Underdark. The party agreed to this plan but pressed for more information. Isorin elaborated that the statue could amplify magical power. When tensions rose and threats were made, Isorin cast *Invisibility* and vanished.

The group returned to Vetri, where they met with Gemma and Aven. The sisters, acting on behalf of the king, rewarded the party with money for stopping the meteorite. Gemma and Aven then presented the party with a choice of assignments. The party opted to investigate Cuspa, where rumors claimed that gods had manifested as people. Before they departed, Aven leaned in close to Aluxio and cryptically asked, "Do your friends know your real name?" before leaving with a mischievous smile. Gemma, embarrassed by her sister's remark, offered an apology and escorted her out.

In Cuspa, they discovered that a group of half-animal beings had arrived in the town and were planning a congregation that evening. To pass the time, the party visited the local library. There, they unearthed ancient lore stating that white crystals were left by Lodarr, the God of Light, during the world's creation. They also found records suggesting that dragons were believed to be the world's protectors in various myths.

## Session 13

The party spent time exploring Cuspa, delving deeper into the town's culture. Fugly found herself drawn to the teachings of Tekreus, the God of Trickery, and sparked a flirtatious connection with Grugly, a local priest. Meanwhile, Aluxio and Dawn discovered that the hybrids had gathered in the church dedicated to Zomis, the God of Chaos, but chose not to engage with them at that moment. During their exploration, the group also stumbled upon a local newspaper that featured an article about their recent efforts to combat the spread of the purple crystal infection. To their surprise, the article officially dubbed them the *Purple Paw Patrol* (or *PP Patrol*).

As evening fell, the party attended the congregation of the half-animal hybrids. Mary, one of the normal humanoids with the hybrids, stepped forward to deliver a passionate speech. However, during her address, chaos erupted as two individuals suddenly transformed into werewolves. The party acted swiftly, subduing the transformed individuals and ensuring the safety of Cuspa's citizens.

### Mary's Speech

\_(Mary steps onto the stage, her posture tall and commanding, yet wrapped in a veil of humility. She begins with a tone that resonates with the congregation's respect for nature, but gradually shifts toward a much more radical message.)\_

"Thank you, [priest's name], for your words of wisdom, and to all of you for your devotion to Genas. Her teachings guide us, yes, but they also challenge us to look deeper—beyond the surface.



I stand before you today with a message not only from Genas but from the gods themselves. For they have spoken to me and my companions. You see, the gods of nature, in their infinite wisdom, have chosen to bestow gifts upon us—gifts that have transformed some of us into hybrids, a reflection of their divine power."

\_(She gestures to her companions, who stand nearby, their animalistic features—a symbol of this divine transformation—now more prominent.)\_

"Do you not see? We are becoming one with the creatures Genas loves so dearly. This is no accident. This is a blessing. We have been chosen to bridge the gap between man and beast, to step beyond the narrow boundaries of what it means to be human."

\*(The crowd listens, intrigued, some even awe-struck by the spectacle of the hybrids.)

"But why would the gods intervene now? Why would they turn their eyes to us in these troubled times? The answer is clear: the royals, those who rule over us, have strayed too far from the natural order. They use animals as tools—no, as slaves. You've seen it with your own eyes. In their wars, in their factories, their mines—they break the backs of our fellow creatures for their greed, their wealth.

They care nothing for the weak, the poor, the creatures they crush beneath their heel. They see the animals we revere as mere objects. And what of us? To them, we are no better. Unless you are rich or powerful, you are nothing. Just as they strip the land of its resources, they strip us of our dignity."

\_(Her voice rises with passion, her words stirring murmurs among the crowd, a mix of unease and growing conviction.)\_

"But now... now, the gods have given us a sign. The mutations we see in the animals? They are not something to fear. They are a step toward equality. A step toward a world where humans, animals, and hybrids like us stand side by side, as equals! For too long, the royals have decided who is important and who is expendable. But the gods... the gods have shown us another way."

## Session 14

After subduing the werewolves, the party found themselves surrounded by members of the church alongside Mary and her hybrids. The party managed to talk their way out of immediate trouble while Eilena cast detect magic on the werewolves, confirming that they had been affected by some version of the purple crystals. Not long after, the werewolves reverted to their humanoid forms. Upon waking them, the party questioned one of the former werewolves, who admitted he had felt unwell for some time before the transformation. The church's healers then took him and the other former werewolf away for treatment.

Suspicious of Mary's behavior, the party pressed her with questions about how the hybrids came to be. Mary grew evasive, dodging their inquiries, and the party noticed several inconsistencies in her statements. Eventually, they observed that Mary wore a ring adorned with a single Ouroboros—a symbol they had seen before—and that she had a snake tail hidden beneath her robe. Confronting her in front of the church members caused an uproar. The churchgoers demanded that Mary and her hybrids be banished from Cuspa, but the party stopped them, insisting on further questioning.

As the confrontation escalated, Stronk managed to grapple Mary while Valerie used *Minor Illusion* to mimic Mary's voice, sowing confusion among the remaining hybrids. Cornered, Mary ordered her hybrids to flee and then teleported away. Two of the hybrids flew off with another in tow, leaving three behind. The party focused on the remaining hybrids and Valerie cast *Detect Thoughts* on a half-rabbit person. In his mind, she glimpsed thoughts of Mary being the leader of a group called the Serpents, mentions of a rebellion, and connections to the purple crystals. The party handed the hybrids over to the Cuspans to be held in the dungeons for later questioning.

Afterward, Eilena devoted herself to Lodarr's (the god of Light) teachings, receiving another vision in return. As the party left Cuspa, they encountered two carriages traveling in their direction. Valerie excused herself for a "pee break" in the forest while the carriages stopped to speak with the party. The passengers held up a missing person poster featuring Valerie's face, offering a reward of 100 platinum pieces for her return. The party lied, claiming they hadn't seen her, and the carriages continued on their way. Valerie rejoined the group afterward but refused to explain the situation, simply asking the party to act as though they didn't know her if they encountered those people again.

Back in Vetri, the party headed to the mayor's office, but the mayors were busy speaking with someone. To pass the time, they visited Percy's Potions, where Eilena learned how to make healing potions. When they returned to the mayor's office, Gemma was available, but Aven had already left. They provided Gemma with a vague account of what had happened in Cuspa before deciding to take on the Driso job, investigating reports of a rampaging octopus.

Later, Valerie had a private conversation with Gemma, asking who the mayors had been speaking to earlier. Gemma revealed they were talking to someone from Certo who was looking for two individuals: a family member and someone named March.

## Eilena's Vision

She watches as the elusive panther from her previous vision emerges once more. Its movements are graceful, deliberate, and the colors that ripple across its fur seem even more brilliant than before—a radiant, shifting aurora that bathes the surroundings in a soft, shimmering light.

"Seek me," it says, its voice vibrating with power and purpose. "Find what was lost. The white crystal... the one in the image of my Mother. It is too powerful, too dangerous for mortal hands."

As the panther speaks, the space around them seems to shift, revealing flashes of scenes: the white crystal statue of a cat, glimpsed in shadowy hands, a flicker of chaos spreading like cracks in a mirror, and the distant shimmer of the meteorite. The panther's eyes narrow, the aurora surrounding it intensifying.

"It must be returned to me," the panther continues. "It is a part of me, and through it, mortals may wield forces they are not meant to control."

Without further warning, the panther's form begins to shift and melt, transforming fluidly into the white crystal statue itself, gleaming and pristine. For a moment, the statue hovers before her, shimmering in the void, a tangible reminder of what must be found.

## Session 15

The party traveled to Driso to investigate a report of a rampaging octopus. Upon arriving, they saw no immediate signs of chaos and decided to gather information at the local tavern. Here, they noticed someone they recognized from Mary's group in Cuspa—the only member who wasn't a hybrid. This man, introducing himself as Orwyn Pseudus, was asking around about the same octopus they were tasked with finding.

The party decided to follow Orwyn discreetly, but their attempt at stealth failed, prompting him to flee. Thinking quickly, Dawn staged a scene, accusing Orwyn of theft, which drew the attention of the townsfolk. With their help, Dawn eventually apprehended Orwyn. During the ensuing conversation, Orwyn revealed he was part of the Serpents, the same group Mary led in Cuspa. He explained that the octopus they were searching for was another hybrid—a former Serpent—who had become confused and erratic since their transformation.

After some deliberation, the party agreed to work with Orwyn to find the octopus hybrid. Orwyn led them to a facility where fish were trained to steer boats following a clue he gained from the tavern. While investigating, Dawn noticed some of the fish were swimming in unusual patterns and were unresponsive to external stimuli. After speaking with locals, the party learned that a strange hybrid had passed through recently, asking for clothing. With trepidation, they followed the lead to the Tailed Tailor.

## Session 16

Upon entering The Tailed Tailor, the party noticed the shop seemed unusually empty. After some casual questioning of Swift, the tailor, and Fugly purchasing a bear head for only 2 silver pieces, they realized something was off. Swift's responses were limited to simple phrases like "yes," "no," or "2 silver pieces." Valerie cast *Detect Thoughts* and discovered that Swift's mind was dominated by another presence—confused but powerful—blocking most of her own thoughts. One faint plea emerged: "Help."

Shaking her awake revealed Swift was exhausted and starving. She recounted how an octopus hybrid entered her shop, used mind control to take a dark cloak and a bandana, and left her in this state. He seemed desperate to escape Driso, and she suggested they investigate the animal market where transport could be found.

At the stables, they met Arvik, the owner, who confirmed seeing someone in a dark cloak with an unusual demeanor. Feeling pity, Arvik provided him with a horse and directed him to an abandoned cabin outside of town. Arvik guided the party there, but as they approached, they heard a panicked scream of "Stop!"

While the party deliberated their next move, Stronk burst into the cabin and was immediately hit by a psychic *Mind Blast*. The attack harmed him and revealed a vision of a massive ship, causing confusion and fear. Inside, the octopus hybrid stood in a corner, clearly distressed. A fight broke out, but Orwyn persistently pleaded with the party not to kill him, referring to the hybrid as his "brother."

The party managed to subdue the hybrid, and a heated argument with Orwyn ensued. Orwyn insisted on taking the hybrid to the Serpents for healing, but the party distrusted him and the Serpents, demanding more information before they could agree. Tensions rose as threats were exchanged. Orwyn finally admitted that the Serpents opposed the oppressive, wealth-hoarding King Krizna and were considering rebellion. While the party shared some disdain for the king, they viewed the Serpents' anarchic methods with suspicion.

Orwyn made an ultimatum: he would only share more information or relinquish the hybrid if they joined the Serpents. Frustrated, Dawn choked Orwyn unconscious, and the party debated their options. They ultimately decided to play along with the Serpents for now. This was an especially hard decision for Chateau who had been part of the Royal guard. Upon waking Orwyn, they claimed they wanted to join his cause.

Back in Vetri, they found that the mayors had passed a new law banning hybrids from the town. Orwyn led them through a secret tunnel beneath the city to a hidden Serpent base within the casino, *The Tempest*. Inside, they discovered a room filled with maps, notes, and plans detailing the Serpents' operations.

## **Session 17 (Filler Episode)**

This session happened just before the party traveled to Driso

The party decided to investigate reports of frog people near the treetop city of Barus. On their way, they caught a group of frog people attempting to pickpocket them. One managed to steal Eilena's spell focus, but the party recovered it after brutally dispatching the thieves.

Upon reaching Barus—a city built on treetop platforms above a swamp—they ascended via an "Allivator," an elevator pulled by alligators. The city seemed eerily empty. A gnome woman informed them that many townsfolk had gone missing, and thefts were rampant. Frog people had recently been seen gathering near the graveyard on the ground. The woman directed them to the Elders, who confirmed the reports and led them to the graveyard.

At the graveyard, the party discovered a massive, sentient frog consuming a hoard of stolen items brought to it by the frog people. To investigate further, the party disguised themselves as frog people and approached the giant frog. Since the frog people couldn't speak Common, Eilena used *Speak With Animals* to communicate.

The giant frog explained that it was once an ordinary frog until it consumed a purple crystal. The crystal cursed it with insatiable hunger and caused it to grow larger. Townsfolk exposed to its influence transformed into frog people who now worshipped and served it. Despite this, the giant frog was lonely, as it could no longer interact with its former frog companions or speak with its followers. It appreciated the party taking the time to talk to it.

Deciding to help, the party resolved to obtain “the cure” from the druids near Kraven. However, they first stopped in Vetri to explain the situation to Gemma and Aven. The mayors were divided—Gemma and Aven argued for killing the giant frog to minimize risk, but the party convinced them to allow time for a cure. During this discussion, Valerie used *Detect Thoughts* on Aven and discovered that they were aware Aluxio was not his real name. Gemma reprimanded Valerie for using magic without a permit but admitted they kept Aluxio’s secret as leverage for future use.

After this tense exchange, the party went shopping for clothes, obtained the cure from the druids, and returned to Barus. Administering the cure halted the spread of the curse. The frog people regained their consciousness but remained in their altered forms. With most of Barus now inhabited by frog people, the party encouraged the giant frog to seek the druids for guidance.

## Session 18

Upon arriving at **The Tempest Casino**, the party was greeted by a shocked **Laurrie**, who quickly sent Orwyn away with the **octopus hybrid** to take him “someplace else.” Despite claiming the Serpents were **no longer recruiting**, Laurrie decided to bring the party in anyway. Each member was given a role—**Valerie became a dealer, Stronk a bouncer, and Aluxio & Dawn joined the waitstaff.**

The next night was **High Rollers Night**, where the Serpents lured in corrupt elites for “special treatment.” As the guests arrived, the party recognized one of them—**March**, a wanted criminal they had seen on a poster in Cuspa. Strangely, she had brought an unexpected **+1**. The moment Valerie saw them, she **moved away** without explanation.

As Dawn served drinks, she overheard **March threatening her companion**, demanding to know a **secret** he was keeping. Meanwhile, the waitstaff began **spiking the drinks** to make the guests fall asleep. However, just as they started to collapse, **three of the high rollers suddenly transformed into minotaurs**. A fight broke out, and after killing one and injuring the others, the situation took a dramatic turn—

**The ceiling collapsed, and three red dragon wyrmlings crashed into the casino.**

**To be continued...**