

FREE CONTENT FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2021

# KIDS ON BROOMS

By Doug Levandowski

## INTRODUCTION

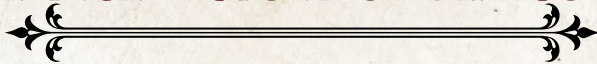


# ***WOAH!*** ***ARE YOU A PLAYER OR A GM?***

If you're a player, stop reading!  
This has major spoilers about your upcoming  
adventures.

If you're a GM, though, read on!

# THE TRUE HISTORY OF DELACORTE



An adventure for *Kids on Brooms* written by Doug Levandowski

Puzzle by Daniel Spenser

**Content Warnings:** deception about history, environmental exploitation.

## ACT I - SOLVING THE PUZZLE

Read the following to players to start the session:

*Chibuzo says, "Hello again. I need your help. Something is wrong. The knowledge we need is not here.,,but also here. And we don't have much time left to save the tree.*

*He's clearly agitated, much more so than when you saw him last in the subway tunnels after the Hurtle game. He paces as he talks, then stops and looks expectantly at you.*

*"The Source has told me that the secret to saving the tree is in here, but there's only one book about the founding of the school... and the pages are blank except for this." He holds open the book, a thick, leather-bound tome with aging but sturdy pages. On a page in the middle, the following is written in neat, precise script:*

It may be worthwhile to print this cypher and give it to players so that they can puzzle over it and take notes.



*The Following is a Set of Directions to the Secret Section. Follow It Carefully And Consider Each Step. Make Sure To Look Back And Be Sure You're Not Being Followed.*

*From the entrance to the library, walk to the Potions section.*

- D Find the book titled Fetid Elixirs, on the 5th shelf, then pull it out and put it back in upside down.*
- D Walk towards the bust with thinning hair, 6 full paces, then turn.*
- D Give an inspirited shout 3 times, and quickly ( before the librarians find you ) hide behind the bust.*
- D Fit yourself between the wall and the 1st bookshelf behind the bust, and slide along until you reach a brick in the wall that is clearly out of place.*
- D Count up 8 bricks and press the intrinsic brick therein, then quickly turn to the right and grab the bright blue book.*
- D Dangerous Djinnis by Corval Sandeman is the title, and make it be the 2nd book you place back in upside down.*
- D Now find the mural of humans and fae intermingling and stand in front of it for 9 seconds.*
- D You'll hear a faint pop from the jutted out part of the mural, go press it 8 times.*
- D If you're thirsty there's a water fountain 3 aisles on your right.*
- D From the fountain, go to the construction section and find the book Thatching For Beginners by Dimple Sturgess the 13th.*
- D Take it to the map of the US Interstate Highway Magic Stations, and place the book on Station 9.*
- D From there, go upstairs to the Statue of The Jilted Warrior, and write down the 10th word on the plaque.*
- D Once you've jotted it down, take 3 minutes to walk back to the map.*
- D The Sturgess book should have moved to Interstate Station 8.*
- D Place it in the hands of the Elam the Totemist statue and wait no longer than 10 seconds.*

*When you have done all of this, the pathway will be in front of you. But you will still need to speak the secret phrase to reveal it.*



As they follow the physical instructions, everything will be exactly where the directions describe them, but that won't bring them any closer to knowing what the secret phrase is.

### ***The Solution***

This is a multi-step puzzle. In addition to following the physical directions and placing the Sturgess book in the hands of the statue, players will also need to decode the steps to the physical directions. Throughout their time at Delacorte, the various puzzles they've been given, when combined, will give them the answer.

Here are the steps they'll need to follow:

- ❶ First, they need to look at the step-by-step instructions. Each sentence has a number in it, which corresponds to a word in that same sentence: fetid, thinning, inspirited, fit, intrinsic, djinni, intermingling, juttied, thirsty, thatching, interstate, jilted, jotted, interstate (again) & totemist.
- ❷ Applying the Morse code cypher to these words will reveal GDVKLSLWKGJWJQ.
- ❸ Finally, players will need to apply the shift cypher, shifting the letters 8 places in the alphabet to get the secret phrase: OLD STATE SORCERY.

This is a very challenging puzzle, and it's quite likely that your players will need hints. Luckily, one of the world's smartest casters is with them, so Chibuzo can feed them hints as needed. Here are some hints that he could give them:

- ❶ "We don't need to look back so that we're not being followed. Does that mean something else?" —> suggests that they should think about the older cyphers they've had.

**Follow Up:** "The Source wouldn't put a puzzle in front of you that it didn't also give you the tools to solve. What has it shown you? What about that code I gave you?" —> Stronger suggestion that they look back over the older cyphers.

**Follow Up (if they're *really* stuck):** "Other than the cypher I gave you, what were the other ones? Maybe we could apply those?" —> strong hint...and after this, if they're still not getting it, Chibuzo can walk through the solution.

- ❶ "Each sentence has a number, and each number could correspond to a word in the sentence." —> clearly points them to the words they'll need to start.

**Follow Up:** "Some of these words are the ones that The Source had me give you. That must mean something." —> strong hint that they need to apply the Morse code cypher.

- ❶ "That can't be the secret phrase. It's unpronounceable in every language I

know. Could the letters be changed to mean something?” —> indicates that there’s another step after the Morse cypher.

**Follow Up:** “It almost looks like a shift cypher...where the letters have to be moved in the alphabet to have meaning. Could it be that?” —> pretty directly telling them what to do.

In the worst-case scenario, Chibuzo can solve the puzzle for them once the players give him the different cyphers they’ve had before—and he can pretty much tell them through the hints that they need to share what those puzzles were from before.

Any attempts to magically break the code will simply fizzle. After a few attempts at this, Chibuzo could tell the players that they’re wasting time that they don’t really have.

As they’re working on this, or if they ask before starting to solve the puzzle, Chibuzo will fill them in on what he knows about the details of the tree. What he knows is as follows:

- ❶ The Source has revealed that the tree at the center of the school, “the Educationem Arbor” to everyone at Delacorte, is nearly dead.
- ❷ He is not sure if it is possible to save it, but if it can be, that seems like the best solution. However, he has no idea how to save a magical tree or why saving it is so important.
- ❸ The solution, he thinks, will come from the way that the tree’s death began. He has scoured magical history books about Delacorte and found nothing that speaks of this, though one source referred to a secret history of the school, buried by its founders. If that book is anywhere, it would be in this library.
- ❹ He is not sure what will happen if the tree dies, but he’s sure it will be bad.
- ❺ If the players tell him about the recent ways that magic has become chaotic around the school, he’ll posit that those might well stem from the problems with the Educationem Arbor.



## ACT II - DEEPENING THEIR KNOWLEDGE

When players place the book in the hands of Elan the Totemist and, in less than 10 seconds, speak “Old State Sorcery,” read them the following:

*Elan's marble fingers curl around the book, then his arms bend inward, folding Thatching for Beginners to his chest in a tight embrace. As his movement stops, the statue slides backwards, revealing a spiral staircase beneath it that circles down into the floor below.*

Have players make a Brains check without consequences for failure. On an 5 or better, the player realizes that there's a floor directly below this one in the library that doesn't have a spiral staircase leading into it. They've discovered a secret room. When they go down the stairs, read the following:

*The narrow, steep spiral stairs dizzy you as you descend, and you have to keep your hand firmly on the railing to avoid feeling like you'll fall down the stairs. As you reach the bottom, you see a stone room, lit from all angles by magic, with seven podiums around the room, each with a closed book on it. There are small placards on each podium indicating what the books are. Though he came down the stairs last, Chibuzo moves quickest, rapidly glancing at each placard until he finds what he's looking for.*

*“The Founding of Delacorte,” he says, both to you and, to himself. The Source has told me this will have the answers.*

If the players try to examine the other books in the room, Chibuzo will tell them that there's no time to waste, that they can come back to the secret room later, once they've addressed their much more pressing matter: the life of The Tree.

The titles of the texts, though, are listed below. GMs who want to create hooks for arcs after this one should feel free to swap in any titles they want. Also, some of the titles suggest topics that players may have lined, veiled, or otherwise indicated that they don't wish to include in the game. Make sure that you change those.

- 📖 *Perfecting the Control of Others through Magic* by Baranth the Demonstrator
- 📖 *Magical Poisons* by M. Brun & A. Duplis
- 📖 *Potions and Their Uses* by M. Nikolova
- 📖 *The Very Shiny Coin: A Fable for Children* by N. Nomura
- 📖 *Reweaving: Altering the Fabric of Reality* by K. Ramanzai & L. Rodriguez

If players bring the blank book on the history of Delacorte from the Deep Knowledge wing and look at it again, they'll find that the pages have writing in them again, detailing the official history of Delacorte. However, if they want to know the truth...

### ACT III - READING THE BOOK

When players start reading *The Founding of Delacorte* (as printed in the text in this room, rather than the official version), play will shift to a collaborative storytelling using the major arcana from a tarot deck as prompts. If you don't have a tarot deck, the table with the prompts includes card names from a standard deck of cards.

Since this portion of the session is driven by the prompts on the cards, if you want to include yourself, as the GM, among the players, you can. Or, if you want to stay out to read the prompts to the players, you can do that as well.

**Doug's Note:** Anyone familiar with Avery Alder's *The Quiet Year* will notice some strong similarities in the process for creating the history of the school. And anyone not familiar with *The Quiet Year* is missing out. Do yourself a favor and play Avery's game!

### Directions

#### *Components*

- ❧ Tarot deck with minor arcana removed **OR** Standard deck of playing cards with all 2s through 8s removed and the 9s of Hearts and Spades removed
- ❧ If you're using a standard deck of cards, a coin
- ❧ The table of prompts based on cards drawn
- ❧ A way to take notes

#### *Set Up*

Shuffle the cards, then deal them, face down, to create the draw deck. Put this deck within reach of all players (as well as the coin if you're playing with a standard deck of cards). If you have 2 or 3 players, deal 18 cards. If you have 4 or more players, deal 4 cards per player.

Explain to the players that you'll be working together to tell the history of the founding of Delacorte. Stress that there are no wrong answers, but there are a few boundaries:

The school will be successfully founded, and anything that players know about the founding of the school should, whenever possible, be respected. For example, if in previous games, you've established that the school was founded in 1802, try to keep that consistent—or come up with an explanation for why that's the official story. (Note, now's a good time



to review any facts that you've previously established about the school with the players!)

At some point in the founding of the school, the tree will be disconnected from The Source (or will have its disconnection set in motion). This will set the death of the tree in motion, though the details of this are up to the group! (GMs, this will be vital for the final adventure in this arc, so steer players towards that if they aren't getting there.) There are some possibilities below, and players should discuss if they want to choose one ahead of time and work towards it or let it develop organically.

- ❶ The founders bargain with a powerful entity, letting it syphon off the tree's magic, eventually severing its connection to The Source entirely.
- ❷ To accomplish something nearly impossible, the founders sever the connection and use the burst of raw, magical energy generated from that severing.
- ❸ The founders divert The Source to some magical artifact, essential for the school's remaining secret from the outside world or to seal off Central Forest from the mundane world—or both.
- ❹ One or more of the school's founders see a way to gain power and syphon off the magic the tree gets from The Source to fuel something independent of the school.

Because of that certainty, there should also be some ways to prevent the death of the tree or resuscitate it. During this phase, those methods can be hinted at or directly stated, but for your final adventure in this arc, you'll need some possible solutions. Using the examples above, here are some suggestions:

- ❶ The powerful entity could be offered something else in exchange for letting go of the tree.
- ❷ A tremendous sacrifice of magical energy could be channeled to re-establish the connection between the tree and The Source.
- ❸ The artifact diverting the magical energy could be found and destroyed or deactivated.
- ❹ The group that is syphoning the magical energy could be convinced to stop—or their means of syphoning it could be discovered and deactivated or destroyed.

A suggestion is that there should be an artifact that connects to the weakening or death of the tree. It can be directly responsible for it, or it can be indirectly responsible for part of its fate. (The final adventure will assume that this is the case, and the example it will use is The Wall of Tranquility. If you would like to keep that for your adventure, guide the players towards that.)



Each player will be embodying one of the factions involved with the founding of the school. The choices the player makes should, generally, reflect the interests of their faction—unless there’s an interesting narrative reason not to.

**GM Note:** if you would like more guidance, you can take a look at the end of this adventure for some notes about what the final installment of this year’s Free Content Friday will look like—or you could hold off on running this adventure until you’ve read December’s Free Content Friday, which will have a prescribed (but adaptable) conclusion to the year. There may be details in there that influence what you steer players to in establishing Delacorte’s founding.

### *Reviewing Possible Topics*

This is a good time to review the safety tools you’re using with your players. What are some topics that you’d like to avoid at the table? Also, what are some topics that you’d be especially interested in exploring? This is a good time to let everyone know what you’re all hoping to see!

### *Choosing a Faction*

In choosing which faction to embody, players can select any goal for the school that matches with what they know about the history of Delacorte. The factions are defined mainly by their goals and by the kind of Delacorte that they want to create. Players can choose any goals they want (provided that they don’t directly conflict with the established, known history of Delacorte). Here are some possible factions for players to choose from if they wish:

- ❶ A group that wants Delacorte to steer students to lucrative careers after they graduate, not esoteric studies
- ❷ A group that wants Delacorte to prepare students to complete advanced studies in magical arts rather than getting a “hands-on” job
- ❸ A group that views Delacorte as a kind of “magical finishing school,” a place for the children of the magical world’s elites to make connections
- ❹ A group that wants students to be able to explore freely while at Delacorte, kind of like a magical Montessori school
- ❺ A group that thinks that a rigid, prescribed curriculum is vital to students’ long-term success
- ❻ A group that wants to focus on the exploration of the natural world in Central Forest
- ❼ A group that believes school should teach magic users how to manipulate those who don’t use magic

- ❶ A group that wants to use their magical abilities to help everyone, even those who don't use magic

Once players have chosen, they should share their factions with the other players. It's okay if players goals are overlapping, but players shouldn't have precisely the same goals for their factions. For example, it's fine if one player's faction wants Delacorte to be a Montessori-like school and another wants the school to focus on exploring Central Forest. However, two players shouldn't both want to have Delacorte be a Montessori-like school.

### *Telling the Story*

**Overview:** The story is broken into two phases. In the first phase, players will draw cards and start telling the story of Delacorte's founding, creating benefits and complications for their faction. In the second phase, cards that created complications will be shuffled back into the draw deck. Players will continue telling the story, resolving complications if the cards that created them are drawn again. Finally, players will wrap up the story of the school's founding as they see fit.

### *First Phase*

During this phase, players will draw cards from the draw deck. If you are using the major arcana, make sure you make note of whether the card is drawn upright or reversed. Consult the table to see what your prompt is, using only the "First Time Drawn" column for the first phase; note that while the set up is the same, upright and reversed cards have different prompts.

The player who drew the card controls the narration, though other players may, of course, use safety tools to revise the story so that everyone enjoys themselves.

When players have resolved a card, they place it face up in front of them at the table to indicate that they're passing the story to the next person and they should draw a card. Make sure that their cards remain oriented to make it clear which ones they drew upright and which they drew reversed.

The first phase continues until players have drawn and resolved the following number of cards, based on player count:

- ❶ 2 players: 4 cards each
- ❶ 3 players: 3 cards each
- ❶ 4 or more players: 2 cards each

### *Transitioning Between Phases*

Together, the players should come up with a big event that shifts the narrative into the second phase. It could be the arrival of a powerful force, a terrible disaster, or a



tremendous discovery.

Once they have completed that, make note of which cards they drew reversed. Shuffle all cards drawn reversed back into the draw deck. Discard all cards drawn upright.

### *Second Phase*

During the second and final phase, players will complete the story of the founding of Delacorte. Though there may still be some loose ends, by the time players have drawn the appropriate number of cards, most story elements should be about as resolved as they will be.

As in the previous phase, when a player draws a card, they'll get a prompt based on what card it is, and the orientation of the card matters. However, if a player draws a card that was drawn in the first phase, use the "Second Time Drawn" prompt below. (Make sure that players are on the lookout for cards they previously drew reversed! They'll need to refresh everyone's memory about what happened.) This represents a possible complication coming to fruition.

When a previously-drawn card is drawn again, both players who drew the card share control over the narration. Remember, stick with the confines of the prompt. Usually, these are not good for the faction that initially drew the card! Lean into that—but make sure everyone's still having fun.

As in the previous phase, players will place resolved cards face up in front of them. This serves as a round tracker. As the group approaches the end, they should be trying to wrap up the threads of their story as much as possible, but they shouldn't stress about that or twist cards to conclude storylines that they don't connect to. There will be a short, final phase where threads can be wrapped up in a freer way.

The second phase continues until players have drawn and resolved the following number of cards during this phase, based on player count:

- ❖ 2 players: 4 cards each
- ❖ 3 players: 3 cards each
- ❖ 4 or more players: 2 cards each

MAJOR ARCANA	FIRST TIME DRAWN	SECOND TIME DRAWN
<i>The Fool</i> (Ace of Clubs)	<p>Your faction finds a previously unknown resource in the forest and uses it.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> Using the resource goes as planned.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> You use the resource recklessly.</p>	The consequences of the reckless use of the resource manifest.
<i>The Magician</i> (Ace of Diamonds)	<p>Your faction manifests an essential element for the school, getting the other factions' favor.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> That element works better than expected.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> The manifestation is a complex illusion that can only remain for so long.</p>	The illusion wanes, undermining that faction's goals.
<i>The High Priestess</i> (Ace of Hearts)	<p>A collective dream guides the founders of the school.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> Its counsel is wise, bringing into the world an idea you could all only come up with together.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> The fae have deceived you into thinking these are your own insights.</p>	The fae's trickery comes to light in the worst way possible.
<i>The Empress</i> (Ace of Spades)	<p>Part of Central Forest that you've cleared starts to return.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> Your faction uses this teeming life to your advantage.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> One of your faction's goals can no longer be achieved.</p>	The abundance of nature strains that faction's resources, forcing them to make a difficult concession.



MAJOR ARCANA	FIRST TIME DRAWN	SECOND TIME DRAWN
<i>The Emperor (King of Clubs)</i>	<p>Your faction beseeches the Council for the Ethical Use of Magic to redress a wrong another faction has committed against you.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> They rule in your favor.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> They rule against you, and you are penalized for bringing an unnecessary case before them.</p>	The penalty against that faction is worse than they'd originally thought.
<i>The Hierophant (King of Diamonds)</i>	<p>One of the oldest, most respected magical families visits to see the progress on Delacorte.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> They are pleased, especially with your faction's progress. They offer you their support.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> They have harsh words for your faction's progress, and you take steps to impress them in the future.</p>	The steps that faction took to impress that old, respected family backfires.
<i>The Lovers (King of Hearts)</i>	<p>An emissary from the fae arrives, offering help to your faction.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> The offer is sincere, and they help to advance your ends.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> As fae are wont to do, they seem to be helping—but only for now.</p>	The fae was never really trying to help, and their trickery betrays that faction.

MAJOR ARCANA	FIRST TIME DRAWN	SECOND TIME DRAWN
<i>The Chariot</i> (King of Spades)	<p>Your faction provides clear direction for a problem facing Delacorte's founding.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> That direction is successful.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> That direction is unsuccessful, eroding your faction's credibility.</p>	That faction tries to rally support, but their lack of credibility comes to bear.
<i>Justice</i> (Queen of Clubs)	<p>Another faction's machinations against you come to light.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> As a result, the others agree to support you in one of your goals.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> They face no consequences, making you question their sense of fairness.</p>	Emboldened by the lack of consequences before, the rival faction successfully moves against them.
<i>The Hermit</i> (Queen of Diamonds)	<p>A member of your faction wanders into Central Forest late one night.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> They return two days later with an epiphany that helps your faction.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> They go missing.</p>	The missing person returns changed—and with a dire warning that forces that faction to abandon a goal.
<i>Wheel of Fortune</i> (Queen of Hearts)	<p>An unexpected event upends the progress on Delacorte.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> Your faction uses this disruption to your advantage.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> Your faction fails to adapt to the changes and makes a serious mistake.</p>	The impact of that mistake, though it took a long time to come, comes back to haunt that faction.



MAJOR ARCANA	FIRST TIME DRAWN	SECOND TIME DRAWN
<b>Strength</b> <i>(Queen of Spades)</i>	<p>A bestial creature from Central Forest rampages into Delacorte.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> A member of your faction faces the beast bravely, winning support from the others.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> A member of your faction crumbles in the face of this threat and injures themselves.</p>	<p>The injury was only the tip of the iceberg, and the unexpected consequences manifest.</p>
<b>The Hanged Man</b> <i>(Jack of Clubs)</i>	<p>A member of your faction sacrifices something important to them.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> Their sacrifice advances your faction's goals.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> Their sacrifice does nothing...for now.</p>	<p>The sacrifice costs that faction more than they thought it would.</p>
<b>Death</b> <i>(Jack of Diamonds)</i>	<p>One of your faction's goals needs to change.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> You adapt to this change and advance the new goal.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> You are unable to adapt to this change, clinging to your old goals.</p>	<p>The refusal to change their goals irrevocably harms their cause.</p>

MAJOR ARCANA	FIRST TIME DRAWN	SECOND TIME DRAWN
<i>Temperance</i> (Jack of Hearts)	Two other factions' conflict boils over.  <b>Upright:</b> You guide them to a resolution by forging a middle path.  <b>Reversed:</b> Both sides refuse to budge, trying to put their own approaches into action. You attempt to use this to your faction's advantage.	The other factions learn of their trickery and unite against them.
<i>The Devil</i> (Jack of Spades)	A burden from the past returns to plague a member of your faction.  <b>Upright:</b> You succumb to the worst parts of yourself and the burden overwhelms you.  <b>Reversed:</b> You resolve the burden surprisingly smoothly.	The burden was not resolved and presses upon their faction even more than before.
<i>The Tower</i> (10 of Clubs)	Something you have already created at Delacorte is destroyed by a sudden storm.  <b>Upright:</b> You are able to rebuild in a way that better suits your goals.  <b>Reversed:</b> You stave off the full damage through your quick thinking and skillful magic.	The quick, magical fix that faction used wears off, making the impact worse than it would have been before.



MAJOR ARCANA	FIRST TIME DRAWN	SECOND TIME DRAWN
<p><i>The Star</i> (10 of Diamonds)</p>	<p>Your faction has success in working toward their goals.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> It gives your faction hope and motivates your future work.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> You become convinced that this is your last great victory.</p>	<p>Because that faction thinks they've had their last great success, they overlook an important opportunity.</p>
<p><i>The Moon</i> (10 of Hearts)</p>	<p>A spectral figure, seemingly the ghost of a mentor long dead, appears at Delacorte.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> It offers sage advice that helps you to advance your faction's goals.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> It offers cryptic advice that you believe you've interpreted correctly.</p>	<p>That faction realizes that they've terribly misinterpreted the spectre's cryptic advice.</p>
<p><i>The Sun</i> (10 of Spades)</p>	<p>A celestial event occurs.</p> <p><b>Upright:</b> Everyone takes this event as a sign that your faction is correct, encouraging them to support your goal.</p> <p><b>Reversed:</b> Everyone takes this event as a sign that your faction is wrong, preventing them from supporting your goal.</p>	<p>Another celestial event occurs, proving to the other factions that their faction was right.</p>

MAJOR ARCANA	FIRST TIME DRAWN	SECOND TIME DRAWN
<i>Judgement</i> (9 of Clubs)	An unexpected problem forces you to reassess one of your goals.  <b>Upright:</b> After reflection, you find a way forward.  <b>Reversed:</b> You decide to forge ahead despite the problem.	Ignoring the problem causes that faction's goal to fail.
<i>The World</i> (9 of Diamonds)	A project essential to one of your goals nears completion.  <b>Upright:</b> Another faction allies itself with you to complete the project.  <b>Reversed:</b> An unexpected setback derails the project, preventing its completion.	An unexpected offer to complete the project appears, and that faction jumps at the chance.

#### Final Phase

After the final player draws and resolves their last card, the players should consider if there are any loose threads that need to be wrapped up. If so, share narrative control of concluding these threads—if you want. If you want to leave some loose ends for future adventure hooks, feel free! As in life, the history of the founding of the school likely won't end with every tension completely resolved!

When all players (and the facilitator) agree that the story is concluded, this part of the adventure is over.

#### ACT IV - CLOSING THE BOOK

When everyone agrees the previous part of the adventure has concluded, read the following to the players:

*Temitope Chibuzo sighs, snapping you out of the story he was reading to you from the book. You'd forgotten, for a moment, where you were, but it all comes back to you. Well, he says slowly. Well, what do we do now was?*

Before closing this session, the GM and players should discuss what they learned from the story about how to save the tree—or what it will mean if they let it die. Chibuzo will be



unwilling to let the tree die, but he knows it's beyond his power to prevent it without the PCs help. (And if he's reported to the faculty at the school, they'll be able to overpower him.)

This closing discussion will be important for you, the GM, to plan the next session. Because each story of Delacorte's founding will be unique, your final adventures will be, too. That said, the final entry for this year's Free Content Friday will outline components that will likely appear in many adventures. To give an overview of some key details (if you want to steer the players to these through how Chibuzo interprets the story):

- ❶ The faculty at the school will be deeply mistrustful of Chibuzo (especially after his use of "The Red Shoe Shuffle" on all of them). Many will even be hostile towards him.
- ❷ Branwell will return, seeking to help to save the tree, and he will be important in saving it—should the players choose that. Ged, the caretaker's cat, will help Branwell get back on campus and want to help him—especially since Ged's an archfey in disguise, keeping an eye on the school.
- ❸ Letting the tree die will mean that the magic in Delacorte rapidly wanes. This loss of magic will spread, over less than a year, through all of Central Forest, extinguishing all magic there. The fae and magical creatures who live there will either have to move elsewhere or die.

Saving the tree will require all of the following:

- ❶ To generate enough magical energy, there will need to be a great, permanent sacrifice of magical energy, likely a severing of a very powerful caster from The Source. But clever players may be able to figure something else out...
- ❷ The process has to be completed before the flames change from green to a mundane color. There may be ways to delay the change, but much of the final chapter of this adventure will be a race against the clock.
- ❸ In the process of reconnecting the tree to The Source, Delacorte will have to become known to the outside, mundane world. Not all faculty and students will think this is a tradeoff worth making.

Of course, if any of these details don't work for your group, you'll be able to change them. Ultimately, players will be given a choice to save the tree or not, and what they choose will have a profound impact on the course of their world's narrative—should they choose to continue playing in the world they've helped to create.

But, more on that next month in the final installment of this year's Free Content Friday!