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THE EASTLANDS *



-  TEMPLE OF AGRIPPA
-  ASYLUM
-  CONSERVATORY
-  CASTLE
-  MONASTARY



FROBOZZ NATIONAL ARCHIVES

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

LOCATION: Greater Underwing, Sec. 3502.32

ARCHIVE FILE # A-NEM/FOBILA

CONTENTS: Journal and effects belonging to Agent L. Bivotar, discovered 20 bloits downwind of the Eastlands (a.k.a. the Forbidden Lands)

INSTRUCTIONS:

By Order of The Esteemed Vice Regent Syovar:

To be filed without indexing among the personal papers and memoirs of the Vice Regent. Seal is to remain undisturbed on pain of severe torture and/or dismemberment of any violator.

Signed,

Flapto Dimtop

Flapto Dimtop,

Regal Director of Records
and Historical Accuracy
Frobozz National Archives



F R O B O Z Z N A T I O N A L A R C H I V E S

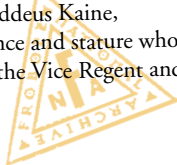
By Declaration of The Esteemed Vice Regent
Syovar the Strong:

This Parchment declares that Agent Karlok Bivotar has full Rights and Authority to act as Agent and Representative of Vice Regent Syovar in all matters concerning the investigation of Cases 95820, 95821, 95822, and 95823* of the Bureau of Missing Citizens.

Any requests for assistance and/or information made by Agent Bivotar should be treated with the utmost immediacy.

Long Live the Vice Regent.

*Referring to the suspicious disappearance of Madame Sophia Hamilton, Bishop Francois Malveaux, Doctor Erasmus Sartorius and General Thaddeus Kaine, respectively, all Citizens of importance and stature whose welfare is of the utmost concern of the Vice Regent and the Empire.



17 DISMEMBER 947

MOST ESTEEMED VICE REGENT SYOVAR-

My SOVEREIGN,

I NOW STAND AT THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE FORBIDDEN LANDS, PREPARED TO MAKE QUICK WORK OF THIS STRANGE AND WEIGHTY ASSIGNMENT ENTRUSTED TO ME. I WAS SOMEWHAT DISTURBED THAT OUR BRIEFING WAS HASTENED BY AN UNEXPLAINED URGENCY. NEVERTHELESS, MY OBJECTIVES ARE CLEAR TO ME, AS ENUMERATED BY YOUR EMINENCE:

1. TO DETERMINE THE WHEREABOUTS OF FOUR (4) MISSING CITIZENS OF PROMINENCE.
2. TO SUBSTANTIATE THE ALLEGED ~~W~~ORSE ~~O~~F THE SO-DECLARED FORBIDDEN LANDS.
3. TO INVESTIGATE RUMORS OF UNAUTHORIZED MAGIC, BLACK OR OTHERWISE, IN THE REGION.

IT IS THE FINAL ELEMENT OF MY ASSIGNMENT THAT MOST INTRIGUES ME, AND, IF I READ YOUR COUNTENANCE PROPERLY, STANDS TO BEAR THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FRUIT.

THAT YOU HAVE ORDERED MY MISSION THROUGH UNORTHODOX PROCEDURES, AND MADE SPECIAL REQUEST THAT I REPORT BACK TO YOU ALONE, GIVES ME CAUSE TO THINK THERE MAY BE MUCH TO BE GAINED FROM THIS ADVENTURE. I SHALL KEEP THESE PAPERS FAITHFULLY. YOU HAVE PROMISED GREAT REWARDS. I SHOULD HOPE SO, AS, TRUE TO ITS NAME, THE LAND SEEMS TO PROMISE GREAT RISK.

YOUR OBEДИENT SERVANT,

BIVOTAR

22 Dismember 947

I am now three days journey south of the northern branch of the Frigid River. The border crossing was well-guarded. Even with the scroll bearing Syovar's signature, the royal militia was reluctant to let me cross. They must have thought me crazy for wanting to journey into the Forbidden Lands. And perhaps I am; I have not yet reached the edge of the desert, but already the signs of devastation are obvious on every side. Immense scars and patches of burnt land are visible with alarming frequency, as if the Implementors have tormented the province with an unceasing series of lightning strikes and fire storms. Giant corbies circle overhead menacingly, already waiting for me to collapse in exhaustion. This is no place for the living.

Of the hauntings and hallucination, this much I can piece together. The Grey Mountains slipped into oblivion first, the inhabitants of Frostham complaining of horrible screams and an inescapable stench that pervaded the area. Reports came from the Desert River next. Merchants and trading caravans that still moved through the areas untouched by the war began to report nightmares and visions so powerful that they lingered for weeks in the minds of the victims. Soon the entire sky over that area became covered with distorted faces and figures, prompting Syovar to consider forbidding all access to these desolate provinces. Most of the refugees managed to make it out in time. Those who didn't are now dead or, from what I have witnessed thus far, wish they were.

It is clear to me now that the Vice Regent's order to make all of the eastern provinces outside of his control into forbidden territory was a wise decision. It is doubtful to me if even Syovar the Strong (Dear Yoruk, the life of a sycophant— must I call him that, even in my personal papers?) would be able to defeat the force that has taken control of this land—whether it truly is a curse, or simply the latest terrorist tactic of the Enchanters' Guild. Moreover, since the fall of the empire, these lands have been devastated by famine and barbarian invasions of the worst kind. It would be a wasted effort for Syovar (!) to attempt to recapture these territories in hopes of restoring the Great Underground Empire—just as it is a wasted effort for me to be here now. Civilized life will never again thrive in these territories, a fact undeniably attested to by the unpalatable platypus pot pie I was forced to eat for my dinner last night—if you could call it that. Some sort of evil spirit has come to reside, at least in the gastronomy of this place, that much is clear.

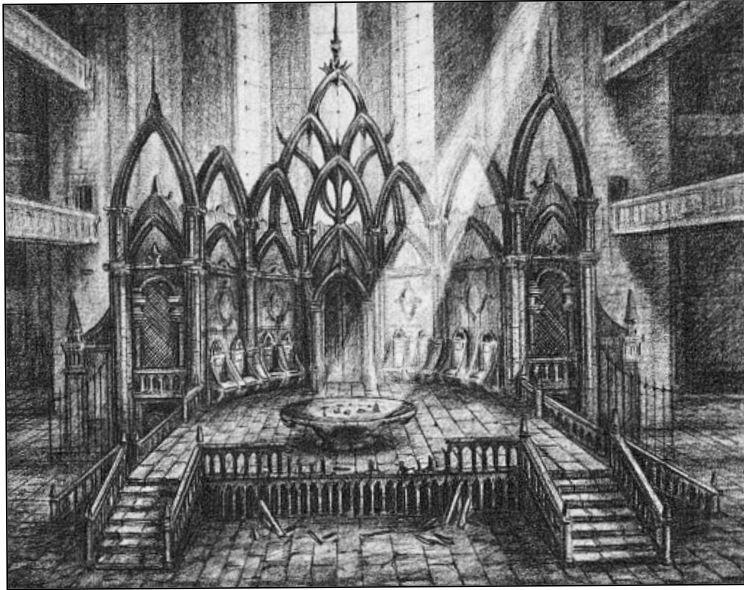
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△	▽	▲	▼	2

5 Estuary 948

I arrived at the outskirts of Irondune, Kaine's territory, at dusk yesterday. I found only one old woman, sitting in the central square, lost in her own little world. She hadn't eaten in days or bathed in weeks. Using a stick to carve lines in the dirt, she pre-occupied herself by doodling a vast array of astrological symbols all across the square. I tried to grab her attention, but she simply went on mumbling about the nature of the secret elixir and the philosopher's stone, and praising the unity of all elements. The references to the forbidden alchemical sciences caught my ear, and I pressed her for details. She pretended not to hear me, only gradually answering my own questions by continuing to talk to herself, but I caught a garbled reference to one Doctor Erasmus Sartorius, a.k.a. my assignment 95822. I hurriedly began to copy down the symbols she was drawing in the dust. Before I could finish, she took the pen from my hand and began to sketch the most beautiful, otherworldly drawing. I asked if I could have it, and she took from her bag a roll of parchment, filled with her elaborate, mystic visions. I have studied them for hours, and don't know what to make of them. They are strangely arresting.

7 Estuary 948

As I make my way through the desert south of Aragain, the desolation of the sand dunes renders this already-deserted province nearly unbearable. It seems hard to



I don't know what to
make of this —

believe that this desert was not always a wasteland—not until the black magic of two ruling egos levelled it. I can see Irondune rising up in the distance, surrounded by plumes of black smoke. I see that Ellron wastes no time, now that the General is absent. Perhaps here I will find some answers that will lead me to General Kaine and hasten my return home.

My fellow wayfarers—of the unimpressive yet customary sort that you find along the Great Underground Highways of this land—attribute the curse to some dark figure they will only call the “Nemesis.” The name has surfaced two or three times now, and with the same dark respect a child attributes to the boogey-man. But these are mawkish, superstitious folks, with not the insight of a brogmoid between them. I refuse to endure another endless game of Fanucci in hopes of eliciting more useless information.

27 Estuary 948

Syovar-

I have spent the past few weeks traversing the territories of Irondune, my Regent. The endless border disputes between Ellron and Kaine—over, if you recall, the former Aragain and Desert River provinces—seem to drag on without solution, as they have for several decades now. No two men have despised each other more. As we imagined, since Kaine’s inexplicable disappearance, his army has fallen into complete disarray, and even his precious Irondune is under siege.

[REDACTED]

BUREAU OF MISSING CITIZENS

Division of Prominent and/or Special Citizenry



CASE FILE 95823 - UNSOLVED

CLASSIFICATION - X

NAME: Kaine, Thaddeus

DATE OF BIRTH: Jelly 6, 899

PLACE OF BIRTH: Aragain

EMPLOYMENT: General in the Vice Regentís Royal Militia, Liege at Irondune

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: See Attached Photo

LAST SIGHTING: Leaving Irondune, headed in the direction of the Temple of Agrippa.

FOR BUREAU USE ONLY: The subject of this report is a Citizen in Full Standing of the Empire; is a Prominent and Useful Citizen; and does not Cross Reference into any reports Criminal, Insurrections, Suspicious, Magical or Otherwise.

[REDACTED]

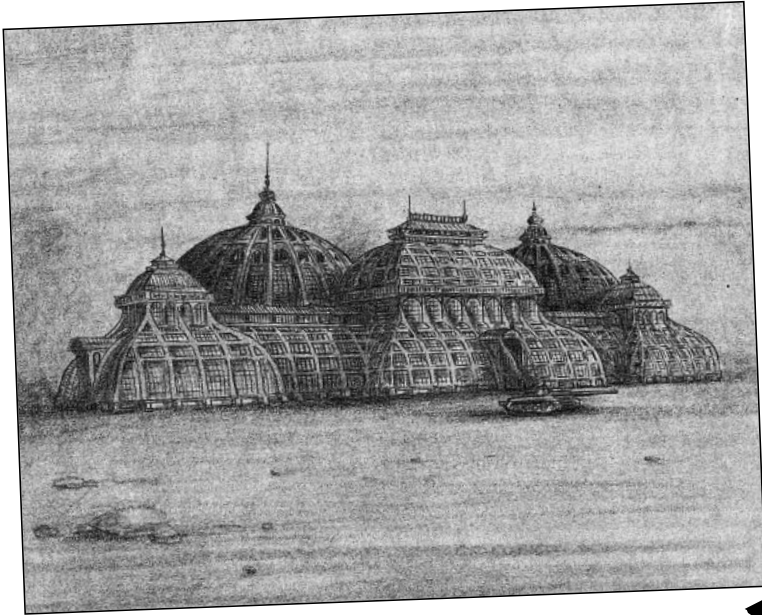
Yet perhaps more remarkable than the disrepair of Kaine's army is the lamentable state of Ellron's. Ellron's armies have fallen utterly out of his control. Every man has fallen prey to the sickness that pervades this land, from his highest generals to his lowest foot-soldiers. Large numbers of soldiers have fallen upon one random village after the next, like packs of wild wolves. These hordes seem to be driven by a force almost outside of themselves, moving in directions and committing atrocities that even they do not understand.

What inhabitants remain in the region keep hidden behind their boarded-up doors. I try to enlist them in conversation, but they are too frightened—and most of what they say makes little sense. I have kept some record.

Since the Nemesis began to visit us, I no longer fear the devil. Blood runs in the streets where he goes. The madness begins later. And the hallucinations—unspeakable atrocities, written in the dunes, the dirt, the skies. The first one to die was skinned alive by his own tent-mate, as he screamed about the lady and her lover. Please. That's all.

—Andrew Brog, Port Fozzle

I love the skies here at night. You see such beautiful things. That woman is the most stunning sight I have ever seen. But the Darkness. It stalks her. I witness her murder again and again,



The Castle Ironclad

every time I dream. In the morning, my pillow is wet with her blood. Is there nothing you can do to save her?

—Ariela Comnena, Frigid River Valley

The General was a good man. A family man. If he knew what was happening...in his own land, with his own people. It's a bloody shame. Spooks or not, the old empire has fallen, fallen...

—F.B. Punketah, Zylonika

I do not see the things that they see. I cannot help but wonder why it is that I have been spared. The sickness that pervades this place has passed me over. I fear it is only a matter of time.

2 February 948

I have reached the Castle Irondune, and was surprised to recognize the castle from among the madwoman's sketches. What to make of this, I do not know. Clearly, the sickness has preceded me here. Ellron's armies have pushed what is left of the resistance all the way to the southern reaches of Famathria, across the southern branch of the Frigid River, and within sight of Kaine's ancestral castle. No one here knows what the final goal of that insane and rebellious army might be, nor exactly

what the siege of his castle will accomplish. Still, the black smoke of battle grows thicker every day.

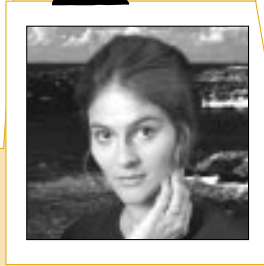
It was not difficult to slip past Ellron's troops undetected, but when I reached Irondune, I discovered a most amazing thing. The majority of Kaine's troops aren't even convinced that the General has disappeared at all! It appears Kaine, who, as you will no doubt recall, invented Thaddenium, remains equal parts scientist and general. He maneuvers his troops through an elaborate system of remote radio control codes of such a sophisticated nature that I have been unable to decipher them. All that I know is this: the codes seem to telegraph Kaine's instructions on any given day, provided the soldier can identify himself with the given cipher for that day. If I progress any further with this intelligence, I will forward it immediately. I sense that information of this nature would be entirely too dangerous to carry on my person.

10 February 948

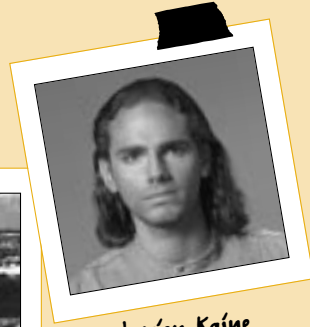
I stumbled upon an old castle guard today, raving mad and desperate to talk. Such is my luck. He spent all morning lecturing on the minute differences between each of the General's many suits of armor. I wanted to borrow a knife from one of their scabbards and slit his throat. Lucky for him, the scabbard was empty. Unluckily for me, he continued on with his deranged show-and-tell all afternoon, trying to



The Kaine Family



Lady Elizabeth Kaine(!)



Lucien Kaine



Madame Sophia Hamilton

convince me this one repugnant little antique dog was actually some sort of weapon. And I am Lord Flathead, and you are Yoruk himself!

Apparently, this toothless old fungus has known Kaine since he was a boy. Note: General Kaine does seem to inspire this type of fervent fealty in all those who serve under him. The guard, no less inclined, pressed these photographs into my hands and begged me to bring his beloved liege back to him. I recognized some of the figures in the photographs from the Society Page, the New York Times, etc., but I realized I had never seen the young man, whom the guard confirmed to be Lucien, Kaine's only son. Why this Lucien had never been present at any of the Regional Councils on War, Governance or Taxation that, as heir to Irondune, he would have been overwhelmingly likely to attend with his father, I could only speculate. The guard recalled that he was either an artist or a dentist of some significance. (!) In either case, I am thinking that he may have gone to practice in some foreign clime, perhaps the Westlands.

I must find this Lucien Kaine. I am convinced he will lead me to the General. Lady Kaine, whom I have determined to be in seclusion in Antharia, has a well-documented history of poor health and cannot be disturbed. Irondune, once a frontier post in the great campaign of Duncanthrax in the Seventh Century, is the ancestral home of her family, and falls to Kaine by marriage, not blood—so we see the great war hero is perhaps as shrewd as he is strong.

BUREAU OF MISSING CITIZENS

Division of Prominent and/or Special Citizenry



**CASE FILE 95820 - UNSOLVED
CLASSIFICATION - X**

NAME: Hamilton, Madame

Sophia

DATE OF BIRTH: Mumberbur 14, 904

PLACE OF BIRTH: Aragain

**EMPLOYMENT: Musician, Headmistress of Frigid River
Branch Conservatory**

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: See Attached Photo

**LAST SIGHTING: Leaving the Conservatory, headed in
the direction of the Temple of Agrippa.**

**FOR BUREAU USE ONLY: The subject of this report is a Citizen
in Full Standing of the Empire; is a Prominent and Useful Citizen;
and does not Cross Reference into any reports Criminal,
Insurrectionary, Suspicious, Magical or Otherwise.**

15 Frobruary 948

I came across a single photograph of a beautiful woman whom I have determined to be Madame Sophia Hamilton, concert musician and headmistress of the Frigid River Branch Conservatory, not to mention Case File 95820 of my quest. The possibility that I might discover the nature of the connection between the honorable General and the cultured Madame leads me north to the Frigid River at once. The potential nature of their connection is a subject upon which decorum forbids me from further speculating at this time. Suffice it to say that the General, too, is a widely noted expert in the usage of a variety of instruments.

17 Frobruary 948

The Frigid River Valley is just that.

(Q) How many Grues does it take to screw in a lightbulb? ha ha...

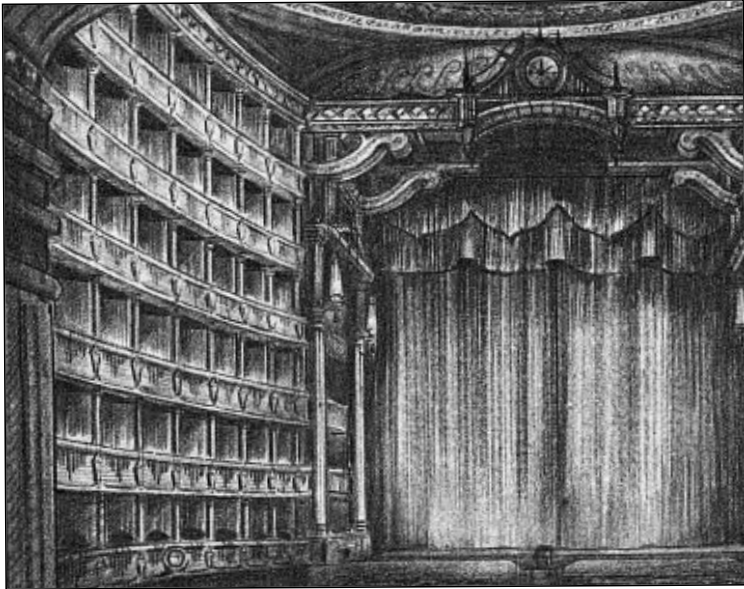
25 Frobruary 948

I finally reached the Conservatory today. A second startling discovery: the madwoman, with her peculiar alchemy, must have anticipated my journey, for the exact likeness



From the Desk of Bivotar

Things to do when I get back.
File Report
Write to Cousin Antax
Visit Mother (mine)
Get new styling gelatin (for oily hair)
Take a bath
Mail (urse Day Cards (belated)
Get the new Soundungeon album
Buy yipple Kibble for Peppy



The Conservatory —
Why has she seen my journey in her dreams?

of the Conservatory appears in her imagery, just as Ironstone did weeks ago.

The atmosphere of that imposing structure hung heavy and still, and I saw that it had fallen into disrepair, since the disappearance of its ruling Madame. I felt strangely sympathetic to her, as if being in her rare, cultured world could show me something of her refined presence, or teach me something of her expert knowledge. If I stood for a moment listening, it was almost as if I could hear lingering melodies from years ago. I felt for her, a moment, a strange sadness. I believe time is not so fixed in this place as elsewhere—though I know here, as everywhere, the old must eventually be replaced with the new...

Then the oddest thing happened. A darkness came over me, a feeling of utter fury, a kind of hatred I have never before known. I screamed—I could not help myself—and found that the sound I heard was not my voice, but the roar of a great beast, a daemon in a murderous frenzy. I heard the sound of glass breaking, and I looked up to see a cleaning woman. She backed away from me—making the sign of Yoruk over her breast—and whispered, "Nemesis."

Perhaps the curse of this land is working upon me yet. It is difficult to stay untouched.

2 Arch 948

As I journey, certain events in past months take on new significance. I remember a

Some kind of outdated brochure, I think.
From the Conservatory.

FRIGID RIVER BRANCH CONSERVATORY

HEADMASTER: Madame Sophia Hamilton, the renowned classical pianist of the Frobozz Philharmonic Orchestra, is the esteemed Headmistress of the Conservatory. As Madame Sophia has played with all the finest Symphonies and greatest Z'orchestras in the Empire, her knowledge of the precious harmonies of Zork is virtually unparalleled.

CHOICE OF INSTRUMENT: The Conservatory, while emphasizing the Zork Violin, recognizes the classical beauty of all eight instruments of the traditional Z'orchestral Philharmonic. The Conservatory offers courses of study in:

THE VIOLIN - the most soulful of the Z'orchestral instruments, with its resonant Platypus-gut Strings.

THE NAMBINO - the popular Antharian percussion instrument that draws its design from the steel shipyard drums of the Port of Marba.

THE MIANO - the Accardian lyre sometimes employed by

conjurers for use in musical incantations.

THE FLEEZLE - a wind instrument with a single reed.

THE WERTMEZER - or "Worst Marriage" - the cheerfully comical two-player accordian that sounds a disharmonic blast when its bellows are pumped.

THE GEDERAGLINI - the "Lover's Horn" - played by two lovers at once at most weddings in the Empire.

THE FROBOPHONE - the traditional horn accompaniment to the Borphee Metropolitan Opera.

THE POPPERKEG - the small percussion instrument that plays whole melodies from a single note.

We also offer classes in Z'orchestral architecture and instrumental arrangement, as we feel that the proper placement of the instruments, according to the formal Zork Orchestral Layout, is critical to the success of a concert.



VIOLIN



FLEEZLE



GEDERAGLINI



MIANO

routine Surveillance Duty at the Convention of Enchanters (106th). The conversations and seminars were typically dry, ranging from such dull topics as the propriety of using "nitfol" (conversation with beasts) to gain information on competing Guilds, or the dangerous side effects of impurity in "fooble" potions (intended to increase muscular coordination, but also known to act as a most potent laxative). Between sessions, however, I overheard in a hushed conversation a word even the Vice Regent would not speak—alchemy.

My sources at the Enchanters' Guild (which include members of the Circle of Enchanters) were tight-lipped about any new developments or significant information, so I failed to include this reference in my report. In retrospect, however, their forced silence on the subject reinforces my suspicions that my reconnaissance here may reveal more than I expect. Alchemy. What did that madwoman know of my purposes in this dark land? What has her Alchemy to do with the reports of a great power gathering in the Eastlands? I study those symbols again and again, and can make no sense of it.

7 Arch 948

I am very tired, and cannot write much this evening. I attended a concert today, in the nearby town of Zorokesh. I suppose no one is to blame, considering the general chaos in the land, but without Madame Sophia, there was no Violin in the

FRIGID RIVER BRANCH CONSERVATORY

Coronation Recital

Cracle 22, 944, GBE

*A Collection of Pieces Composed and Performed
by Madame Sophia Hamilton
and accompanied by Alexandria Wolfe*

*Act I:
The Harmony of the Spheres:
A Composition in Six Notes.*

*Intermission:
Lecture by Bishop Francis Malreaux. Exemplifying his
Much Lauded Volume, Revolution and Eternity.*

*Act II:
The Berlioz Enchanted Symphony*

Traditional Closing Anthem

*Proceeds from this Recital to be dedicated to the Frigid Memorial Scholarship Fund,
which is used to support extremely cold artists.*

found this in a desk
at the Conservatory

local Z'orchestra, and the traditional Closing Anthem could not be played. As a result, the concert continued on—most tortuously—for seventeen additional hours. The sun set and the night grew progressively darker; children wept and then slept in the thick stupor of utter boredom—and finally, so did their parents.

It was at that point that I crept away from my seatmates in bored Box C, and determined to retire. Perhaps they are sitting there still.

11 Arch 948

I found this program, but do not know what to make of Bishop Malveaux's appearance in it. General Kaine, Madame Sophia, and now Bishop Malveaux, all in association — 95823, 95820 and 95821. I am beginning to suspect foul play, some grand conspiracy, but cannot determine why they would be abducted, until I can discover what it is that makes them so valuable to this "Nemesis," if he is indeed responsible. I will make passage to the Steppinthrax Monastery, and see what I can learn of the good monk Malveaux. I have purchased a copy of his best-selling "Revelation and Eternity"—which has led many thousands of Quendorans to return to Zorkastrian fire-worship, and which I fully expect to be rehashed New Age garbage for the fickle yipple-brained masses. I will read it on the road. The things I do in the name of Syovar (!) and, hopefully, a promotion and vast riches (!)(!)

[REDACTED]

BUREAU OF MISSING CITIZENS

Division of Prominent and/or Special Citizenry



CASE FILE 95821 - UNSOLVED
CLASSIFICATION - X

NAME: Malveaux,

Bishop Francois

DATE OF BIRTH: Oracle 10, 900

PLACE OF BIRTH: Port Fozzle

EMPLOYMENT: Bishop of Zork, Steppinthrax

Zorkastrian Monastery; author of Revelation and Eternity.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: See Attached Photo

LAST SIGHTING: Leaving the Monastery, headed in the direction of the Temple of Agrippa.

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[REDACTED]

15 Arch 948

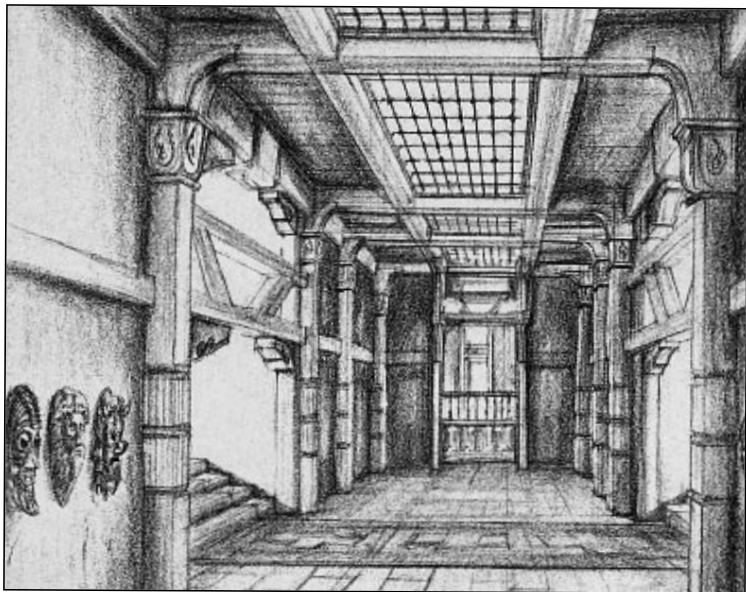
The heat here is unbearable. I spent the better part of today lost in the rolling of the dunes. Just as I was despairing of ever finding a way out, I came across a wandering band of monks—a dozen of them maybe—dancing in circles around a fire in the sand. They were a strange bunch, singing aloud in some ancient tongue, throwing little scraps of metal into the fire, yelling out poems of praise to the fire-gods. It's hard to believe people ever thought the world was flat, let alone that it rested on the head of a giant brogmoid. Then again, it's hard to believe that anyone would pay a Zorkmid for that fire-rubbish I was reading last night. But I've heard of people dropping quite a few Zorkmid on their way to the temple. Even the Implementors have their price.

The monks did not run from me, unlike most people in this horrible land, but were in fact quite friendly. It soon came out through conversation that they had come from the very monastery I seek, some several hundred bloits to the southwest, among the mountains on the Steppinthrax Peninsula. All of these monks were unanimous in their praise for Malveaux. They called him a great man, a genius akin to the gods. They assured me that his powers of alchemy had destined him for immortality. Alchemy. My thoughts returned to the strange symbols drawn in the sand. But they would say no more on the subject, and passed the rest of the night plying me with tales of Yoruk and the fires of Hell. I found them strangely compelling, and have tried to reconstruct what I could from recollection—

THE DESCENT OF SAINT YORUK

The story goes something like this. The merchant Yoruk, a simple man, grows dissatisfied with his simple trade, his simple gods, his simple life. He prays to the Implementors and hears nothing. He doesn't take it personally. He understands he's just yipple dung to them, a little man among little men. So he does what any logical fellow would do—and follows this sullen, lowly sod of a daemon down to hell, to speak with the Devil. Quite reasonably, he assumes the Devil, being the Devil, will keep less exclusive company. And he's right—only, standing between Yoruk and his Devil is this totally horrific, fire-snarling daemon—a major daemon, the grand daemon of them all, the Great Daemon of the Threshold. And, I believe, a ring of hell fire.

There absolutely is fire, I am now remembering, because that's what next has to happen. Yoruk's daemon pulls out a ruby shield and passes through the flames untouched. But Yoruk—oh ye with the faith of a fungus—loses his nerve and lets go of the magical shield, and is burnt. As a whole throng of daemons gathers around him to heckle and jeer his imminent incineration, Yoruk seizes his opportunity, steals a like shield from the side of a careless daemon, and dashes through the flames—unscathed. Then, armed only with the simple blade of a simple merchant, Yoruk slays the Great Daemon of the Threshold in his surprise, and makes his way down to the Devil, who, reasonably amused, teaches Yoruk the Great Mysteries of the Cosmos.



The Monastery at Steppinthrax —
The Seat of Zorkastrianism

That's really about it. Yoruk spends the rest of his life making good sense out of Hell, and finally, when his natural life draws to a close and he finds himself creeping upwards to the Implementors, the seraphim and the cherubim, the harmony and the ecstasy, seem strangely florid and overwrought. He stays to talk awhile with the Implementors, finds them likeable enough in their own way, and then politely requests that he be returned to the company of his good friends in the Underworld, citing differences both aesthetic and philosophical. The Implementors resist until Yoruk, brandishing his sword and the bronze shield with the five fire rubies, hacks a path through the Happy Fields where Joy forever dwells, and is never heard of again, though his vast knowledge of things Above and Below, as scripted in the many Books of Saint Yoruk, is truly Enlightenment of a most sensible sort.

21 Arch 948

I am, by this time, not surprised to discover that the madwoman sooth had predicted my current destination in her eerie drawings. As I wandered through the Monastery at Steppinthrax, I stopped upon a stone staircase to look over the arresting view. The landscape, broken by volcanic formations, seemed to reflect the unrest I was feeling at the very moment—the unrest of the curse. A simple man seeking answers, like the good Yoruk himself. I made my way into an empty office, and found several volumes on Alchemy. The subject returns to me once again; it seems to



Who is the girl?

be the common link, but I do not understand it. The monks here are mourning the departure of their dear Bishop, and have, for the most part, taken a vow of silence. Between the hundreds of thousands of fire worshippers who cling to his text, and the Zorkastrian brothers who defend his person, I can find very little reason that anyone would seek to harm Bishop Malveaux to begin with.

Then again, if the Nemesis is truly some great daemon, the Bishop's goodness would be grounds enough.

26 Arch 948

I found these photographs in the monastery. I found dozens of them, all of the same whimsical little child. I believe she is an orphan, a foster child raised by the sect. It appears that the good Father was indeed, a good father. I cannot yet identify the girl, but I will.

3 Mage 948

Magic, science; science, magic....

My mind returns again to my visit to the Convention of Enchanter — this time to the Keynote Address, where Guildmaster Barbel made veiled references (which only now are becoming transparent) to critical “elements” that may portend an upheaval of all Learned Arts in the Empire.

[REDACTED]

BUREAU OF MISSING CITIZENS

Division of Prominent and/or Special Citizenry



CASE FILE 95822 - UNSOLVED

CLASSIFICATION - X

NAME: Sartorius, Dr. Erasmus

DATE OF BIRTH: Jan 19, 895

PLACE OF BIRTH: Frostham

**EMPLOYMENT: Chief of Staff, Gray Mountains Asylum;
Research Scientist; Physician**

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: See Attached Photo

**LAST SIGHTING: Leaving the Asylum, headed in the
direction of the Temple of Agrippa.**

**FOR BUREAU USE ONLY: The subject of this report is a Citizen
in Full Standing of the Empire; is a Prominent and Useful Citizen;
and does not Cross Reference into any reports Criminal,
Insurrectionary, Suspicious, Magical or Otherwise.**

[REDACTED]

He also quoted the renowned historian (and, perhaps, oracle) Ozmar, who wrote in 821 GUE:

The greatest irony is this: that the ancients of our kind were nearer to knowing the truth about Science than those who called themselves Scientists. Science has taught us much and given us new words for old mysteries. But beneath these words are mysteries, and beneath them more mysteries. The pursuit of Magic has given these mysteries meaning and provided for our people great benefits unrealized as yet by Science. One day, perhaps, a great union will be formed between Magic and Science, and the final mysteries will be solved.

Clearly someone, or something, in the Forbidden Lands—I don't know which best describes this "Nemesis"—has ventured forward along this dark path, further than Ozmar might have expected.

12 Mage 948

I continue to encounter cosmic symbols and runic writings that I cannot understand and have difficulty reproducing in this Record. I believe them to be magical in nature, however. As, I have determined, are these sketches.

Strange. I have sworn to uphold the Unnatural Acts (in effect since 672 GUE),

bittyjoo	makes lies undetectable (and chocolate to vaporize)
krak	drastically slows time (may cause disorientation)
nikmo	creates the urge to initiate a temporary relationship
boor ^{**} nil	something about toothless creatures
loktar	causes temporal distention
pax-ten	slows productivity through confusion
ghel-ook	suspends subject in a gelatinous substance
dabhku	ensures complete obedience of subject (lasts one hour)
koasst	plays soothing ambient music
Zugthug	automatically corrects spelling errors
kepmkonn	causes massive destruction to specified edifices

Formula for some kind of
potion- magical or scientific -
who knows - found it with
the Doctor's papers.

pinen salt from Aragain Falls

corn nuts to top, if desired

P-D-C-S, Formula

1 basin boiling water

electricity to cook

or gas, if you have it

hydrogen to oxygen

molten ore

oxygen to hydrogen

water to cool

helium to make sure it rises

Pie, Windcat, Secret Recipe

14 hairs (fungus or windcat) for flavor

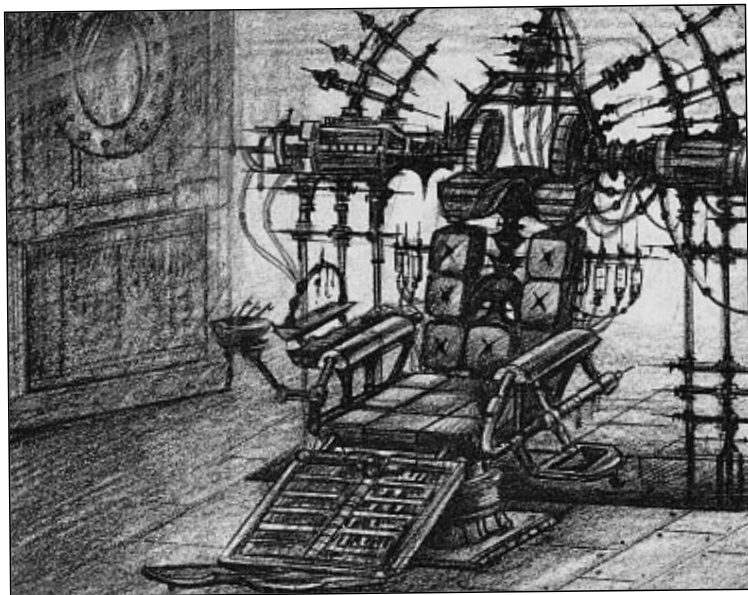
2 quarts live, active Rat-Ar

which provide stiff penalties for those convicted of selling "Unnatural or Supernatural Substances," and prohibit the unauthorized conflagration of the Learned Arts. Yet, (and I have admitted this to no one) in studying the violations and forbidden acts, I have developed a silent fascination with the Enchanter's Art. Sadly, my memory is weak, and always has been, and therefore my efforts to master the simplest spells escape me. That does not keep me from trying to understand what I see here... I have recorded a list of spells, potions, and my attempted translations on the preceding page.

17 Mage 948

This Asylum is a haunted place. Many levels of the complex are abandoned—floors 2 through 19 appear completely deserted. This esteemed Doctor Sartorius, who, from the testimonials I have discovered, has done such good for so many, has left his papers in some disarray. The place looks as if it has been ransacked. It is hard to visit this place and not walk away, for a time, shocked. Partly, the condition could be attributed to the withdrawal of government funding, as the Doctor's papers attest. However, there is a great deal of blood, which suggests a familiar pattern—the work of the Nemesis. Knowing nothing of the medical profession and less of science, I am learning little.

I encountered an unusual chair. It must have been some therapeutic device, as



A Thousand Fingers —
A Most Unusual Chair

sitting in it created a most pleasurable sensation, as though hundreds (perhaps thousands) of fingers were devoted to my corporeal stimulation. After several sittings, I resolved to bring this device to the attention of the Vice Regent on my return.

I discovered some food here and made the mistake of eating it. Suffering from abdominal disorder. Surrounded by medicines I dare not take. Pain increasing. What is going on in my stomach? I am beginning to wonder whether this Assignment is worth the trials I am experiencing. I can only go back to the concealed gleam in the Vice Regent's eyes when he mentioned my "reward."

24 Mage 948

I have spent the last week doing nothing but reading the Alchemy books I discovered among the Doctor's papers. Finally, I am able to decipher the signs written in the sand. They are indeed Alchemical, and I will try to translate them as best I can.

26 Mage 948

Alchemy is the study of the great system of correspondances that holds our cosmos together. Hence each of the four has a sign indicating a planet, an element, and a metal. My guess would be that the four were alchemical initiates, each master of one of the four elements. The fifth element, or the Quintessence, is the

MALVEAUX -  fire

SARTORIUS -  air

SOFIA -  water

KAINÉ -  earth

Philosopher's Stone that caused the Madwomen such excitement! These books argue back and forth about what is the precise nature of this quint essentia—is it spiritual, like love or hate; or physiological, like blood or marrow; or chemical, like ether or sulphur. What the books do agree upon, however, is the boundless power of the Quintessence, once possessed. Marked by a great Eclipse, the making of the Quintessence will bring eternal life and the dawning of a new world.

If this daemon Nemesis has taken possession of the Forbidden Lands as he appears to have—if this curse is his doing—then it is my hypothesis that the General and his Madame, the Monk and his Doctor—all suffering under the curse themselves, whether for the sake of their troops or their patients, their music or their parishioners—came together to fight All Hell with the One Power Stronger. The Quintessence. And then, I must further hypothesize, they lost.

29 Mage 948

The Doctor's papers name a sacred place built by Agrippa, an engineer of Duncanthrax—the Temple of the Ancients, in the Eastlands. I believe this place to be a place of power, of wild magic. The kind of magic that creates—and destroys—worlds. If there is anything left of these four brave alchemists, I hope to find them there.

I ventured into Frosthams, and tried to speak of this Temple. None would say

19 Orkle 935

To Whoom It May Concern:

It is my most sincir wish to make gnown to all publick peoples through-out the Empirer that Docter Sartorius, the kind and generus Docter, has done a deed so thotfull, so helpfull, that words cannot describe the things I am trying to say at this time.

My sun was so sick, he cood not talk, or read or do anythine inteligent or smart like usual. We were in mony problems (as we ar poor), and cood not find a person for helpin us. Docter Sartorius said he wood fix my sun with no mony. Not only did he fix my sun, he gave him some jobs to work at the Labratory, and my sun spens all his tyme there now.

Docter Sartorius is the greatest kind of man I have gnown. His things he learns about health hav saved my sun. I am forever in his det.

Sincilly,


Agba Skimlipt

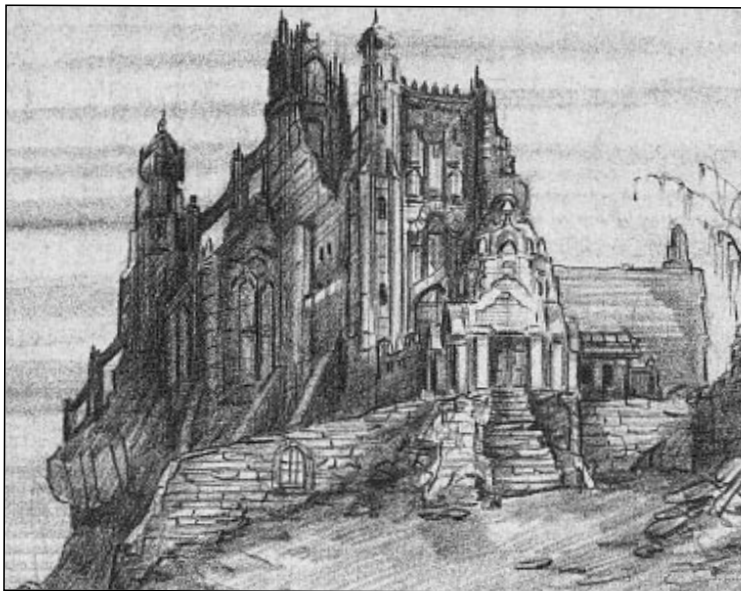
that it existed—but their haunted faces seemed to confirm what their words could not. I found my chance in the gleaming eyes of an old drunk, swilling cheap ale on the side of the road. He had a cousin, who knew a sherpa who needed the money and could take me part of the way. A few Zorkmids later, I found myself shivering on a pack horse, staring up at what appeared to be sheer cliffs of impenetrable rock.

Now, my guide tells me, I am on my own. I shall strike out for the temple tomorrow. I am certain that the end of my journey awaits me there. A dark mood has overtaken me. Perhaps I, too, have finally fallen under the curse. It is difficult to say. All I know is that it is no longer the promise of fortune or promotion—neither politics nor economics—that drives me forward. Like Yoruk, I now seek only simple answers, the simple truth, the simple power it wields. I will find the One Power and, if I do not, I will meet the Nemesis in Hell.

I have made arrangements, Syovar. If something were to happen to me in there, I have cast the one spell I know by heart—the spell of the homing pigeon, which returns lost possessions to their homes—upon this little book. Despite my clumsy hand at magic, I have attempted to ensure that this narrative would return to your chambers, my Lord. I pray for the day, however, that I place it in your hand myself.

Yoruk save us all.

Bivotar



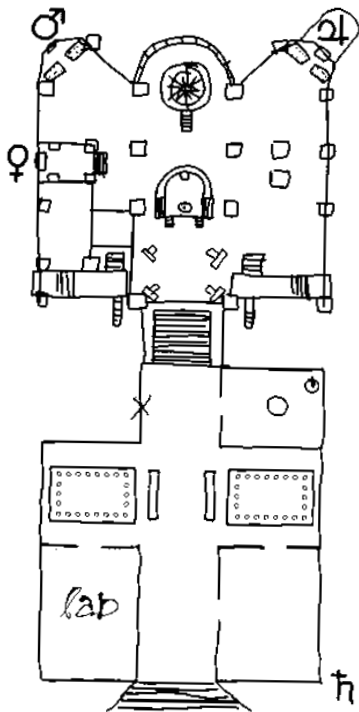
The Temple of the Ancients

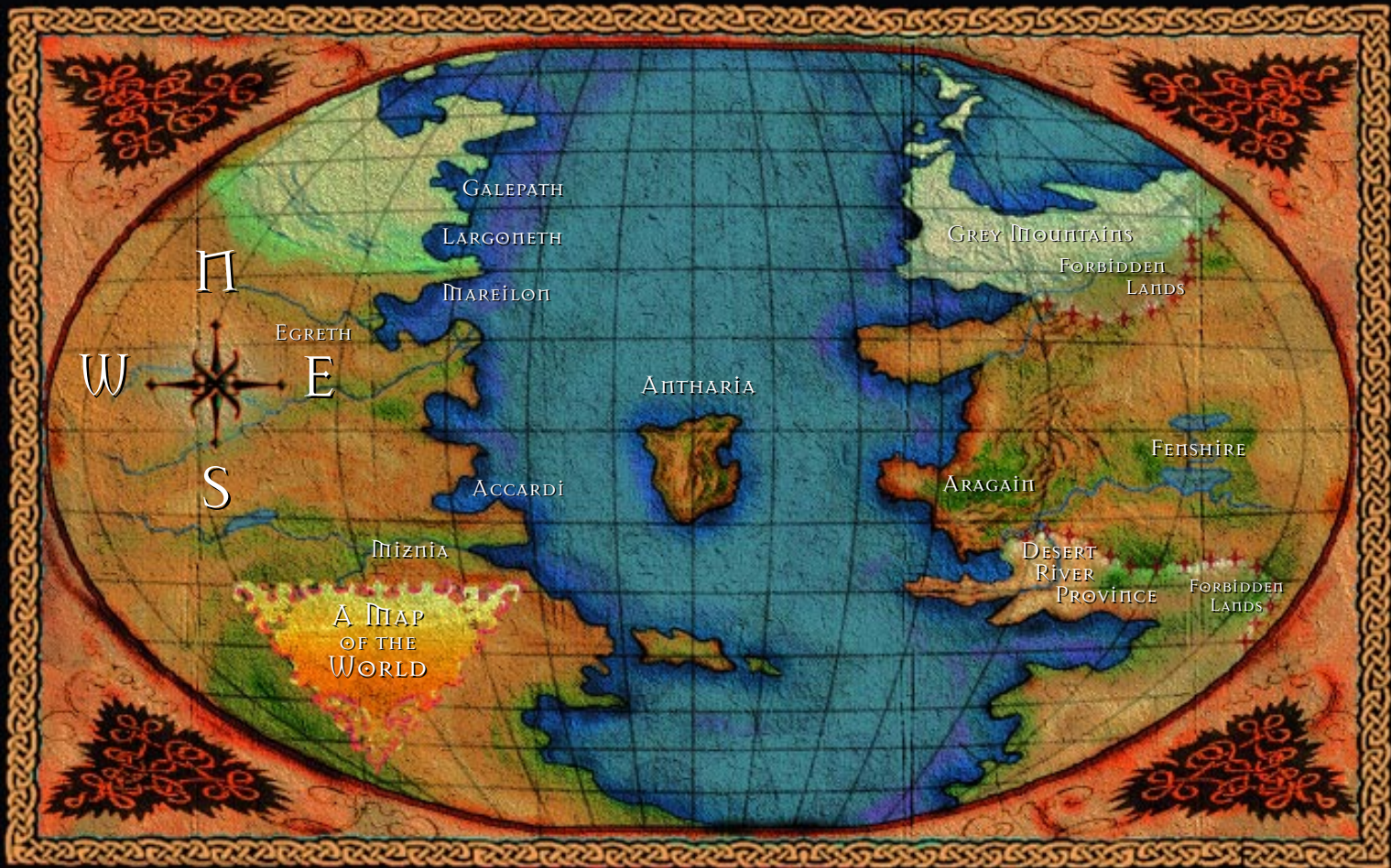
THE FOUR THEY ARE HERE DEAD
NEMESIS HATES

KILLED THE GIRL
EVIL

HE WILL NOT
I AM

DEAD





GALEPATH

LARGONETH

ΜΑΡΕΙΛΟΝ

EGRETH

ΑΝΤΗΑΡΙΑ

ACCARDI

ΜΙΖΝΙΑ

GREY ΠΡΟΥΠΤΑΙΝΣ

FORBIDDEN
LANDS

FENSHIRE

ARAGAIN

DESERT
RIVER
PROVINCE

FORBIDDEN
LANDS

A MAP
OF THE
WORLD

THE CONSIDERED CLASS

ZORK NEMESIS™



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