

Session 19

What spooky scary adventures await?

Kiva knows that sunlight is the bane of the Dhool but the crystal has long since gone out. She decides to do the next best thing which is run to Stella, Helior's light will counter this thing. She springs through the air, aiming to flip through the room and avoid the traps she had set up to get out as quick as possible, and she gracefully slides over the stair trap but trips a wire that triggers a bucket to fall from a high shelf and it bonks her in the head and she falls down the rest of the stairs in a tumble. She winds up on her ass, and pushes backward with her feet until her back hits the door, then levers herself to her feet and books it outside. She starts running right away, but as she looks over her shoulder there is a moment where the figure you see at the door of the building isn't the spirit but Kiva herself, 30 years from now with graying hair, rough peasant's clothes, and looking rough. A thought occurs to her that this is who she will inevitably be, a nobody who never amounts to anything. Her feet are already moving though, and she feels a pain in the back of her head as it drains a portion of her lifeforce as she pulls away. Beneath the village Esme starts awake, realizing that she never mentioned the additional presence she felt.

Kiva arrives at the orphanage where Stella sleeps with Granny Eadna and the kids. The door is latched to protect against wandering children so she is forced to bang on the door and yells out Stella's name over and over. This wakes pretty much everyone in the building and Anders begins to cry. Stella opens the door with a grumpy look on her face, and asks what Kiva wants. Kiva is taken aback by the look on her face and says "listen, I'm sorry to wake you up but I am being chased by a demon and really need your help! Please!" Stella's face turns serious and she turns around to shoo the kids who are gathering curiously behind the door back inside the sleeping room. Lona goes to wake Granny Eadna as well. When Stella steps out the door and closes it behind her she calls through to lock the door. A faint "Okay!" comes out from inside, and as she turns around the sound of the wooden slat falling into place echoes hollowly into the night.

Standing outside with Kiva, the night is deadly quiet. Stella brought her lantern and reflexively lights it. She then consecrates the flame and invokes the Dancing Light of Helior. The burning flame separates from the lantern and floats up above Stella's head, illuminating the street around them. Some heads donned with night caps poke out of doors and windows to check out what is going on as they walk down the street towards Kiva's home. When they arrive the light bathes the front of the house. The night is still preternaturally quiet, but there is a faint murmuring coming from inside the house. Kiva steps inside and looks around, but it looks much the same as she left it just a few minutes ago. The murmuring gets a little louder, clearly coming from Kiva's parent's bedroom. Kiva calls out to them "Mom? Dad? This is serious, I need to know if you are home. Are you there?"... Silence is her response. She steps forward quietly, with Stella and her light following behind, and pushes open the door of the bedroom.

Sleeping in their bed is her parents, but her mother is weakly stirring and mumbling in her sleep. Hovering above her is the Dhool, and as the door opens it floats up towards the ceiling to get away from the growing light. As Stella sees the spirit for the first time she is suddenly aware that Kiva is not there, and her parents aren't there and the ghost is not there, and it is silent. She realizes with the certainty of dreams that she is the only person alive in the village. Just before she succumbs to this vision she bursts out of it, feeling the pain of the Dhool sucking her life force. She sees it move up into the corner of the room to get away from the light, and Stella moves her flame forward into the room, fully illuminating the spirit. It seemed to fold into itself, letting out a pained screech and rushes out the window into the night. Stella dims the light and Kiva turns to her giving her heartfelt thanks for saving her parents.

Esme has just woken up Soren when she hears footsteps outside the Chronicle. Bedwyr comes running in, and tells Esme that Granny Eadna sent him, there has been a bunch of shouting and you should go check it out. Esme wakes Rua up and makes sure he knows what is going on and asks him to guard the crate, and she takes Soren with her and explains to him the presence she felt in the public house while they run up the stairs.

Back at Kiva's house, her father sits up in bed and rubs his eyes blearily and asks what is going on? He turns to his wife and she is laying there unresponsive, her skin an ashen grey tone. Kiva calls out to her and shakes her, but there is no response. She turns to Stella and pleads with her to help. Stella rushes forwards, the dancing light going out as she reignites her lantern and prays to Helior to bring his holy light to heal Kiva's mother. Her lantern's flame grows and she passes it over her brow and the golden light suffuses the room as the colour returns to her skin. Kiva's mom's eyes flutter open and she sees Kiva leaning over her and softly says "Oh thank the gods above and below you are alive!" Kiva hugs her tightly and says she is so so happy that she is okay. Stella takes a few steps backwards and gives them space, and explaining the spirit that was feeding on their fears. Kiva's father harumphs and says he is not going to be getting any more sleep and goes to the kitchen to get tea.

When Esme and Soren get to the top of the stairs she angles towards Kiva's home. Soren is convinced that their plan failed but Esme is concerned about Kiva being left alone. When they arrive they see the front door standing ajar Esme calls out for Kiva and Kiva calls back from inside. "Oh thank goodness" Esme exclaims and they head inside. The four of them are sitting around the table, the dad is making tea and he serves it to Stella first, thanking her for being a hero and saving them. They catch Esme and Soren up, and Esme's immediate reaction is to want the Lygosans gone. Soren also wants to see them kicked out, they sent a phantom in the night to hurt people for crying out loud! Esme and Soren go to Treasa to recruit her help, then head to the public house to confront them. Stella and Kiva stay behind, and end up taking a stroll together since neither of them would be getting anymore sleep.

They knock on Treasa's door and explain the situation and she puts on her armour and gathers her axe and they head to the public house. On arriving, Esme slams her mallet into her shield, and it rings out with a resonant sound as she calls out "Agents of Darkness and Chaos, I denounce you in front of the gods, you are anathema to civilization! Begone from this place!". Foruza comes out with an angry look on his face, asking what evidence does she have for her accusation? Esme lays out the presence she felt, and the attack on Kiva's family, it all clearly points to them being the

cause. The other two strangers are looking guilty in the background but Foruza is the image of indignation at being called out like this. In the exchange, Esme can see in Foruza's eyes that he has done many dark things in the pursuits of his goals, and cares not her Esme or her authority.

Esme again tells him and his companions to leave the village immediately. Soren chimes in as well, saying that they came to the village asking questions about the Makers and myths and stories, and now there is a spirit flying around? Too much to be a coincidence, for sure. Foruza looks at him in disdain and says mockingly "Oh yes, the outsiders consort with demons and are agents of chaos, damn you northerners really are idiots." He threatens to spread bad words about Stonetop and how they roughly treat visitors while packing up his things. He and the other two get their stuff together and head out of the village with Esme, Soren and Treasa making sure they left, and a growing number of curious villagers following them out as well.

Meanwhile, Stella and Kiva are sipping their tea and start to discuss what they know about spirits and creatures of darkness. The conversations starts out halting, but soon they are animatedly discussing snippets of books and lessons they had learned. Stella says that she learned from Olwinn, her predecessor, that creatures of darkness could be banished by trapping them in sunlight. Kiva's also knows from her research that silver works against supernatural entities. Stella recalls that there is a ceremonial silver dagger left by Olwinn at the shrine to Helior, and they plan to use that if the Dhool comes back.

Once they are gone Esme pulls Treasa aside and discreetly discusses with her the merits of going after them in the night and killing them on the road. Rua sees them and butts in on the conversation, quickly picking up on what is going on. He calls out that she already passed her judgement by kicking them out, she can't go back on her word and try to kill them now. Since Rua has already figured out what is going on she drops it, and they turn back to the village.

Soren spends the night going around and assuring disturbed villagers that all is well, the strangers were consorting with spirits and are no longer welcome here, if they are spotted again raise the alarm. Rua goes back to his home and tosses and turns as he replays the events of the night.

End of Session!

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