

Ned Morris, lone detective-turned-nomad is hired by a village Priest to investigate the home of the equally lonesome local witch, Dame Farrow; main suspect in a local streak of missing persons cases.

Though Dame struggles to meet up to his unsavoury reputation.

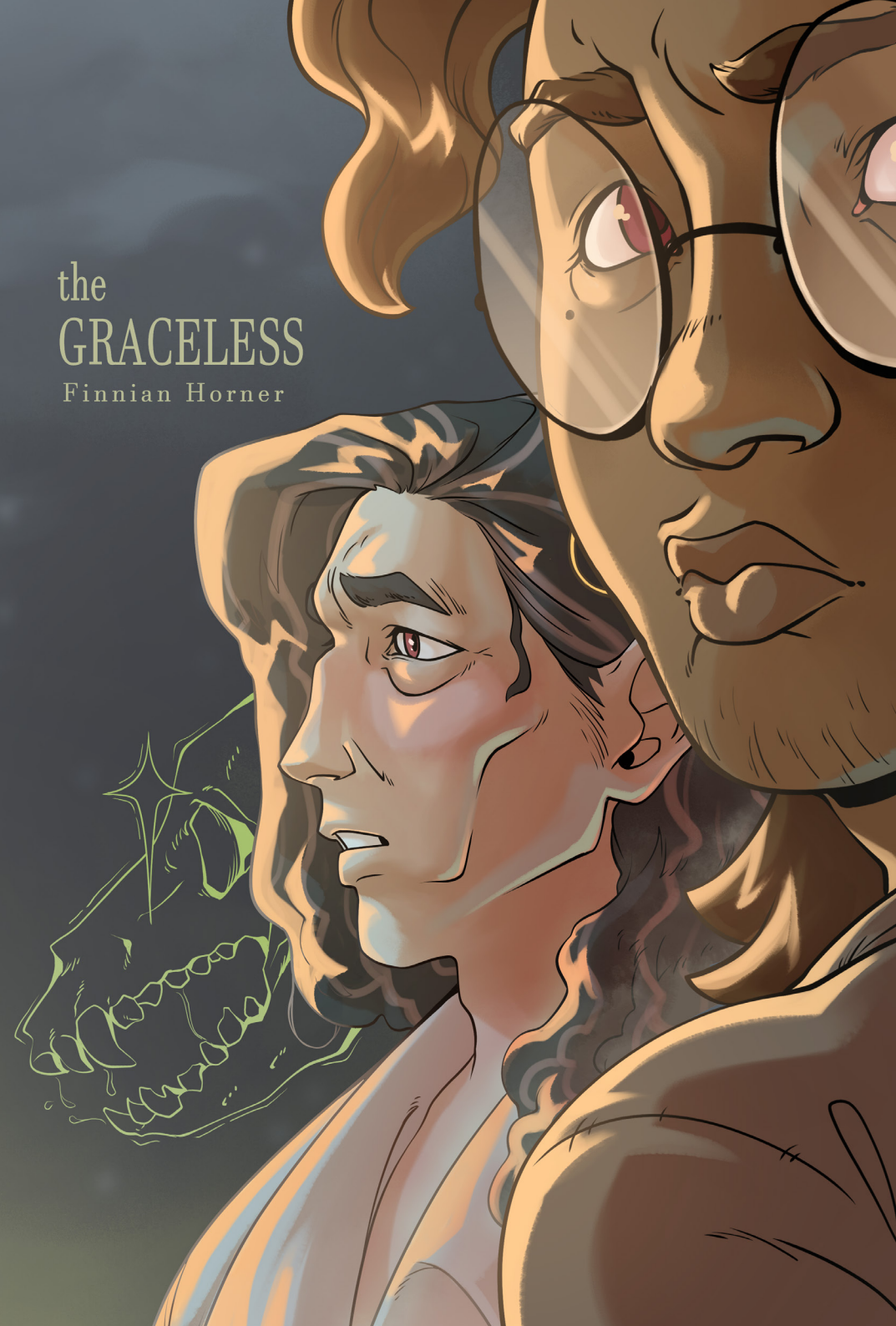
So Ned does what he does best. He lies, manipulating and/or seducing a closeness with his suspect so Dame will let him in his home: the most likely location for any significant evidence.

All Ned needs to do is get inside the house, and out again. Then he can move on with his life; onto the next unfortunate town. Neither this hostile little village, nor Dame, will ever have to cross his mind again. Just as things always go.

But Ned finds his plan has backfired somewhat, when his false feelings for Dame start to become truth.

the GRACELESS

Finnian Horner



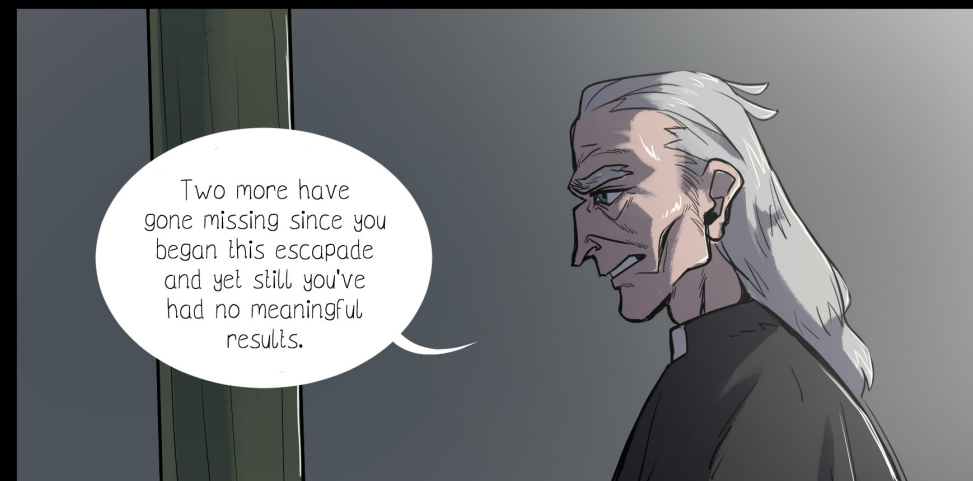




I had assumed this investigation of yours would be more proactive than it has been thus far.



There are lives in the balance, Mr Morris.



Two more have gone missing since you began this escapade and yet still you've had no meaningful results.



My apologies, I know from an outside perspective it may look like not much is happening in way of progress-



-but I'm slowly earning his trust. He's warming up to me.





You need to swing with more confidence than that.



I've never done this before!



I can see that.

You wanted to be helpful.

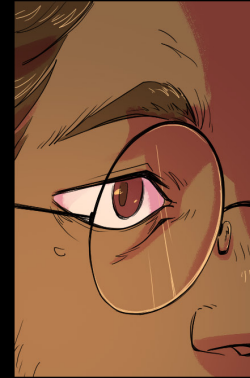


Good grief, stop!

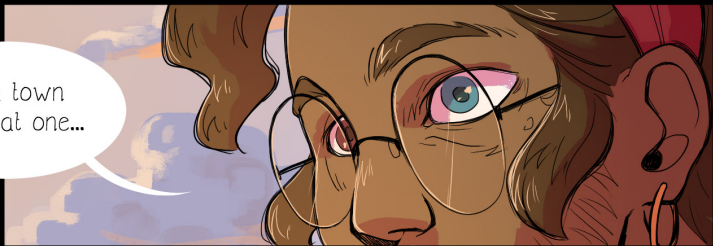


Let me show you.

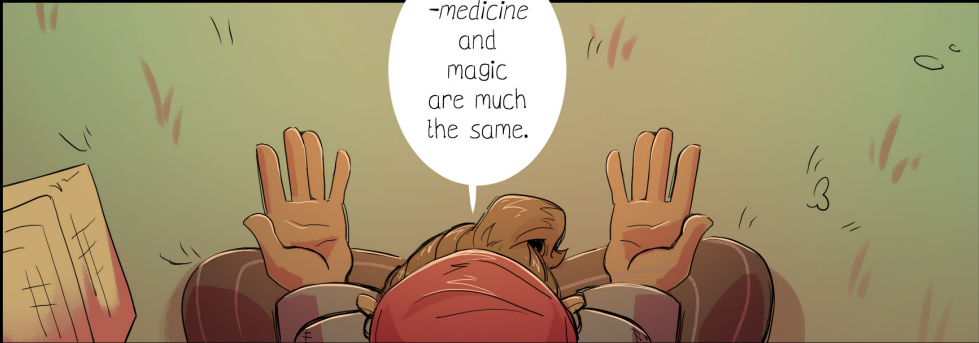




In a town like that one...



-medicine and magic are much the same.



And you know better than anyone their opinions on magic.



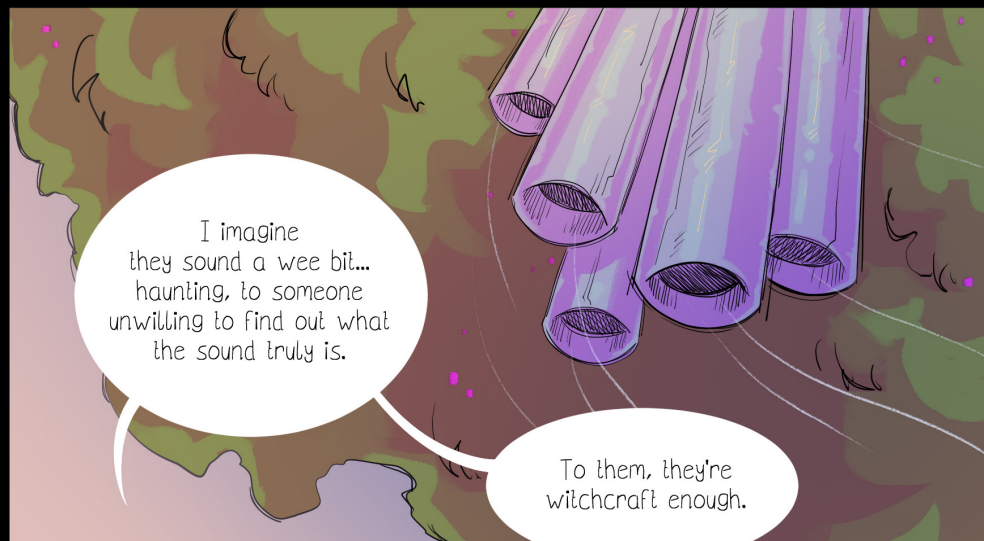
Most of them will hardly look at me, never mind allow me into their homes to...

...to help them.



Half of the reason they distrust me is these chimes.





I imagine they sound a wee bit... haunting, to someone unwilling to find out what the sound truly is.

To them, they're witchcraft enough.

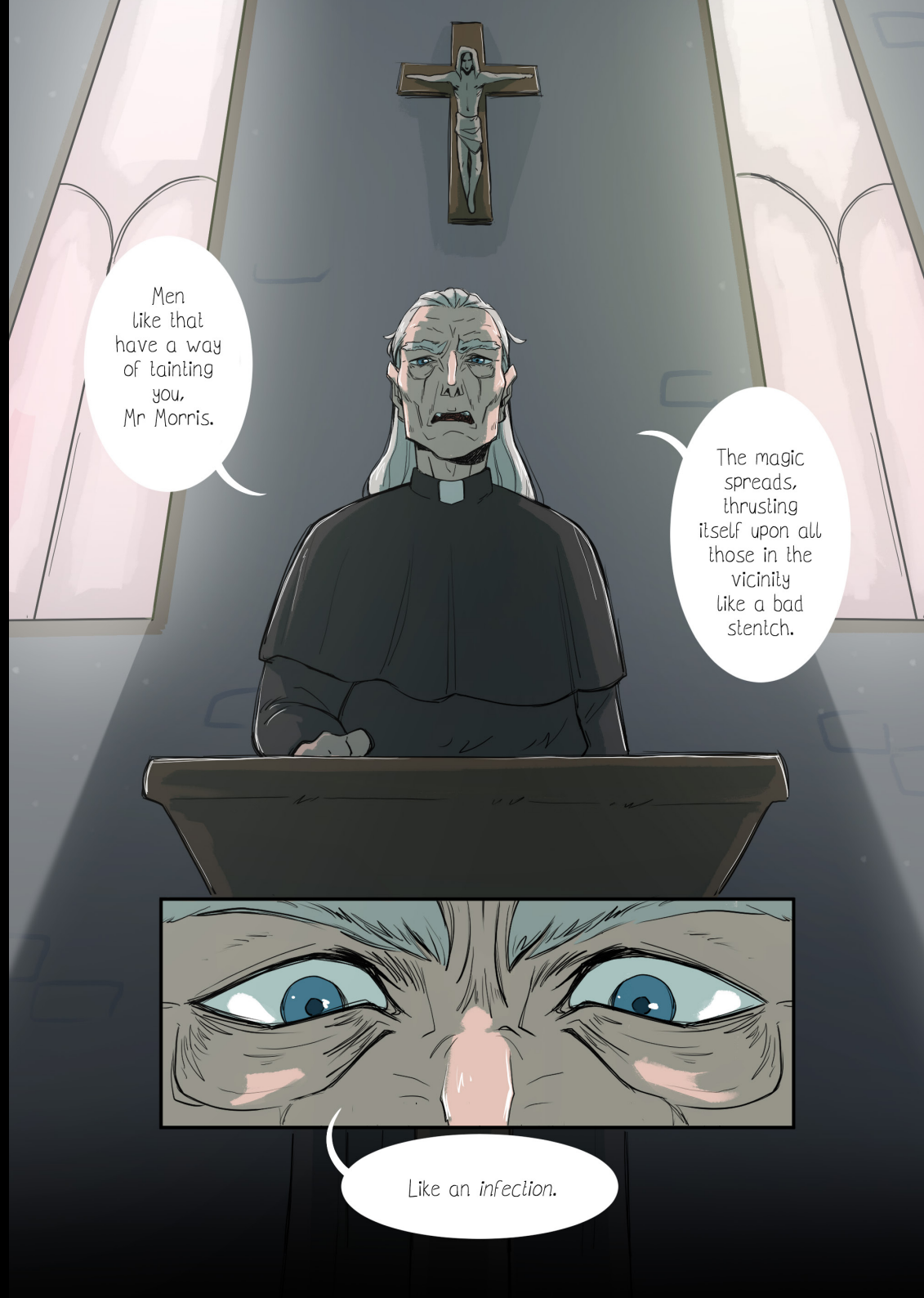


God-fearing fools.



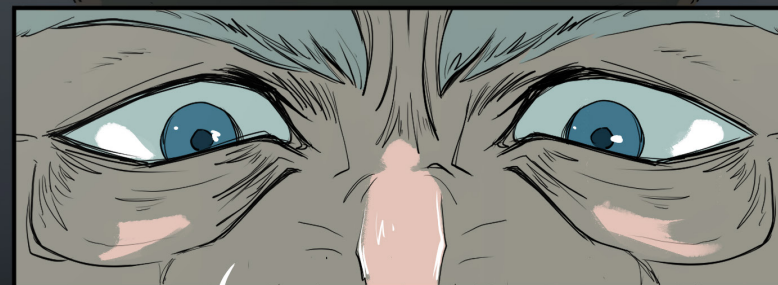
I need to get closer to him to find answers.

And you yourself know how closed off he is.



Men like that have a way of tainting you, Mr Morris.

The magic spreads, thrusting itself upon all those in the vicinity like a bad stench.



Like an infection.

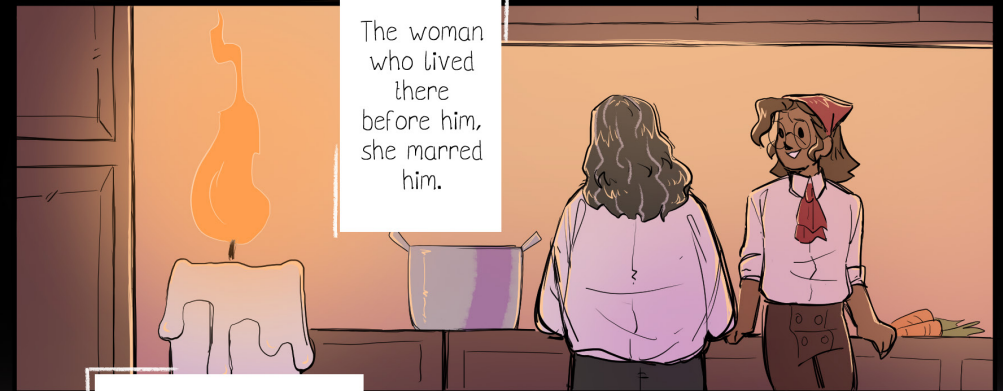


It's getting dark.

You shouldn't walk back to town now, Edward. There's all sorts of things in these woods. Please-



-Come inside.



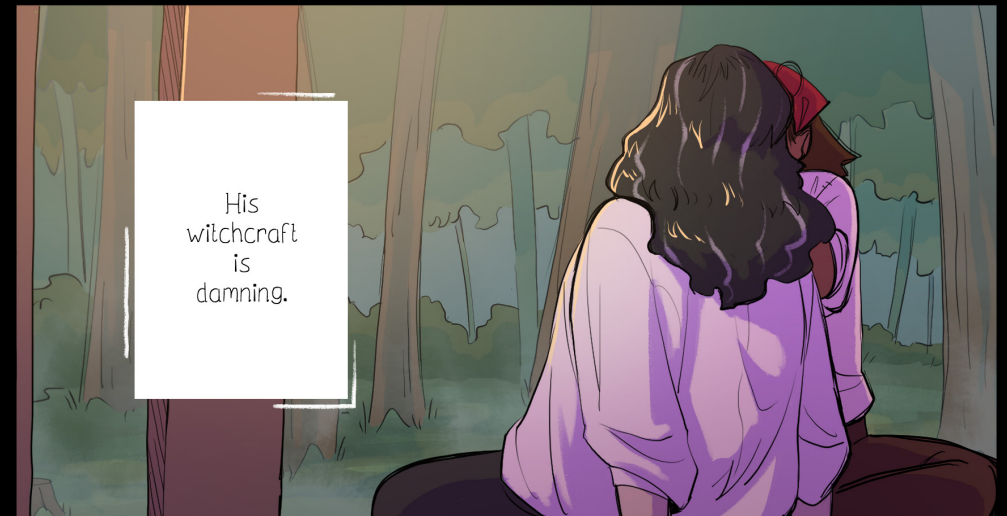
The woman who lived there before him, she married him.

Turned him into the thing he is.



He could've had a normal life had my town, one of my people taken him in.

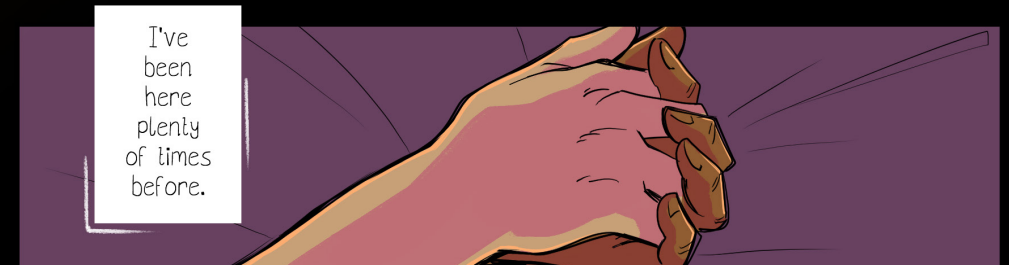
But she got there first.

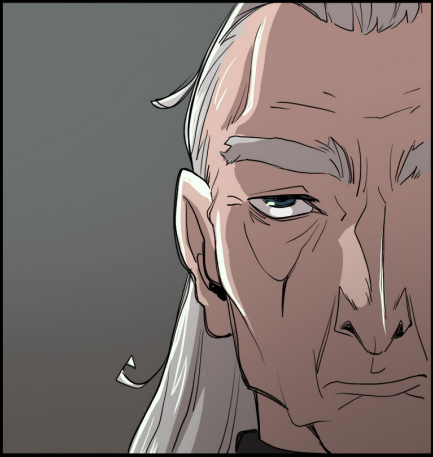




Is this okay?









Ned

Edward 'Ned' Morris has a tendency to approach life much like a cat might- cautious, curious, and with a somewhat reckless abandon for all others in his vicinity.

Ned is a Detective for hire, currently employed by a priest he doesn't trust as far as he can throw, investigating a series of odd disappearances in a small 16th century village.

Despite his irritating smugness, Ned is passionate about his work, determined to crack any case he can get his mits on. Although, he may soon find he's met his match with this one, each lead reaching dead-end after dead-end.

That is, until Dame Farrow enters the scene.

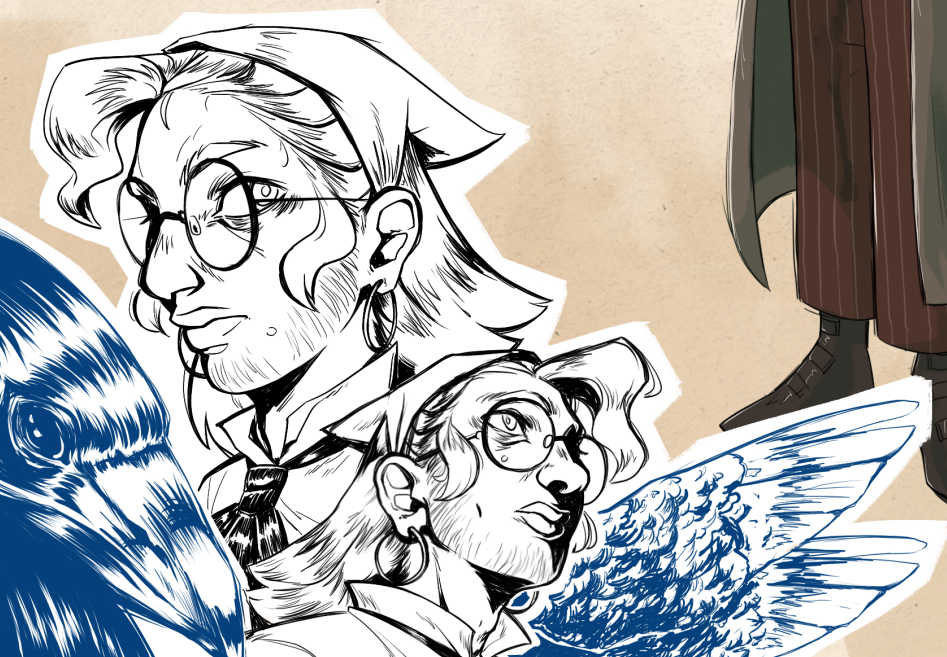


Dame

Dame Farrow is a mysterious man living alone a few miles outside of town. Thus far, he's been Ned's most promising suspect, already equipped with an anti-social reputation, alongside the rumours of his penchant for witchcraft.

Ned goes to Farrow house expecting to find a kidnapper, but finds a lonely blacksmith instead, living in an odd-looking house covered in metal sticks that make music when the wind blows through them. It's a somewhat different picture than the one painted for him.

The answer to his mystery must be somewhere in Farrow House, Ned decides, determining the easiest way in is through the front door- with owners permission. So, the prying detective starts to worm his way into Dames' life, one day at a time. After all, Ned is nothing if not a professional.



For a time, Farrow house was home to two occupants.
Dame is its second owner, the first being a young woman with shocking red hair, and warmth enough to invite a runaway, teenage Dame in from the cold.
Magic enough to teach him to control his abilities.
Love enough to ask him to stay.
And soon, all there was left to ask was for him to marry her.

Perdita was gone many a year before Ned entered Dame's life, the claws of grief and loneliness never having released their grip, even with the passage of so much time.

Her portrait is displayed along the staircase, overlooking, frozen in time as Dame grows older without her.





Father Abel

First and foremost, Abel is a man of God. He leads in God's image, a vessel for his will and message to the townspeople of Talda. Secondmost, he is leader of his people. A meagre village of some two-hundred, he has lead for over twenty years, and brought the village back from starvation with his diplomacy and strategem.

Only third, is he a Father. To a son he once held far more love for than he does now. Clements' curiosity, his intregue for knowledge that no mortal has any right to know. Questioning God himself. Abels' shame is indescribable.

While Abel cares that his child has gone missing- of course he cares- Clement was only one of many. First, he is a man of God. Second, a leader.

A man wanders into town one day, otherworldly. He brings Abel a proposition, having overheard of their ongoing disappearances. Ned, as he calls himself, claims he is a detective, capable of solving any mystery. Abel is desperate. Trust in his leadership has been dwindling for months. So he agrees to fund Ned's investigation- a last ditch attempt to rekindle his authority, and reassure the town.

It works for a time. But as people continue to go missing, and Ned's misplaced confidence remains, Abel only grows impatient. Impatient and suspicious.



