

# COUNCIL

*a game of knowing, choosing, and consequence — played with words, not dice*

*There are no dice here, and no character sheets. There is only the story we tell together — and a handful of promises about how it answers back.*

## THE SHAPE OF PLAY

- 1 **You live a scene.** You speak and act as your character, and the keeper plays the world around you. Most of the time, that is all there is — and it is enough.
- 2 **A need arises the table can't just wish away.** A locked door. A hidden truth. A thing that must be built or found. Under dice you'd roll. Here, you don't guess the magic question — you simply *reach* for the answer, and the world provides it by one of two ways below.
- 3 **What comes back changes the next scene.** And the tale sails on. That wheel — scene, answer, scene — is the whole of the game.

## THE TWO WAYS AN ANSWER COMES

### By Price

What you **pay for**. You may seize an answer by spending something of your own — a truth confessed, a new trouble taken on, a little time lost. Price is yours to demand. It always costs the self, and it is always true.

### By Grace

What you are **given**. The keeper may hand you an answer freely — unearned, unasked, because you are stuck and the story loves you. Grace cannot be bought or demanded. It falls where it falls, and it falls most on those who keep trying and keep hoping.

*Strive and pay, or be given. Most tales are told in the weather between the two.*

#### YOU CANNOT BE TRULY STUCK

Behind every real obstacle the keeper has already written three clues – a gentle **nudge**, a plain **bearing**, and, at the last, the **answer** itself. They are never improvised and never withheld forever. However you reach for help – by cleverness, by price, by grace – one of these comes. No riddle in Council is a locked room with no key. That is a promise.

#### THE ONE THING WORTH KEEPING

Council is built to reward **hope**. The world bends kinder to a crew that believes it can be made better, and grace runs toward them like water downhill. The game can wound you – it can cost you dearly, and grieve you truly – but it only truly breaks the one who has stopped hoping. Keep hope, and you are never past saving.

*Despair is the only door that locks from the inside.*

#### ONE STRANGER YOU SHOULD KNOW

There is a madman named **Landis**, who is real only in water. Find still water in any world – a sea, a cistern, a cup – look in, and ask him with grace, and he will sell you a true answer at a steep and personal price. He is not the main road, and you will not need him often. But he is always there, in every water, and every answer he gives is true. More of him waits in the pages the keeper keeps.

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