

Sunbourne: *Wind and Flame*

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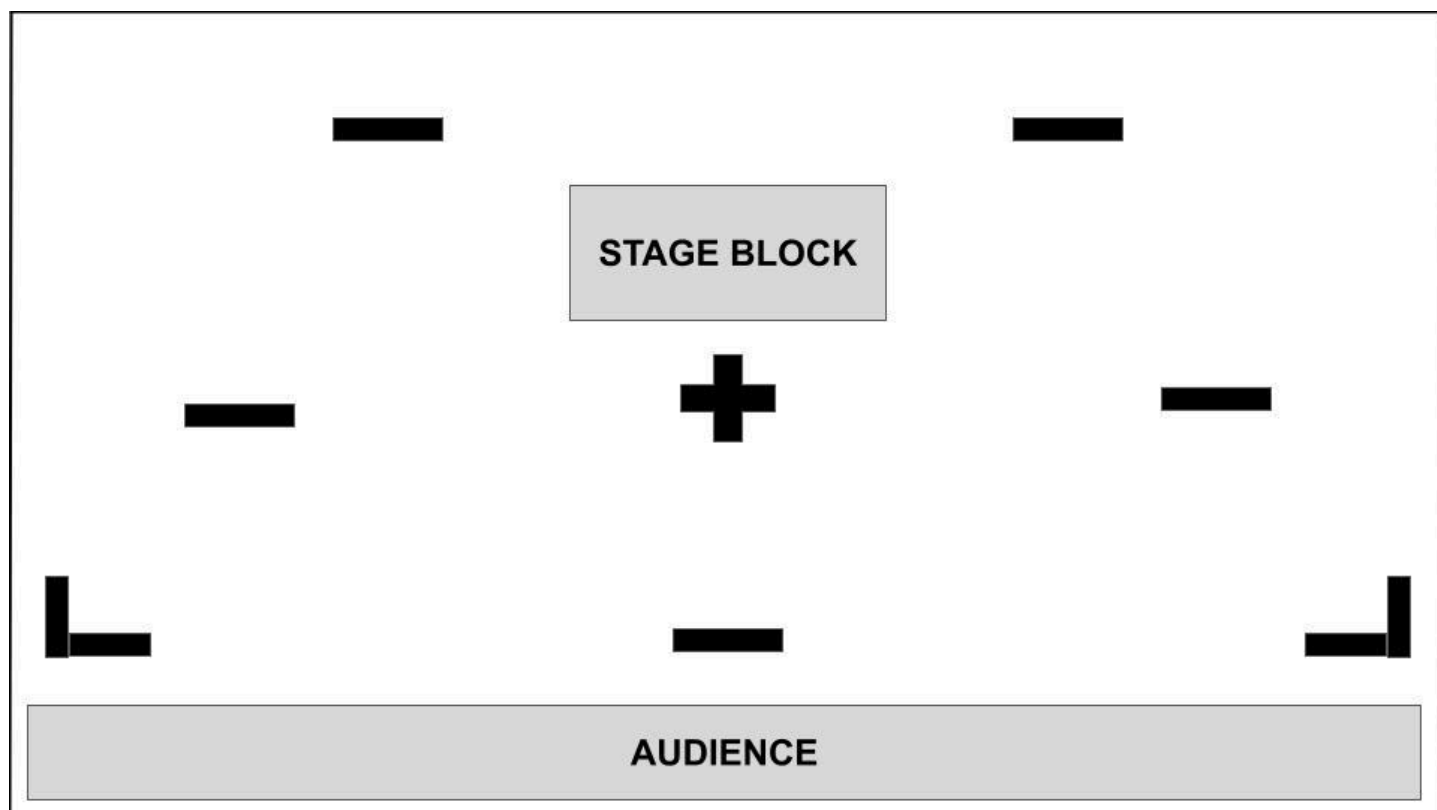
FOREWORD

In a fantasy world full of magic, The Sunbourne, an Order of Knights, led by Commander Karnak, embark on a perilous journey into the Grey, a mysterious and dangerous mist that begins encroaching on their lands. The Knights must uncover the truth behind its origins to save their realm. The play unfolds as a tapestry of alliances and secrets, navigating treacherous landscapes, both physical and metaphorical. As the characters grapple with their past and uncertain future, the play promises an epic tale of redemption, unity, and the quest to mend a world torn apart by ancient mistakes.

This play was inspired by the role-play sessions with the Kensington Blue Company of 2023-24.

Using the 'Role That Dice' system, the pupils explored an immersive world in an improvised drama setting. Through this process the pupils created the characters, lines and narrative for this play.

STAGING DIAGRAM



SCENE 1: THE COAST OF SHARDS. NIGHT.

Enter DIATH and LIATH peering towards the Coast of Shards, their expressions filled with concern and trepidation, they engage in a whispered conversation.

DIATH

(Gazing at the spreading Grey)

Liath, look.

The Grey Mist.

LIATH

Have you ever seen it extend so far into our lands?

Could this be a portent of something that will soon come to pass?

DIATH

Indeed, Liath I feel it too.

The Grey encroaches upon the dominion of the Sunborne Knights.

Could the prophecy finally come to pass?

Were the stories the elders would tell us actually true?

LIATH

(Puzzled)

I remember the tales, brother.

Mother would read them to us,

That was before the Great Sundering -

(Gazing at the spreading Grey)

The elders foretold of a time when the Grey would bridge the realms of elf and men.

But that was just a fable...wasn't it?

Enter QUINLAN and FORGON.

QUINLAN

(Concerned)

Fables are often laced with truths, my dear Liath.

The Grey spreads and the balance between our worlds is shifting,

And the humans will bear the consequences.

FORGON

(Nodding)

The ancient prophecy warned that the curse would be tied to the actions of the Sunbourne.

They brought this upon themselves.

Humans! with their insatiable, unending desire for power and their relentless expansion.

QUINLAN

Whatever the truth may be, we must uncover it..

The Grey's advance into their lands could be a harbinger of dark times.

I always feared this day would come.

FORGON

The Sunbourne, reckless and over confident!

This is an opportunity for retribution.

To finally have them taste the consequences of their misdeeds.

QUINLAN interjects, emphasising a more compassionate approach.

QUINLAN

Revenge is not the path, Forgon.

We must help mend what they have broken,

Discover a way to heal the weave of magic.

(hand on shoulder)

Come along Liath.

You're running late for our lecture on the history of arcana.

LIATH

(Puzzled)

Again!

More lessons!

Quinlan, we both know I already mastered arcana!

QUINLAN

You are extremely powerful, dear Liath.

But I beg to differ.

These lessons will only strengthen the power you wield.

I fear we may need your skills in the days ahead

Come along now..

QUINLAN and LIATH exit.

FORGON

(aside)

Mending requires the right tools.

And, I am an instrument of vengeance.

Justice will not be ignored.

DIATH

(Frowning)

You, what?

FORGON

(Shocked)

Boy, you also possess a skill, similar to your sister..

Yes... you will be instrumental in fixing what the humans broke.

DIATH

Ey?

Wot you on about?

(exits)

As FORGON plants a dark sharded sword on the coastline and casts a spell, the lights fade to black.

SCENE 2: CASTLE SUNBOURNE. MORNING.

The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS look inward to centre stage where LORD ALTAN GUNES, a dignified and stern-looking king frowns in thought. Standing to the left of him is KARNAK, the seasoned Commander of the Knights. Standing to his right is NARRATI, the King's Hand. The room is filled with an air of anticipation and tension.

IZZY

(A wise and seasoned knight, her voice steady)

My King, what danger could be so dire that it warrants all of our presence at this hour?

LORD ALTAN

Thyra.

You say you bore witness to the mists crossing the breach?

THRYA

Your grace.

Whilst tracking the borders of the realm I saw it.

The Grey - it is coming.

Of that I am certain.

(harsh)

My King, we need to act swiftly!

KARNAK

Thyra!

THYRA

Sorry commander.

The room is filled with silence as NARRATI approaches his sister.

NARRATI

I hate to admit it, my King.

Whilst, my sister is *often* wrong.

About this, Thyra is certainly right.

I saw it too... Via the ethereal platform.

THYRA

(punches Narrati in the arm)

Thanks bro!

NARRATI

That's big bro to you.

(smug)

And, the King's Hand.

PORTHOS

(A pragmatic knight)

My lord, forgive my doubt.

But what if this danger proves too great even for us?

What then?

Would you have us sacrifice our lives in vain?

LORD ALTAN

Porthos - your caution is noted.

Our seers have foreseen this threat, and the urgency of their visions cannot be ignored.

KARNAK

(His eyes harden with resolve)

Every knight here knows the risks.

We all swore the oath.

We go not to meet death, but to vanquish the darkness and protect our realm.

But if death is what we find, we meet it head on, we greet it with courage in our hearts.

For we are Sunborne.

SERIPHINA

(A fierce and passionate knight)

Commander Karnak speaks true.

We are not just protectors; we are the hope of our people.

Our weapons are not wielded in vain, but in defense of all we hold dear.

INDI

What of our families, Seriphina?

What of our homes?

If we do not return, who will safeguard them in our absence?

THALIA

Forgive my ignorance, but what exactly is this Grey?

Is it a physical barrier, or something more dangerous?

SHAO-JANG

(His voice carries a hint of sorrow)

The seers say that the Grey is a place lost in time.
Lost in the void.
Where the very essence of life seems to wither away.
But it is also a metaphor for the encroaching darkness,
That threatens to consume our realm,
Casting a shadow over our vibrant lands.

CRYSTAL

You speak of encroaching darkness.
How was the Grey created?
What was there before?
Was it once a thriving land like our own?
What happened there?

INAGO

Thirty years ago, during the “War of Forgotten Myths”,
There lived a powerful mage - who went mad.
He was of the forgotten race.

CRYSTAL

Elves?

INAGO

Yes.
Quinlan, a powerful elven mage.
Sought to harness the forbidden energies of the weave to attain godlike power.
And in his reckless pursuit, he shattered the delicate balance between light and shadow.

HOPE

Creating the Grey.
Legends say the mad mage still wanders the Grey.
As a husk, caught in an endless pursuit to correct his mistakes.
A cautionary tale of the dangers of unchecked ambition.

The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS listen in hushed silence, absorbing the tale of the Grey and its tragic origins. The weight of history hangs heavy in the room, underscoring the gravity of their mission.

IZZY

My Grace.

Forgive my candour.

But are we to venture into the heart of uncertainty?

What assurance have we that this mission is not folly?

THALIA

(A quirky bard, her brows furrowed)

My lord, and what if, in the face of this peril,

Some among us are not willing to venture into the Grey?

What if we refuse this treacherous path?

ELEANOR

Consider this everyone:

Refusing this quest may offer temporary respite,

But the darkness will not spare our realm.

It will creep closer, devouring everything in its path.

Until there is nothing left to defend.

SERIPHINA

The strength of Sunbourne lies not only in our arms but in our unity.

We are bound by duty, honour, and loyalty to protect our people.

Refusing this mission means abandoning that sacred oath.

Allowing the darkness to consume not only our land but our very souls.

The KING sits down on the block, thinking. The hall falls into a heavy silence, the weight of their choices hanging in the air. The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS exchange meaningful glances, understanding the magnitude of their decision. With a deep breath, Commander KARNAK nods, acknowledging the responsibility before them. One by one, the SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS step forward, their armour clanking softly in the stillness of the hall. With unwavering determination, they step forward, their hands firmly gripping the hilts of their swords.

SERIPHINA

My axe and my life, I pledge to this quest.

IZZY

For the people of Sunbourne and the realm we hold dear.

ELEANOR

Count my blade and my life among those devoted to this cause.

THYRA

The darkness shall know the might of Sunbourne.

HOPE

To the defence of our realm, come what may.

INDI

The courage of Sunbourne's knights knows no bounds.

PORTHOS

I offer my life willingly.

For Sunbourne and all we hold dear.

CRYSTAL

To safeguard our realm from the horrors that lie beyond.

INAGO

May our unity be our strength and our determination be our shield.

THALIA

(raising her violin in the air)

In service of Sunbourne.

The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS exchange meaningful glances.

SHAO-JANG

I was the last to pledge.

Even then, I felt it.

Even then, I knew our fate.

(pause)

To conclude, the Commander declared.

KARNAK

My noble brothers and sisters.

Defenders of the realm.

The shadows of the Grey loom ever closer.

Our realm looks to us for salvation.

Break your fast swiftly, gather your weapons, and ready yourselves.

KARNAK and the SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS move to their position on the edge of stage, backs to audience.

***Downstage NARRATI and LORD ALTAN, engage in a hushed and secretive discussion.
THALIA watches hidden behind a block.***

LORD ALTAN

Narrati, the knights must never learn of our deed.
The choices we made all those years ago have returned to give us woe.
Should they uncover the truth...

NARRATI

(His voice filled with remorse)

My lord, we unleashed a force beyond our control,
A weapon to contain the elves and their ancient magics.
But the Grey has grown beyond our control,
Threatening not only the elves but our own people.
If the knights knew the role we played in creating the Grey.
The truth could unravel everything you've built.
We must protect them, guide them, without burdening them with the sins of our past.

LORD ALTAN

Yes.
They must never learn.
The burden of our mistakes is ours to bear alone.

***LORD ALTAN and NARRATI leave stage.
THALIA moves downstage.***

THALIA

Oh, by the dancing daisies of Dunshire,
What have my little ears stumbled upon?
The king, our fearless leader, harbors a secret so rich.
Secrets are like honey – too much, and you're stuck, too little, and you crave more.

(She taps her forehead knowingly)

So I shall tuck this precious gem away - for now!

This has the making of a good song

(Sits and begins playing on her VIOLIN)

SCENE 3: JOURNEY THROUGH THE GREY.

*THE SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS, one by one unfreeze from the positions to perform downstage centre. THALIA plays the **VIOLIN** as the monologues below are read and depicted through physical movement by the actors.*

THYRA

We crossed the breach, the veil into the **Grey**.
Unease rippled among us.
Yet, for Sunbourne's fate, we marched on.
Navigating the unknown with shared determination.

HOPE

Tensions simmered among us.
A subtle unease woven into the fabric of our unity.
The Grey demanded resilience.
And we, the knights of Sunbourne, pressed on.
Our destinies uncertain.

INAGO

Our steps echoed, a hollow sound in an unfamiliar realm.
It wasn't just the mist obscuring our vision;
It was a feeling, a silent understanding.
Each footfall, a step further into the unknown, a collective hesitation.

SERIPHINA

Bubbling pools and misty hues painted our path.
Shadows flickered, and unease lingered.
We marched as one, but doubts crept in like tendrils.
Unity, tested by the spectral whispers,
And yet we pressed on, bound by our shared destiny.

PORTHOS

Echoes of a forgotten curse reverberated through these broken lands.
Whispers hung in the air,
Our unity wavered in the dance of shadows.
A symphony of doubt played beneath the surface.
Forward we moved, an unsteady cadence in the Grey's dissonant melody.

ELEANOR

The mist, a shroud of hidden uncertainty, surrounded us.
Within this realm, doubts surface like phantoms - ever-shifting.
Unity, our delicate armour, faced testing from an unseen force.
Nevertheless, resolute, we pushed forward,
Navigating the mysteries concealed within the Grey - still with unwavering determination.

INDI

We finally arrived at the edge of our realm.
The Coast of Shards.

(pause)

A marvel very few human eyes have seen.
There beneath our boots was a fractured realm mirroring our quest.
The air was heavy with the weight of ancient curses.
Unspoken concerns lingered, flickering like the distant lights in the Grey.
We journeyed, together yet apart.

IZZY

The Coast of Shards, where memories seemed to fracture.
Doubts lingered, a shadow cast upon our fellowship.
Yet, through the Grey, our steps carried purpose.
Despite the unease in the winds that whispered of the unknown.
An unspoken understanding bound us.

CRYSTAL

Footsteps echoed on the shards, a sound swallowed by the Grey's expanse.
In a realm unknown, our concerns were left unspoken.
Our journey, a tapestry woven with threads of doubt - and silence.
Yet, through the Grey, we advanced, guided by an unseen force.
Our destiny entwined with the shadows.

KARNAK

A shattered coast, and a realm that mirrored our purpose.
I had been here 30 years earlier, in the great war.
And my fears remain etched into the landscape.
Still, we journeyed forth, a collective resolve in the face of uncertainty.

(To the knights)

Hold!
We make camp here for the night.
Shao, take the first watch. Let's secure the perimeter.
Everyone else, rest, but be vigilant,
We move again at first light.

SCENE 4: THE WHISPERING WOODS. NIGHT.

KARNAK and SHAO-JANG exit stage. The remaining SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS establish their camp, embracing the stillness of the night beneath the enchanting glow of the moon, nestled within the enigmatic embrace of the whispering woods. The air around them seems to hum with secrets, the shadows of the woods whispering ancient tales.

HOPE

Has anyone else considered, what if we aren't being told the truth?
What if The Grey was created by something else?
I mean why would the elves do this to their own home?

ELEANOR

The Mad Mage of The Grey corrupted these lands using dark magic - everyone knows that!
In his pursuit of power, he abandoned the very principles that he swore to protect.

HOPE

But what force could have unleashed this magical turmoil upon these lands?
These questions burn within me.
And, I am compelled to seek answers to these questions Eleanor.

INAGO

I must admit I too have considered it.
What if it's a lie?
It wouldn't be the first time that those who govern us, told us lies now, would it?
I am certain something is amiss.
And I don't believe our King will look after us - as he says.

INDI

You are right to question the sincerity of our king's assurances.
And I urge you all, my comrades, to rely on your own instincts.
We must forge our own path as we seek the truth.

PORTHOS

I know we've all felt it, since we arrived in these woods.
Magic flows through these trees, and so do shadows of old.
Within the arcane lies a potential to overcome our dark enemy.
So let us be mindful of the lessons these ancient woods may offer.

SERIPHINA

(resolute)

Tell me, are you afraid?

(looking around the group)

I am, and you should be too.

As Knights of The Sunbourne, we must learn to put our fears aside.

Here in The Grey, I need to know you have my back, like I have yours.

I need to know that the fear won't get you.

Now I'm getting some sleep.

I suggest you all do the same.

INDI

And that's Seriphina for you.

Show her no fear.

She's fiercely loyal, but actually very nice.

IZZY

Seriphina's right, you know.

Fear has no place in our hearts.

If anything, it's a waste of good energy.

Save that for what lay ahead.

THYRA

This quest is a contract signed with our minds, bodies, and souls.

The weight of our mission bears down upon us,

And I acknowledge the sacred commitment each of us has made to the cause.

Our collective spirit becomes a beacon,

Guiding us through even the darkest corners of The Grey,

Towards the promise of a brighter future.

CRYSTAL

We have each other.

And we will look after each other.

That's what matters.

We stand united against the darkness.

THALIA

Our bonds are our strength.

Let our shared purpose guide us.

We need to understand the root of this struggle.

(nervous pause)

There is something else I have been meaning to tell you all.

THYRA

Well?

What is it Thalia?

THALIA

So back at Castle Sunbourne.

Well I was sneaking around when I witnessed a conversation between the -

INDI

That's it!

That's it Thalia!

Every spell has a caster. Right?

So if we can find the source of this spell, then perhaps we can mend The Grey.

And unravel the threads of magic that bind this realm.

INAGO

(sceptical)

And how might we find this mysterious spell caster, little big sister?

CRYSTAL

Perhaps the whispers in these woods hold the key.

Legends say these lands have witnessed centuries unfold.

If we learn to follow the messages in the winds.

They might guide us to the spell's origins.

IZZY

And what if when we find the spell's origins,

It is beyond our comprehension?

What if it's a power that even we can't face?

ELEANOR

(gazing into the distance)

It does not matter.

Regardless, we shall face it together, as one.

Our unity is our shield against the unknown.

(pause)

You heard the commander. We need to rest.

The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS find solace in the shared understanding that their fates are intertwined. In the heart of the Whispering Woods, they rest for the night, each determined to face the looming shadows with courage and unwavering loyalty. Once all the Knights are asleep. SHAO-JANG enters and takes his post, guarding the perimeter.

SHAO-JANG

(Muttering)

Another night in the Grey...
I'm sick of this!

As SHAO-JANG remains vigilant, the dark shard sword planted by FORGON earlier begins to resonate with a sinister energy. SHAO-JANG feels a shiver crawl down his spine as a whispered voice, laden with dark allure, invades his thoughts.

SHAO-JANG

(Calling out, with a sense of unease)

Hello?
Who's there?!

DARK SHARD V/O

Shao, warrior of the East.
You sense the power pulsating through the mist don't you. Embrace it.
Let the shadows become your strength.
The Grey yearns for you.

SHAO-JANG, captivated by the seductive whisper, approaches the dark shard sword. The mist coils around it, and the air becomes charged with malevolence.

SHAO-JANG

(Whispering, succumbing to the temptation)

How do I resist such power when it calls my name?

SHAO-JANG, entranced, reaches for the dark shard sword. As his hand wraps around its hilt, a surge of dark energy courses through him. The mist swirls around SHAO-JANG, engulfing him in an ominous aura.

DARK SHARD V/O

Yes. Embrace the darkness.
Let it consume you.
Servant of the Grey.

SHAO-JANG, now under the sway of the dark shard sword, stands amidst the swirling mist, a newfound malevolence in his eyes. The campsite remains shrouded in an unsettling silence as the other SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS sleep, unaware of the darkness that has taken root within their comrade.

SCENE 5: CASTLE GREY. THRONE ROOM.

QUINLAN stands centrestage, his expression stern, addressing the gathered elves. FORGON sat downstage left, a scowl etched across his face. DIATH and LIATH exchange concerned glances, seated downstage right.

FORGON

(dismissive)

Are we to allow them - those who did us so much harm,
To freely enter our lands?

QUINLAN

(voice filled with conviction)

We cannot dismiss the Sunbourne Knights so easily, cousin.
We must learn their intentions first.

FORGON

(dismissive)

Intentions, Quinlan?

You're too trusting.

We have the power of the Wind and Flame.

We should harness it and obliterate the Sunbourne once and for all!

QUINLAN meets FORGON's gaze, unwavering.

QUINLAN

(flashing anger)

The Wind and Flame are not ready yet.

We've seen the limits of our magic against this unnatural threat.

We do not know the harm we could do to them.

FORGON

(frustrated)

Quinlan, you are naive.

DIATH

(curious)

How was the Grey created?

Quinlan, please tell us what happened.

QUINLAN takes a deep breath, his eyes reflecting the weight of the past.

QUINLAN

(resolute)

It was the humans who created the Grey.

They crafted it as a weapon, claiming it as a gift to assist us.

But in reality, it was a curse meant to disrupt the very essence of our magic,

Throwing the weave of arcana into chaos.

LIATH's eyes widen, disbelief written across her face.

LIATH

Why would they betray us like that?

FORGON

(bitter)

Lord Altan and Narrati, once our allies, orchestrated it.

Fearful of our magic, they sought to cripple us under the guise of friendship.

We should never have trusted the humans.

FORGON glares at QUINLAN, vindicated.

QUINLAN

(furious)

I was betrayed by those I called friends.

Now, they must face the consequences.

United as elves, we will put an end to the Grey.

DIATH and LIATH exchange determined glances, realising the gravity of the situation.

DIATH

(resolute)

I am not sure if Liath and I get a say in all this.

But I think we must hear the humans out.

LIATH

(nodding)

Diath is right.

We can't let the mistakes of the past dictate our future.

The Sunbourne Knights might offer a solution,

FORGON

Fine, but mark my words.

We can't rely on outsiders for our salvation.

QUINLAN's gaze remains firm, determination burning in his eyes.

QUINLAN

(agreed)

We won't rely solely on them, Forgon.

We'll combine our strengths—the Wind, the Flame, and the knowledge the humans bring.

Together, we'll mend what was taken from us - all those years ago.

As the elves begin to discuss their next steps, the forest resonates with a mixture of hope and uncertainty. The twins, Diath and Liath, exchange a silent understanding, ready to face the challenges ahead. The shadows of betrayal cast long, but the elves, united in purpose, strive to dispel them and reclaim their lost legacy.

SCENE 6: SHADOWS OF THE GREY.

SHAO-JANG enters stage in a flurry, panic gripping him, as he runs from something through a haunted forest. A laughter grows louder and more mocking him, as he is surrounded by his comrades.

SHAO-JANG

What's happening?

(desperate)

Stop! Please, stop!

The laughter intensifies, echoing as SHAO-JANG stumbles backward, trying to escape the torment, but the haunting voices of his comrades surround him.

SHAO-JANG clutches his head, the dissonant whispers and laughter merging into a cacophony of torment. Suddenly, the shadows of the Whispering Woods take on grotesque forms, contorting and reaching out for him. He fights against the hallucinations, swinging his sword at the imaginary foes.

SERIPHINA

(alarmed, shouting from a distance)

Shao!

Shao!

Shao-Jang!

Together, KARNAK and SERIPHINA manage to shake SHAO-JANG out of the nightmare. As he gasps for breath, the nightmare dissolves, and the dissonant whispers fade away. The campsite returns to stillness, with the SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS watching their shaken comrade.

SERIPHINA

(urgent)

Shao-Jang, are you alright?

SHAO-JANG

(aggressive, catching his breath)

Always.

The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS exchange confused glances, unable to comprehend the ordeal SHAO-JANG has just faced.

SCENE 7: CASTLE GREY. COURTYARD.

The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS, led by KARNAK, stealthily move through the mist-covered grounds of Castle Grey. The eerie silence of the night hangs heavy. KARNAK signals the scouts, INDI, THYRA, and INAGO, to spread out and search for any signs of traps or enemies.

The Knights, hidden upstage, stay low, tense and watchful. INAGO, the agile rogue, spots something glinting on the ground. She bends down and picks up the coin.

INAGO

(curious)

I found something.

A Sunbourne coin?

What's it doing here in the elven lands?

INDI

That's strange.

Sunbourne currency has no business in these parts.

INAGO

I wonder if this item has any memory.

THYRA

(cautious)

Be careful, Inago.

Using magic in The Grey might be dangerous.

As INAGO examines the coin and uses her arcana she brings forth a sudden vision.

Downstage LORD ALTAN, NARRATI, and QUINLAN appear. A younger LORD ALTAN hands a seemingly magical sword to QUINLAN, the elven mage and leader. The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS, hidden, gasp as they witness the events unfold.

LORD ALTAN

(smiling)

Quinlan, my trusted friend, take this sword.

It is a gift, a token of the enduring alliance between human and elf.

QUINLAN, unaware of the impending betrayal, accepts the sword with gratitude. But as soon as he touches it, the sword begins emanating a malevolent energy. The mist around them thickens, and a catastrophic event unfolds. The Grey, a swirling mist that engulfs the elven lands, is unleashed.

NARRATI

(leaning in)

The elven lands and your mysterious magics,
Will be forgotten in time.
Lost to The Grey.

QUINLAN

What have you done?
What have you done?!

LORD ALTAN

Narrati. Time to leave!

The vision ends, as LORD ALTAN, NARRATI, and QUINLAN exit stage from either direction. The Knights move downstage, reacting with shock and horror.

ELEANOR

(moving forward)

By the sun, our own King... betrayed the elves?

HOPE

(disbelief)

This can't be true.
The Grey was a weapon created by our own people?

IZZY

(angry)

And we've been led to believe it was the elves' all along!

PORTHOS, steps forward, his face a mix of anger and sorrow.

PORTHOS

(bitter)

Our own king, responsible for the suffering of an entire race.
This changes everything.

The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS grapple with the revelation, trapped in the moment of betrayal. The castle grounds, shrouded in mist, bear witness to the weight of history and the choices that have shaped the fate of both elves and humans.

FORGON strides onto the stage with a wicked grin, DIATH flanking him.

FORGON

(laughing mockingly)

Well, well, look who we have here.

The valiant Sunbourne Knights, saviours of all races, or so you claim.

KARNAK steps forward, his expression a mix of defiance and regret.

KARNAK

(grim)

Forgon, we did not know.

We were deceived, just like the elves.

THALIA

Deceived, were you?

Or was it willful ignorance Commander?

Were you there when The Grey was born?

KARNAK

(defensive)

I was there, but I didn't know Lord Altan and Narrati's true intentions.

FORGON

Lies!

PORTHOS

It seems there's only one currency that matters here - power.

Whilst our King, cowers under his title.

He sends us to clean up the mess he created in these lands.

I see in you, Commander, a true leader.

Let us return to our lands and take the throne from this tyrant.

So, Commander, what will you choose?

To be a man radiating with power, nobility, and leadership?

Or a puny little coward, unable to stand up for what's right?

KARNAK, torn between loyalty and the shocking revelation, takes a moment to absorb Porthos's words. The mist swirls around them, adding an ethereal atmosphere to the tense scene.

ELEANOR

(resolute)

This changes everything, Porthos.
But treason... It's a dangerous path.
Are we to become traitors to our own kingdom?

INAGO

(snickering)

Traitors or heroes?
Sometimes, the line between them is thinner than we imagine.

SERIPHINA

The choice is simple.
Serve an evil king, knowing we're on the wrong side,
Or commit treason in the name of justice.

(mockingly)

Are we so blinded by loyalty that we'd rather perpetuate the suffering our King has caused?

KARNAK looks at his fellow SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS awaiting his decision, seeing the uncertainty and conflict in their eyes.

KARNAK

(solemn)

We swore an oath to protect the realm, to serve the king.
But if the king is the source of the suffering,
Then our loyalty is misplaced.
We expose the truth.
We reveal the king's betrayal to the people and rally those who still believe in justice.
If that makes us traitors, then so be it.

HOPE

(determined)

So, what's our course of action, Commander?

KARNAK

(resolute)

Elf, forgive our trespass.
We will leave now, returning to our lands.
And pledge to one day return to you and mend what we broke.

The Knights exchange determined glances, acknowledging the gravity of their decision. FORGON and DIATH watch with amusement, sensing the fracture within the Sunbourne ranks.

FORGON

You claim to be the solution, but you humans are the problem.

(grinning maliciously)

Diath, do just as we practised.

Show them the power of the Wind.

DIATH steps forward, raising his hands, and a sudden gust of wind sweeps across the castle grounds. The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS struggle to maintain their footing against the powerful force. FORGON smirks and then, with a dark glint in his eye, he reaches for this staff.

FORGON

Let the true power reveal itself.

As FORGON raises his staff a sinister voice echoes in SHAO-JANG's mind.

DARK SHARD V/O

Kill the commander.

End this deception.

SHAO-JANG, under the dark shard's influence, draws his weapon and attacks KARNAK. The other Knights, still reeling from the powerful wind spell, react too late.

KARNAK

(grim)

Shao-Jang, resist it!

This is not the way!

SHAO-JANG, struggling against the dark influence, hesitates for a moment. But then, driven by the dark shard's command, he delivers a fatal blow to KARNAK. The commander falls to the ground, his life extinguished.

SHAO-JANG

(shouting)

I'm sorry.

I can't control it!

The DARK SHARD's laugh echoes in the space and for the first time The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS hear it too.

SHAO-JANG, in a moment of desperate resolve, thrusts the dark shard into his own stomach. The mist recoils, and a sudden silence descends upon the castle grounds. The dark shard shatters, its malevolent power broken.

SERIPHINA

(stammering)

What have you done, Shao-Jang?

SHAO-JANG, his face etched with a profound sense of relief, crumples to the ground. A heavy silence descends upon the space, enveloping us in the aftermath of the tragic events. FORGON, seeing the chaos unfold, grins with satisfaction.

ELEANOR

(angry)

You did this!

You'll pay!

FORGON

Diath, show these trespassers how we can defend ourselves!

Just as FORGON and DIATH prepare to unleash their combined power on the remaining Knights, QUINLAN and LIATH emerge on the opposite side of stage.

QUINLAN

(holding a raised hand)

Hold your magic, Diath!

Forgon, I believed in unity.

I believed in a world where elves and humans could coexist.

But your actions have stained that vision.

Your lust for power has betrayed the very ideals our people fought for.

LIATH stands facing her brother, her eyes fixed with determination and concern.

LIATH

(looking at DIATH)

Diath, my brother, the path before us has always been treacherous,
But the decisions we make today will shape the future of our people.

We stand at a crossroads.

The humans have wronged us, that much is undeniable.

But revenge only continues the cycle of hatred.

Remember the wisdom of mother and father.

They, too, were victims of this conflict,

Yet in their final moments, they spoke of a power greater than hatred.

Love - Love is the beacon that can guide us out of the darkness.

Little brother, they believed that one day, love would save this land.

DIATH wavers for a moment, torn between loyalty and the glimmer of truth in Liath's words.

DIATH

I told you to stop calling me 'little'.

The storm overhead intensifies, crackling with energy as the final confrontation between the forces of Wind and Flame unfolds. In slow-motion, THE ENSEMBLE becomes a living canvas, contorting their bodies with precision and grace. Each member embodies the ferocity of the battle, their movements mirroring the relentless attacks from the Wind and Flame. With every gust, the ensemble leans and twists, their limbs reaching out like tendrils of wind. Simultaneously, as the Flame retaliates, their bodies writhe and flicker with fiery intensity. As the battle escalates to its end, the ensemble's movements become more dynamic and intense.

SCENE 8: CASTLE SUNBOURNE. MORNING.

SERIPHINA and THALIA alone, share a solemn moment.

THALIA gently places a hand on a nervous SERIPHINA's shoulder, offering a reassuring smile.

THALIA

You've done what needed to be done, Seriphina.

The realm is in your capable hands now.

You made the right choice.

And I've seen nothing but strength and wisdom in your choices.

(winking)

Commander.

SERIPHINA nods appreciatively, taking a deep breath.

SERIPHINA

I'm ready Thalia.

For the good of the realms.

*THALIA with a smile, takes a seat downstage and begins playing a haunting melody on her **VIOLIN**. The **SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS** emerge, followed after by **QUINLAN**, **LIATH** and **DIATH**, leading **FORGON**, **LORD ALTAN** and **NARRATI** forward as prisoners.*

QUINLAN and SERIPHINA address the condemned trio with conviction.

QUINLAN

The Grey yields and fades.

And the elven lands will heal in time.

Luckily, we elves have plenty of time.

Commander Seriphina, you and your knights have restored honour to the realm of Sunbourne.

SERIPHINA

Lord Altan, Narrati and Forgon your treachery has brought shame to the realms.

You are hereby banished.

Forever exiled from the realms of Sunbourne and The Grey.

Attempt to return, and you shall find only the cold embrace of death awaiting you.

May this proclamation echo through the winds,

Serving as a dire warning to any who would dare follow in your traitorous footsteps!

THYRA approaches NARRATI, her gaze pierces through her brother as she speaks with a mixture of pain and disappointment.

THYRA

You know, brother, my heart aches at this betrayal.
The Grey, your dark creation, brings disgrace upon us all.

(pause)

I recall that night when we sought warmth in each other's embrace,
Pledging to uphold our family's honour and to safeguard each other.
This was to be our legacy.
How disappointing that you have forsaken that sacred vow.

(pause)

Go now and never look back.
Should you return, death will claim you - I shall see to that firsthand.
Farewell would be too kind a word for this bitter parting.

***QUINLAN, LIATH and DIATH, lead FORGON, LORD ALTAN and NARRATI offstage as prisoners.
The SUNBOURNE KNIGHTS stand in solemn unity, unwavering gazes fixed upon the horizon,
as they embark on a ritual of reaffirmation. Each Knight steps forward, their voices resonating
as they deliver the closing lines in which they pledge the sacred oath of their order.***

SERIPHINA

(placing Karnak and Shao's weapons on the floor)

Knights of The Sunbourne,
Upon this sacred ground,
As the fallen watch on from above,
We renew our pledge to The Order.

CRYSTAL

Bound by duty, through tempests and triumphs, we stand united.

INDI

In the realm's hour of need, we are steadfast.

IZZY

In the name of honour, we stand tall and deliver justice.

HOPE

For every heart touched by darkness, we shall bring forth hope.

PORTHOS

In the face of chaos, our oath binds us stronger than steel.

THYRA

We are the shield that defends the realm.

INAGO

May the light forever illuminate our righteous path.

ELEANOR

And let our valour shine as brightly as the sun itself.

- **END**