

The Ties That Bind
Æternal Legends Introductory Adventure
By Stewart Wilson

Introduction

The Ties That Bind is an introductory adventure for **Æternal Legends**. The characters are given a quest to deal with a relatively minor threat to the Pocket Kingdom of Heavenside, and are soon swept up in a much more deadly plot.

The scenes presented here are frameworks, and deliberately so. You can—indeed, you should—insert your own details, fudge things to match your group, and do whatever makes the game fun. As this is an introductory adventure, the scene descriptions are reasonably comprehensive. Don't feel constrained by what's written here—adapt this plot and story to the actions that your group takes!

One thing to remember when running **Æternal Legends**: embrace the clichés you come across. Underneath every tired and worn plot staple is a good idea. If you need an excuse, remember that magic in the world is directed by those Legends who have ascended to the Source. It wants its champions to have interesting stories. If the circle goes for a night in a bar, they're bound to have someone ask them to undertake a quest. Take those old plot devices off the shelf, polish them up, and take pride in them. Revel in the fun, and encourage your players to play along. Foster that sense of wonder and possibility again. In that, **Æternal Legends** hews closer to Young Adult fantasy in tone.

This adventure, with the exception of the Prelude, may seem rather odd. **Æternal Legends** is a game of modern fantasy. Why then remove the adventure from the modern world? Partially because Heavenside is a chance to revel in the combination of magic and technology without worrying about the Unaware—it gives the characters a chance to really cut loose and find out what they can do in a (relatively) safe environment. Also, Heavenside contains an urban sprawl common to the downtown area of most cities, turned up to 11 thanks to the close ceilings and constant press of people. Imagine if downtown New York City had two-metre ceilings over everything and people weren't surprised to see an orc wandering down the street. With that said, the climax of the adventure does shift focus back to the Unaware world, reminding the Legends that they can't stay in Heavenside forever—soon enough they'll have to take on more quests and find a community to protect.

The Ties That Bind contains a mixture of mental, physical, and social challenges to characters. It's designed for three to six characters of diverse Spheres. If your group would rather use pre-generated characters, six such characters are available as free downloads from wherever you downloaded this adventure.

Setting

The Ties That Bind is set almost entirely in the Interstice that holds the Pocket Kingdom of Heavenside. The Interstice connects to the real world in at least two places, both in Chicago, and has links to other Pocket Kingdoms, providing ample opportunity to bring the circle into the action.

The Interstice is an endless blue sky, with occasional white clouds floating both above and below—there's no "ground" to hit at the end of a fall. Numerous islands float in the sky, and wing-fish ride the lazy air-currents between the islands. Rumours tell of feathered serpents and draconic lizards drifting through the sky, though nobody's seen them close to one of the islands.

Heavenside

The Pocket Kingdom of Heavenside resides a large island hanging in the eternal sky. So far, it's the only reported island to have any links to the Unaware world, and is the only island with an Aware settlement.

The surface of Heavenside is covered in rolling meadows about two miles across at it's widest point. Just off-centre is a depression two hundred metres wide, ringed with standing stones four metres tall. Carvings on the stones identify this area as the Gateway, though nobody knows if it ever linked to the real world. Four sets of standing stones have a cross-stone, forming an archway. Each of those has a gateway to another Pocket Kingdom. Crossing through a gate costs 2 Magic per person.

Other carvings on the stones indicate that the stones have to remain the highest thing on the island. A cluster of low buildings stands close to the stone circle, including the Heavenside Security Office and a very exclusive restaurant. One of these buildings is the Elevator, connecting to the Ziggursky Tower in Chicago. The other buildings have access to the real Heavenside—the network of tunnels dug through the bedrock.

On the surface, Heavenside has two docks for sky-ships. Each ship is a miracle of magical engineering, ranging in size from yachts to trawlers. The rim is otherwise surrounded by a three-metre fence to stop people falling off accidentally.

Heavenside extends downwards for half a mile, an inverted mountain that serves as the island's foundation. The very tip gleams with structural diamond, and small lights shine off the surface where windows look out. Inside, the majority of the community lives, shops, and works in tunnels created by legions of dwarves in times past. As time marched on, engineers and enchanters installed elevators in addition to the sloped tunnels. Another tunnel near the surface and close to the Security Office ends in a vertical shaft with a ladder in the wall. This is the other entrance to Heavenside, opening behind a locked service door in Lake station of the Chicago El.

Close to the surface, the tunnels are light and airy, with room for pedestrians and vehicles alongside each other. The overhead lights are magical, providing a full daylight cycle, and openings to the surface allow for plentiful airflow. These levels are high-class, featuring the Warden's office, the local Ministry branch, and any other business that wants a good address and doesn't mind paying almost extortionate rent in return.

Lower down, Heavenside starts to feel cramped. Away from the surface, spells draw air in through the rock and provide a constant twilight. People cram into the streets at all times, and vehicles have a hell of a time getting through. Alongside the inhabited

areas, large caverns lit by artificial sunlight provide the kingdom with vegetables grown in imported soil to supplement the diet of wing-fish meat (a meaty white fish rather like monkfish). The lowest tunnels are barely two meters high, access shafts leading to cramped apartments. At the very bottom, the diamond point is a refreshingly spacious area offering space for people to meet surrounded by sky and supplied by three bars.

The general atmosphere in Heavenside is good; while everyone lives underground, the lack of “surface dwellers” and easy links to the Unaware world stop most people from going stir-crazy. It’s a freewheeling, anarchic place, but people tend to pull together because they’re all in it together—and they have a common enemy.

The Isle of the Lost

The closest island to Heavenside, the Isle of the Lost rises out of the clouds like a rocky thunderhead. A mountain rises almost half a mile from the Isle’s widest point, and harpies flock around the mountain at all hours.

The Black-Winged Empress rules the Isle of the Lost as a benevolent dictator. She clawed her way to the top two hundred years ago, and occasionally tears apart pretenders to her throne. She wants back into the Unaware world, but not until the time is right. She knows that her people couldn’t survive without more magic than the world currently has, so she’s prepared to bide her time until the world is right to return. Some of her minions aren’t as patient. Heavenside comes under attack from young harpies occasionally, but most of the time the sky-ships capture the raiders with net-guns and drop them back at the Isle of the Lost. When sky-ships can’t respond, it’s up to the Aware to vent their frustrations on the winged creatures.

The surface of the mountain is dotted with entrances to the caves and tunnels that riddle the mountain. Some exit to small plateaus, while a skilled pilot can steer a sky-ship through some of the larger ones. The Black Winged Empress’ cavernous throne-room is the size of a small aircraft hangar, and is the largest cave by far.

While some Heavenside inhabitants try taking the fight back to the harpies, most of the sky-ship fleet spend their time acquiring food or exploring. The Warden has negotiated a very patchy truce with the Empress—while some harpies may attack Heavenside, the Empress doesn’t consider them her subjects, so the Aware are free to defend their home without fear of recrimination.

Chicago

Heavenside links to two places in downtown Chicago. Behind a locked access door in Lake El station, a ladder leads into an access tunnel. Anyone carrying a piece of stone from under Chicago can cross into Heavenside, and the Aware markets in the area make a point of stocking these “transit tokens”. Prestigious visitors can instead try their luck with the Elevator. Though they have to dress appropriately for the high-class Ziggursky Tower, once anyone Aware gets the key to the VIP elevator she can ride it right to the top by anointing a jewel set into the key with a single drop of blood.

The Aware community in Chicago maintains friendly relations with Heavenside, though both communities have their own problems to deal with. Chicago’s a major hub for the Aware, and often the city doesn’t have enough natives to deal with all the visitors. The city doesn’t see many Legends, and those who do Manifest often travel to many worlds in their quests.

Prelude

A teenage orc (Angelo Ruiz) approaches the circle with a message from John Dixon, the Sentinel of Heavenside. Dixon's got a whole bunch of magical trouble going on, the worst of which is a group of harpies from the Isle of the Lost trying to cut the Interstice loose from the Unaware world. He can't spare anyone to travel to the Isle to disrupt the ritual, but the Ministry let him know that the circle is in Chicago. Other Legends are all away dealing with their own quests matters. It's a simple job: travel to the Isle of the Lost, find the ritual, and disrupt it without earning the ire of the Black-Winged Empress—ideally before a free morale-boosting gig by local band the Screaming Banshees, who play in the Gateway that night.

There's three sides involved: the Legends, who want to stop the ritual, the Broken Feather, a cult of harpies allied with a Darksider circle who want to cut Heavenside off from the Unaware world, and the Black-Winged Empress, who has no love for either the Legends or the Broken Feather. John Dixon can fill the characters in on the Empress, but knows nothing about the Broken Feather. Island-Hopping covers the circle's quest against the harpies.

Locations

Heavenside: See "Setting", above.

Heavenside Security Office: One of the few buildings to reach aboveground, with a barracks/day room for three on-duty Stewards who act as both customs & immigration for the Ministry and first-responders in the case of Harpy attack. A low, red-brick building on the outside, little more than a box with a door and large windows on all four sides. Inside, one Steward watches CCTV monitors while two more process visitors and immigration—a process that the circle avoids when one Steward notices Angelo and escorts them down to the Sentinel's office.

NPCs

Angelo Ruiz (Orc)

Tall, dark, handsome—and knows it. Shoulder length black hair, deep red skin, bare chest under a vest, always 5-10 degrees warmer than normal.

All Attributes 2 (+1 Friendly, +1 Rousing, -1 Distinctive, -1 Shallow)

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Go-Between 2+Skill: Silver Tongue (+Presence & Edges=6), Heavenside Punk 2 (+Mind=4)

Expertise: Inspiring (Presence + Go-Between)

John Dixon (Dwarf)

Slept-in but good quality suit, dark skin, tangled dreads, hasn't shaved in a week. Overworked Rastafarian cop. Smokes cigars. Has a desk overflowing with paperwork and a signed photo of Peter Falk on his wall.

All Attributes 3 (+Methodical, +Inspired, -Short, -Plain-speaking)

All Traits 7

Aptitudes: Detective 3+Skill: Heavenside PD (+Mind=9) Politician 3 (+Presence=5)

Expertise: Old-fashioned Policing (Mind + Detective)

Island-Hopping

The characters can travel to the Isle of the Lost via sky-ship—a craft that looks like a luxury yacht with a large wing-like sail protruding from each side of the hull. As they get closer to the Isle, flocks of harpies with golden covers on their claws force the sky-ship to dock near the top of the mountain. The Black-Winged Empress desires an audience.

The cavern holds enough harpies that fighting isn't really an option; if the circle tries then the ship's captain will denounce all knowledge and set off back for Heavenside without them. The Empress wants to know why the characters are there—convincing her that the ritual is a real threat is an extended Presence + Aptitude roll requiring 10 points. Each roll has a Threshold of 3, and takes 10 minutes. If the character's degree of success is five points or more, the Empress sends three Harpies to act as bodyguards. If the character fails, the Empress gives them just thirty minutes to find the ritual, after which she will personally throw them off the Isle of the Lost.

Finding the ritual requires a Mind + Aptitude roll with Threshold 3. Success indicates that the characters only take ten minutes to find it; while failure takes twenty-five—giving them not long at all to resolve the situation.

Two harpies per character stand on a plateau, performing the ritual, which they believe is of such importance that even the Black-Winged Empress pales in comparison—they're under a Darksider's Influence. As the ritual requires symbolic destruction, smashing the props doesn't work (and if the circle have bodyguards, the loyal harpies attack on sight). The characters may prefer a non-violent solution; if so they'll have to defuse the ritual and win the harpies over by creating something from the destroyed items; a Legend of the Beauty is pretty much their only hope to do that.

Once they deal with the ritual, the sky-ship captain returns the circle to Heavenside. Before they leave, any of the characters can grab a copy of the ritual, which sports the name "Dana Jarvik" on the back. If the characters go looking for someone of that name, they'll end up in Stage Fight. If they instead research the content of the ritual, go to Ritual Research. Note that the circle can (and probably will) do both, and so the two scenes are independent of each other.

Locations

Sky-ship: A strange craft that's three parts luxury yacht, one part baroque masterpiece, and one part Da Vinci-inspired aircraft. Fore and aft net-launchers protect against harpies and provide a way to rescue crewmen overboard both (3 Force [Stun], stunned enemy can't fly). *Chase Stats:* Speed 30/45, Handling 0, Structure 7

Isle of the Lost: See "Setting", above.

Black-Winged Empress' Cavern: A vaulted cavern about two-thirds of the way up the Mourning Mountain, with a rocky outcropping that can act as a sky-ship dock. Easily two hundred yards high, cave entrances pepper all the sides allowing easy access. The Empress' black granite perch dominates the area.

Ritual Site: A small flat plateau on the side of the mountain, partially recessed into a shallow cave. Stalactites over the cave look like pointed teeth. Near the front of the cave is a small furnace, and detritus of the modern world—ballpoint pens, toy cars, half-eaten hamburgers—that the harpies in residence throw into the fire. One's holding a photocopied copy of the ritual, with a contact name scrawled on the back.

NPCs

The Black-Winged Empress

Regal looking, with smoothed black feathers and golden talons. Looks used to arguing from position of power but secretly likes sparring with people who stand up to her.

Body/Health: 4/8 (+Ferocious)

Mind/Wits: 4/8 (+Incisive)

Presence/Will: 5/9 (-Aloof, -Ugly)

Ethos: 3 (Beliefs: One day I will lead my children back to the world, I was born to rule, Patience is the greatest virtue of a ruler)

Magic: 7

Aptitudes: Harpy 3, Empress 4+Skill: Take the Long View, Magecraft: Shadows 3

Initiative: 9

Conflict: Claws (8), Spear (10), Debate (9—10 with harpies)

Expertise: What's Right for the Empire (Presence + Empress)

Harpies

Misshapen and ugly creatures with the body and head of a human female but the lower body, legs, and wings of a large black bird.

All Attributes 2 (+Ferocious, -Ugly)

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Harpy 2 (+Body=4, 5 for combat)

Harpies can fly at four times their speed on land, and can attack normally with their razor-sharp talons. The Ugly Flaw only counts when using Presence against non-Harpies. On land, a harpy can use the vestigial hands on her wings as hands. Harpy warriors wear an ornate brass spearhead on a thong around their necks, which grows to a full-sized spear when it touches a drop of the harpy's blood. Use the statistics for a spear in the **Æternal Legends** corebook.

Ritual Research

The characters research the ritual that they found on the harpies, and have a chance to hit the seedy underbelly of Heavenside. Either through pre-existing contacts, a Foundation Legend's Network, or by asking John Dixon, the circle will learn of a few people who can help them out.

Heavenside's got a small community of witches and metaphysical researchers, the Wheel Aflame, who can help decipher the ritual. They meet down in the Point, but the circle must make contact with a single member first. Convincing the group to help means beating one member in a contested Presence + Aptitude roll. With the Wheel's assistance, the circle receives a one-die bonus to research rolls, though they can go it alone if they so prefer.

Researching the ritual is an extended Mind + Aptitude roll requiring 20 points. Each roll has a Threshold of 3, and takes 15 minutes. The intent of the ritual was to separate Heavenside from the world, making it much harder to either get to or leave the Interstice.

Down in the Warrens, the characters can find Grench's Curiosities. A member of the Wheel Aflame, Mack Grench will let the characters use his library once he realizes what the ritual was for. He's got a book that details similar rituals, but someone's picked it out already. Looking through his files (Mind + Aptitude, threshold 3) confirms the name: Dana Jarvik. They also get a list of the other books that she's checked out. Mack can fill them in—she's been buying one book every couple of months, building up a collection covering the walls between worlds. The ritual she gave the harpies was a blind, she's really after tearing down the walls between worlds. With her name and confirmation that she's around, the characters can bribe any of the shopholders to get an image from security wards.

Even if they don't pay Mack Grench a visit, the circle can get the images from John Dixon's surveillance paintings if they give him a name and good reason, or retain a sryer with range enough to show them who met with the harpies. From there, they can do some detective work amongst the shopholders that'll direct them to Grench. However they do it, the circle has a firm lead and an idea of what Dana Jarvik is really after—breaking the barriers between Heavenside and the world

When they get her picture, the circle may recognize Dana—she's in the background of the Screaming Banshees concert poster, and her name's there as organizer. Mack cautions the circle that they may want to prepare themselves before facing her. If they heed his advice, A Work of Beauty has some guidelines on preparing themselves. Likewise, if the circle tries tracking Dana down immediately, Stage Fight covers their first meeting. If the group would rather wait until the concert, head straight to To Stop a Witch

Locations

Heavenside Point: The lowest point of Heavenside, fully half a mile below the surface. Seven metres tall, the Point's floor and walls are all made of hardened diamond, carved by a dwarven Legend in ages past. Now it's a stylish meeting place, where people and small groups can gather with only the clouds for company.

The Warrens: These tunnels are maybe two metres tall if that, connected at cross-points and linked by elevators. Store-fronts painted in gaudy colours and lit by neon

lights drown out the natural luminescence in a cramped mass of harsh shadows and lots of people, like an even weirder version of *Blade Runner*'s street-scenes.

Grench's Curiosities: Something between a bookstore and a library, specialising in ancient lore and ritual magic. It's thoroughly cluttered inside, whole shelves threatening collapse and at least one pile of ancient manuscripts holding up the ceiling. Grench doesn't sell books, but he does lend them out on a semi-permanent basis—his files automatically alert them when someone's held a book for longer than they've paid for.

NPCs

Mack Grench (Gnome)

Distinctly old, Mack has close-cropped white hair and beard both. Despite his gruff exterior, he's willing to help out—especially if they let him have a copy of the ritual.

All Attributes 2 (+1 Nimble, +1 Engaging, -1 Oblivious, -1 Old)

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Archivist 3+Skill: *Occult Trivia* (+Mind & Edges=7), Well-respected 1 (+Presence & Edges=4)

Expertise: Occult Librarian (Mind + Archivist)

The Wheel Aflame (Aware Humans)

Mystic researchers heavily into pop-occultism, drugs, and the esoteric applications of unknown magic. Identified by a tattoo of a burning wheel with eight spokes.

All Attributes 2

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Pop-occultist 2 (+Mind=4), Upstanding Citizen 2 (+Presence=4—3 for persuasion)

Stage Fight

The characters track down Dana Jarvik, the creator of the Broken Feather's ritual. Whether they've discovered her real goal or not, they know that they must stop her.

Finding Dana isn't easy—Heavenside's a big place. Characters can make a Presence + Aptitude roll, Threshold 5 to find her (the Network gained through the Foundation Sphere is fully applicable). Dana's currently in Astra's Coffee House in the Groundswell, where her friend and circle-mate Cyrus Anderson is warming up the crowd before the gig.

At the first threat of physical violence, Astra will appeal for calm with mace in hand. Cyrus may be a Darksider, but he's not doing anything wrong.

If Cyrus catches sight of the circle, things soon get competitive. He starts up with some rather inflammatory songs, calling the circle out to a duel and giving him a chance to "read" them ahead of any full confrontation. If the circle walks away, he's got ample opportunity to Influence the audience against them.

Note that this is a chance to match wits with the Darksider without open combat. The circle probably won't guess the real reason Cyrus is working his Influence in the coffee house until much later. If things start to get physical, Astra will call the Stewards before wading in to the fight and kicking *everyone* out.

A Legend of Victory probably can't wait to test her skills. Her work doesn't have to be perfect, just bold enough to catch the crowd's heart. The unspoken challenge is clear: the first one to sway most of the crowd wins. It's up to the group how to resolve the conflict. The simplest way is to have Cyrus and one of the circle make Threshold 1 Presence + Aptitude rolls. Count the degrees of success on each roll, whoever reaches 21 first "wins". This system is fast and fluid, and offers ample opportunity for narrative bonuses to describe particularly vicious barbs or cunning repartee.

Other groups may prefer to resolve the duel more formally, using a variant on the combat system. Each combat round represents five minutes of back-and-forth. Characters attack (make arguments, or attempt to undermine their opponent) with Presence + Aptitude, and use the same pool to determine Defence (countering the opponent's point, rather than making a point of their own). Successful attacks don't deal any actual damage. Keep a track of how many points of damage a character would have done in total. The winner is whoever deals 21 points of "damage" first. Especially adventurous groups may opt to use all the combat options, including armour (pre-existing reputation or standing in the community), tricks (launching two attacks at once), preps (taking time to work through the metre of a song before singing it), and even grappling (twisting an opponent's own words against himself).

In either case, each Legend adds their highest Sphere as their "weapon" (thanks to Influence). This is in addition to any Sphere-synergy bonuses—characters optimized for working a crowd can get a total dice pool of Presence + Aptitude + Aptitude Synergy + Sphere Synergy + Highest Sphere. As always, Edges, Flaws and Skills are assumed to be part of the Attribute and Aptitude values.

The crowd boos the loser out of the coffee house. If the circle wins, they can ask around for information, but all they'll hear is about the concert that night. If they dig deeper into the ritual, they'll encounter the events of [Ritual Research](#). Once they leave the coffee house, the circle will see flyers for the gig. If they wait it out, head to [To Stop a Witch](#), while if they decide to prepare, [A Work of Beauty](#) covers some of their

options.

Locations

The Groundswell: The levels of Heavenside closer to the surface feature wider, taller tunnels—five to ten metres high, and wide enough for one-man trucks and rickshaws in addition to pedestrian traffic. The area's still firmly alternative, but more in an art deco meets trad goth way, compared to the neon-urban-cyberpunk feel of the Warrens.

Astra's Coffee House: A beautiful art deco coffee house with seating for over a hundred people in booths and at regular tables. Astra, the owner, stands behind the main bar day and night, and there's a stage at one end. Discrete fliers advertise everything from improvised comedy to beatnik poetry and folk music, seemingly a different act every night.

NPCs

Astra (Elf)

Tall, more striking than beautiful but with a commanding presence. Bright blue eyes that stare like a laser. Her hair blends into feathers around her shoulders. Under the bar she's got a flanged carbon-fibre mace and a sawn-off shotgun with a pistol grip.

All Attributes 3 (+1 Awe-Inspiring, +1 Precise, -1 Micromanager, -1 Aloof)

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Barista 2+Skill: Coffee (+Mind & Edges=7), Security 2 (+Body=5)

Expertise: Damn Fine Coffee (Mind+Barista)

Combat: Mace (6 + 2 damage)

Dana Jarvik (Human Legend)

Short, blonde hair pulled back in a severe bun. Stereotypical ice-queen with a superiority complex. Briefcase, pin-stripe suit jacket & skirt, and a thin deep red tie. Couldn't relax if you paid her.

Body/Health: 3/7 (-Fragile)

Mind/Wits: 5/9 (+Precise)

Presence/Will: 3/7

Ethos/Conviction/Degeneration: 2/6/7 (Beliefs: Following blindly means all is lost, expression is the foundation of freedom)

Magic: 13

Aptitudes: Ritual Occultist 5, Magecraft: Roads 4

Spheres: Splendour 3, Mercy 2

Initiative: 6

Combat: Ritual dagger (4)

Expertise: Ritual Magic (Mind + Magecraft)

Cyrus Anderson (Orc Legend)

Average height, heavy-set—no stranger to fast food. Looks rooted in Seattle grunge style, replete with acoustic guitar over his back. Dark eyes, matted hair. His hands are Distinctive—he has three large, flexible claws in place of fingers.

Body/Health: 3/7 (-Distinctive)

Mind/Wits: 3/7 (-Formulaic)

Presence/Will: 4/8 (+Rousing, +Charming)

Ethos/Conviction/Degeneration: 2/6/6 (Beliefs: It all works out in the end, violence is the last resort of a fool)

Magic: 12

Aptitudes: Musician 4 + Guitar, Street Punk 2

Spheres: Victory 2

Initiative: 7

Combat: Claws (6 + 1 damage)

Expertise: Improvised Songs (Presence + Musician)

A Work of Beauty

The circle set to work preparing themselves for facing whatever the Darksidiers have planned. Time to get their hands dirty...

Many characters, will want to make something as part of their preparation—a weapon or a device that will help the circle stop the ritual. One such magical item, a “Soul Spike”, is detailed below. That’s not the only option, of course, some groups will have their own idea of the kind of tool that they want.

Alternatively, the circle can try to rally some assistance using their own Influence, gathering a gang of their own to help out. Between making speeches and performing in bars (along with buying drinks for everyone present) they can gather a small crowd of followers, with traits listed below. Use the rules for Influence in the **Æternal Legends** rulebook.

The Enchantment rules in **Æternal Legends** provide a good starting point, but the time interval doesn’t suit the scale of this adventure—the enchanter only has a few hours to work her magic. Drop the time interval for the enchantment roll to half an hour, or even 15 minutes. Characters likely won’t have time to enchant an item with a Total of more than 8—one-shot items take less time to make and require less magical expenditure, so are more useful in this situation.

A Soul Spike is a Simple/Unique enchanted item, a rod or polearm inscribed with dragon’s blood that grounds out magic in the surrounding area. The wielder drives the Soul Spike into the ground and activates it by spending a point of magic. Magic expenditures within a 50 metre radius cost double for an hour, after which the spike crumbles. The Spike is an Essence 2/Total 6 one-use item. Either Mack Grench or the Wheel Aflame will mention it, if the circle indicate their suspicions.

Václavské (pron. “VA-klav-ska”) in the Warrens sells dragon’s blood, amongst other useful items that enchanters would be interested in. The owner, Dané Kafka, only has one small vial left and wants at least \$2000—though if the circle agrees to bring him a replacement, he’ll slash the price to \$200. Dané will offer the use of his workshop to a Legend of the Beauty, while other enchanters will have to leave a “security deposit”.

The circle has three hours to prepare before the concert starts, and magic starts screaming in their very souls. When they head to Gateway, they walk straight into To Stop a Witch.

Locations

Heavenside, Groundswell, etc.: Detailed above.

Václavské: A small, almost poky shop that’s half jeweller, half pawn-shop. Security on the merchandise is very tight, and Dané stands behind reinforced glass. The toughened-glass cabinets show magical relics of varying quality and authenticity, and the general atmosphere is of magic tinged with a hint of desperation. The back room is an enchanter’s workshop, replete with small forge, anvil, and tools.

NPCs

Dané Kafka (Goblin)

Middle-aged, scrawny, worn and stained clothes. Czech immigrant. Chain-smokes hand rolled cigarettes. Nicotine stains in his prematurely white hair and beard.

All Attributes 2 (+1 Cunning, +1 Nimble, -1 Unfit, -1 Cowardly)

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Enchantment 2 (+Mind & Edges=5), Shopkeeper 2 (+Presence=4)

Expertise: Cosmetic Enchantments (Mind + Enchantment)

Heavenside Citizens (Various Bright Clades)

A band of people from all walks of life who find themselves swept up in the circle's quest.

All Attributes 2

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Tunnel-rat 2 (+Body=4—3 for combat), Heavenside Citizen (+Mind=4)

To Stop a Witch

The characters show up at Gateway as the gig's getting started. The band's a mixture of punk and goth in their sound, but they're clearly very into it. That's just what Dana's hoping for—she wants to channel their emotional release into her magic, smashing through the boundary and linking Heavenside with Chicago

The Gateway's the third potential link between Heavenside and the Unaware world, linking as it does to the middle of Soldier Field on Lake Shore Drive—the home of the Chicago Bears. One ritual, no matter how powerful, isn't going to co-locate part of an Interstice and the middle of a football field, but the Darksiders can seriously weaken the fabric of both worlds. The Darksiders must be stopped, no matter the cost.

If the circle gets the drop on the Darksiders, they can disrupt Dana's ritual pretty quickly—destroying her magical trappings will wreck her concentration. On the one hand, they've saved the day. On the other, Dana, Cyrus, and Jak all want to beat them to a pulp.

If the circle approach the Darksiders openly—especially if they've got weapons drawn, then Dana will send the last member of her circle to deal with them: Jak Stoneballs is the group's roadie for the ride, and busting some Lightsider heads really makes his day. Cyrus will back him up in the fight, but Dana needs to give her ritual full concentration and won't join the fray. A few goblins, swayed by Cyrus earlier performance in the coffee house, may join the fray—but if that'd pose too much of a challenge to your circle, those goblins are embroiled in a fight with a gang of gnomish beatniks who turn weaponized poetry on their foes. If the characters gathered their own gang of helpers, they take the goblins out of contention even if that tilts things quite far towards the characters.

Fighting Cyrus and Jak can be a long, slow process and Dana might stand a real chance of completing her ritual. A Soul-Spike (see [A Work of Beauty](#)) will buy enough time to really disrupt the ritual, as will other enchanted items of a like kind. Also, if one of the circle ignores Jak and Cyrus long enough to do damage to Dana, they'll break her concentration. If combat starts while Dana's working her magic, assume her only actions are to concentrate on her ritual (costing 4 Wits, and allowing her to spend 1 Magic). If she spends 8 Magic, the circle fails. Proceed directly to [In Strength We Trust](#), but the Hydra can draw power from its home Interstice and so can heal for only 1 Magic.

If the characters succeed, then well done. They saved the day. There's still a chance that they might not feel like big heroes, especially if a Legend of Strength didn't get to hit things. If that's the case, then Dana's ritual did enough. Proceed to [In Strength We Trust](#). If their victory feels complete, the circle can report in to the Ministry and John Dixon, and tell the story of how they saved Heavenside.

Locations

Gateway: A shallow bowl in the centre of Heavenside about two hundred metres in diameter and ringed with standing stones. By the time of this scene, there's a stage set up at one side of the circle replete with amps, instruments, and the Screaming Banshees. Most of the remaining area is thronged with people dancing and enjoying the music. Close to the backstage area, the Darksider circle cluster around something that looks like a mixing desk fucking a magic circle.

NPCs

Revellers (Various Clades)

A band of people from all walks of life, just there for the music when all hell breaks loose.

All Attributes 2

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Heavenside Citizen (+Mind=4)

Screaming Banshees (Various Clades)

A five-piece band of varying clades, including drummer, keyboards, two guitarists, and a violinist. Black leather and studs, spiked hair, over-the-top guitars and fashions.

All Attributes 2

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Musician 2+Skill: Rocking Out (+Presence=5)

Dana Jarvik

As above

Cyrus Anderson

As above

Jak Stoneballs (Troll Legend)

Five feet tall and just as wide, hard to tell if it's muscle or fat. Up close, it's obviously muscle. Shirtless, leather pants, short blond hair (or is it lichen?), mid-brown "skin".

Body/Health: 4/8 (+Strong, +Tireless)

Mind/Wits: 2/5 (-Slow, -Dull)

Presence/Will: 3/7 ()

Ethos/Conviction/Degeneration: 2/6/6 (Beliefs: Only a fool shows off, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts)

Magic: 12

Aptitudes: Wrestler 4 + Throwing, Car Mechanic 2

Spheres: Strength 2

Initiative: 7

Combat: Grapple (9—10 for throwing), Unarmed (9), Stony Hide (2 points armour)

Expertise: King of the Ring (Body + Wrestler)

Cyrus' Posse (Goblins)

A disorganized mob of goblins, no strangers to Heavenside's coffee houses, who heard Cyrus speak and want to lend a hand.

All Attributes 2 (+1 Cunning, -1 Cowardly)

All Traits 6

Aptitudes: Heavenside Punk 2 (+Body=4), Knife Fighter 3 (+Body & Synergy=6)

In Strength We Trust

The magic in the air, combined with the music and emotional power of the concert, weakened the gap between the worlds. Not so much, as the Darksiders had hoped, between Heavenside and the Unaware world. Gateway, as a conflux of mystical pathways, has attracted the attention of *something* trapped in a long-forgotten Interstice.

Give the characters chance to catch their breath before a reptilian head appears behind the stage, followed by another, and another—a hydra's bursting through the wall between worlds, and it's hungry! The Darksiders split when they see what they have done. It's up to the circle to take the fight to the monster.

Fighting a monster is all well and good, but the beast has broken through in the middle of a concert. Though the attendees aren't dumb enough to hang around, they're not immediately safe—if the Legends are having too easy a time of it, the Hydra might ensnare a band member who's just a bit too slow, or effortlessly bite a straggler in two.

The circle has one advantage: the hydra's out of its natural environment. It relies on the natural magic of its home Interstice to regenerate, something that's not as easy to come by in Heavenside. If the circle have a Soul-Spike or similar magic-disrupting ability, the Hydra has an even harder time regenerating missing heads (double the cost to heal) and thus an easier time dying.

Fighting the Hydra should tax the circle to the limits of their abilities, but if they win, they'll be real heroes known throughout Heavenside. The Ministry might award them a "public service" grant, or their own residence carved from the bedrock, and they'll always be welcome in the Kingdom. The hydra's scales, teeth, or heart could come in very handy to an enchanter.

Locations

Gateway: Mostly as above, save for a hydra bursting through the stage. Most of the revellers and band members will run, but in doing so they'll turn most of Gateway into a field of mud that can get treacherous underfoot.

NPCs

Revellers, Band Members

As above

Hydra

See the **Æternal Legends** corebook. Attacks that don't target the hydra's body (-2 die penalty) target one of the heads. The hydra can spend 2 Magic to regenerate an injury against a head. Regenerating in combat doesn't count as an action and doesn't cost Wits, but only one injury can regenerate a turn.