THE PIER

FINALE



Without the bright lights, laughter, and music from the local carnival, the waters seem like a blanket of rippling darkness stretching into infinity. Towards the sea, the dark shapes of docked ships are almost completely chewed up and overrun by the continuous bouts of waves.

OBJECTIVE

- ★ Look around, talk to NPCs, explore. You just might find something interesting...
- ★ Up to 8 people at a time on this doc.

PLAYERS

- 1. Jehu
- 2. Aleksander
- 3. Florian
- 4. Clairee

- - 6. Mirte

5. Double A

RUIFS

- If you would like to use one of your inventory items please paste the following line at the bottom of your post in bold:
 - CHARACTER NAME wants to use their item, ITEM NAME.
- To be considered 'active' in this Trial, you must post in the roleplay docs at least 5 times. <u>Please include your post number in every post</u>. (examples: 0/5, 3/5, etc)
- If your team notices that a Google Doc is getting too long or laggy, contact a mod and we will create a new one.
- Please keep any OOC chat out of the roleplay section. Feel free to chat in the designated location channel in the official Discord server.
- There is now required post information. Read the journal to learn more.

CHFCKPOINT

One moment you'd been in the city square, and the next you were standing at the piers with a handful of other cats, under a dilapidated shelter to shield you from the rain. In front of you sits Kaulu--but not Kaulu the cat. Kaulu the coyote. Kaulu the god. He's beaming at you like he just gave you a present he couldn't wait for you to open.

"Alright, then!" he says. "This is a special little question and answer time, while we wait for Oordeel and Helena to work out their sibling drama, or kill each other, whichever. Ask me whatever you'd like to know! I have no reason to lie to you. Well, maybe a *couple* things I'd lie to you about. Don't ask me who your soul partner is, I won't tell you. Or your soul shade. Or whatever. But pretty much anything other than that is fair game!"

He crosses his paws, seeming far too polite for an all-powerful universe god. "What would you like to know?"

JEHU the believer.

POST #15

SOUL CLASS

BLACK LV3

(full-body translucency, basic shadow manipulation)

STATUS

RIGHT ALL ALONG

INTERACTING

KAULU

SKILL CARD

[STRENGTH WITHOUT WILL IS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD]

art by mothsighs





HAD JEHU BEEN paying attention to anything going on? Well, of course not, for by the time everyone had come forward with their tales about the night, Jehu had learned something very important. They had been right.

And because they had been right, they had a very important conversation to have with the dragon. *Go away*, they cried to the shadows of the stormy day, *you were wrong about everything*. Helena had nothing to do with the Waste, nothing at all. Jehu no longer had any need to justify the means of such a goal as creating a new world, because the means hadn't even been hers. It was all... the other creature, the beast. Whatever it was. It was other, other, other.

But still... reclaiming their memories of Helena's realm had given Jehu one vital perspective. The means, the terrible means. Did such terror, such sickness, still justify the outcome? What was the goal of this *other* creature? Was it worthy? Was it also right? Was it what Meraxes would want?

The storm wasn't just above them. It was all around.

And the dragon said to Jehu, you are not right. You will never have more than half of the full picture until you break free.

And then the world shifted. The ocean roared. And in front of Jehu was this other.

It was a yipper, Jehu realised, one of those noisy, long-snouted creatures from the lowlands back home... but it wasn't just a creature, it was spectacular. Jehu had never seen a living being with such an energy, not even Helena or Meraxes could match it. This had been following them for so long? This had created the Wasteling disease that Jehu had ripped out of dozens of cats with their own claws? The young cat sucked in a deep breath, and released it slowly, allowing their mind to clear. The dragon wouldn't be bothering them now. They wouldn't allow it.

Allowing themself to take in their new surroundings... Jehu realised they were back where they had started the previous night. They leapt into a defensive, bristling stance, ready to beat away Helena's traitor brother if he was still with them... but as they looked around, they noticed new faces, still dazed from the maelstrom of events they had just emerged from. A large spotted molly, a strange-looking white cat, and a brown molly with a torn-up tail all stood among Jehu's old teammates. Jehu's head turned back to the *other*, their stare solemn but not yet hateful. This was something new.

"Questions?" they said, eyes wide, "well, I ain't missing my chance this time." Stepping forward, just a little, they faced down the magnificent creature.

"What're you doing the, uh, the Red Plague for?" they asked bluntly, stumbling over the Trialgoers' name for the Waste. "Is it for a good reason, like how Helena wanted to make the new world without all the sickness? I just need to know. I don't care about the killings, I promise." They felt themself growing more desperate by the end of their question, their throat closing up as some strange emotion seized them. Was there something within them that wanted to believe in this creature?

"And..." they looked up straight into the creature's burning eyes, so totally unlike Meraxes' cold golden glow. Not hot or cold, light or dark, but simply energetic. "If it's good, if you're good... I'm a warrior, I wanna know what I can do to help."

SUMMARY

JEHU asks KAULU for what purpose he created the Red Plague, and provisionally offers their support depending on his answer.

SHE/HER • LVL 003 • BLUE SOUL



SKILL CARD • APPLICATION

(Art by BreezyBlue22)

MENTIONS: Jehu, Kaulu POST 8/5

BEFORE I COULD come to my senses, it seemed I was right back where I had just been, in the pier district. The brisk air, sharp with the smell of the ocean, had tousled my hair so gently just hours before, but it only felt dizzying to me now. My tail thrashed lightly with unease. I had kept my composure, I had buried that festering, ugly feeling deep in the depths of my stomach, but now I could feel it slowly rising, like bile in my throat. I was seething.

Kaulu sat mere feet across from us, unfazed in the slightest. In fact, I could surely pin the gleam of delight in his multicolored pupils. I knew, hopelessly, there was nothing I could do. So I stayed put, teeth clenched, trying to ignore the bitter taste of venom pooling on my tongue.

A brown and tan cat, who I had seen only in passing and thus lost any trace of their name, piped up first. "What're you doing the, uh, the Red Plague for?" they asked, ears perked with inquiry. "Is it for a good reason, like how Helena wanted to make the new world without all the sickness?

They continued to talk after that, but I missed the remainder of their thought was drowned in the sound of my heart throbbing in my ears. *Is the plague for a good reason? What good fucking reason?* I could hear the sound of the sea sloshing not far off, begging to coil around my paws. My fur bristled, a growl rising in my throat.

"I don't give a shit why you made the plague--" I spat, addressing the coyote god. I was livid, now. "What I want to know--" I continued, my words dripping with both literal, and metaphorical venom "--is if it's permanent. Tell me there's a way to get rid of it." My voice gradually thickened as I strained to say the words, my mind now flooding with thoughts of my mother. I had, quite stubbornly, refused to acknowledge what had happened last trial. I did not allow myself to picture her blank, crimson eyes, nor the frail build of her body, or the last words she had said to me. But now, I couldn't get it out of my fucking head.

The only thing I could think of, in all of it, was how much I felt like it had been my fucking fault.



SUMMARY: Mirte is seething. Her fur bristles at Jehu's implication that the plague could, in any possible way, be justified. She redirects her malice at Kaulu, demanding to know if the effects of the plague can be reversed. But as she finds it harder and harder to not think of her mother's empty, red eyes, her furious ask gradually dwindles into a desperate plea.

Florian

Purple soul lvl 3
Post 19/5 | App | Skill Card

Interacting with: Kaulu

Mentions: Arrow, Jehu, Mirte, Clairee

Blood rushed in Florian's ears, and he could feel nothing but the burning rage within his veins. They were fooled, toyed with, they were all *pawns*. Before he knew it, he was up there preventing Arrow from protecting *the coyote*. His trialmates held the monster, the murderer, down, and—

He begged. Kaulu begged them to stop, they were still friends, *please*. Tears swelled in Florian's eyes as he watched, on the precipice of horrified and the aftershocks of numbing rage. He deserved this, *he did*, he *murdered* their trialmates. *Chip*. Florian made a choked sound, almost a sob, as he watched the cats subdue the god that had walked among them as one of them, and then, suddenly, it was over.

Blood gushed from Kaulu's chest as he still continued to beg and Florian couldn't decide what was stronger, his hatred or the terrifying thought that he was involved in taking a life, no matter how indirectly.

All was silent, but the silence feels wrong, and then there is no silence at all.

Kaulu rose, bathed in blood, his visage changing into one of brilliance, and Florian had the sinking feeling that they had just doomed themselves.

Everything happens so fast, after that. Florian flies off the pile of rubble and hits the ground, and he watches, dazed, as Kaulu's jaws crush Oordeel's throat. Despite the utter lack of faith Florian held for the God of Judgement, it was still... horrifying. This cat, whatever else he might be, however ineffective and unimpressive Florian found him, was still a *god*, and it would be a testament to the coyote god's power if he simply *killed him*, just like that.

Except, instead of dying, Oordeel regains his power and his wings, and flies off to stop Helena. Doubtful, Florian is wary to hope for such miracles. Hopeful, he does anyway.

Awed, he watches the gods before him and knows he truly is only a pawn in this game.

They are all swept away, and Florian opens his eyes at the pier. They are given the chance to question Kaulu, and his trialmates jump right in. Florian tries to calm himself despite the whirlwind of raw emotions, and takes stock of his fellow trialgoers, wanting to make sure they were okay to soothe his reeling mind. He knew most, some only from tonight, some not at all. But one cat stood out – Clairee, a cat he'd known since these trials began.

Florian stepped towards her, unsure, but Jehu and Mirte's questions stop him. His head snaps towards Jehu and he frowns, fur bristling angry at the implication that the Plague had anything *good* about it. The grey blue soul seemed to be of a similar opinion, and she went on to ask about the reversal of the Plague.

Panic floods Florian as he remembers his mother, eyes red and blank, stranded on Helena's world.

"M-my mother," he blurts out before he can stop himself, stepping towards Kaulu with trembling paws. "Can she be saved? My aunt? I-is... is my father still alive?"

His family, though largely strangers to him now after all this time, was suddenly clear in his mind, the one thing he clings to through all of this inner turmoil of pain and grief and rage. His aunt teaching him how to climb trees, then one day

swallowed by the Red Plague. His mother's soft purr and kind eyes bleeding into red and the bleak silence of the Plague. His joyful father, his fate unknown, a question that hung heavy on his heart.

But, would it matter, Florian realizes as his heart sinks, if they failed the tasks the Legendaries gave them and couldn't save their dying world?

Would there be anyone *left* to save the world, if things kept up the way they had, with murderous gods taking their lives for no good reason?

Then, Florian shakes himself and his desperate expression hardens into one of determination. He had more important questions to ask the embodiment of the universe.

"Wait. You said you're the universe," Florian says, a flash of something dangerous in his eyes. He can't hide his hatred of the coyote god. "Is there anything left if you're gone?"

'If we kill you,' goes unsaid.

SUMMARY: Finale recap. Florian has feelings, desperately and unthinkingly questions about his family, then composes himself and asks Kaulu if there is anything left in the universe if Kaulu would be gone.

Notes: If the info is needed, Florian's mother is plagued on Helena's world, his aunt is plagued on our world, and his dad is with the Legendaries unplagued.

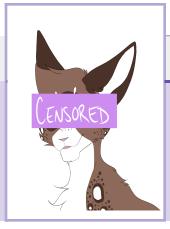
CHECKPOINT

Kaulu eyed Jehu curiously. "Oho, an opportunist, hm? Well, I'm sorry to disappoint you but I am not 'doing' the red plague, actually. Helena is. Now, I may have given her a little tip or two on how to... y'know... do it, but I'm certainly not the one abducting entire colonies and plaguing them. That's all ll on her! So... is chaos inherently good, or not? Hah! That's a question for the ages. But I appreciate the support? I think?"

He turned to Mirte, eyebrows raised. "So much for asking *nicely*. To answer your question--yes. Or no. Maybe? Probably! Is there a cure? Also maybe probably! But I'm sorry to say you won't be getting my help to find it."

He turns to Florian last. "Ok, well, while I don't like the murder in your eyes just then, I'll still answer your questions. Mom and auntie? They're plagued, so like I said, who knows! Kind of up to you! Your dad? Hm." His eyes unfocus and his face goes slack for a couple heartbeats before he appears to come back. "Dad's good! No worries there… well, at least for now." His eyes narrow slightly at the other questions. "The universe! Now that's a pretty big title, isn't it? Though I am extremely important, I

wouldn't say I'm the UNIVERSE. I was just the first thing the universe *created...* so maybe that answers your question."



ALEKSANDER | PURPLE SOUL

Male | Three Years | Level 4

>Skills --- Bio<

Mentions: Aileen, Jehu, Florian, Double A, Mirte

Interacting with: Clairee, Kaulu

With his sights set on Aileen at last, Alek began charging her way, before the very fabric of time and space churned around him and he found himself back on the pier. He yowled in despair and looked around at the cats he found himself with. Two he had been with the previous night, Florian and Jehu. Double A he had seen the night they-he shook himself violently to fight that memory away, if even for a moment. He did not want to relive that horrible vision right about now. Another was a cat he wasn't sure he knew the name of if he was honest. The final was...

He squinted at the other cat, as though that would help him identify the female. He'd seen her in passing of course, ever since he'd taken off the blindfold. He took a tentative step toward her and took a quick scent of the air. His heart seized. This was one of the first cats he'd met at the valley before this all began. He was finally putting a face to the name that had lingered on his mind. He suddenly felt terrible that he hadn't approached her sooner.

"Clairee?" He asked quietly, approaching her slowly. He tried to give her a small smile, which was as big as his frayed nerves allowed. He chose in that moment to stand beside her for the following confrontation with the newly revealed god.

His eyes moved to Kaulu as he began answering the first round of questions. Alek bristled at the answers. He was so nonchalant about everything, and that truly unnerved Alek. He didn't like that this seemed like a joke to him... with all the suffering he'd 'helped' cause.

He fought down his rising panic at his noncommittal answer about a potential cure, and the fact that he would not be assisting them. Some God... he thought bitterly. He turned his own eyes to Kaulu, noticing perhaps a bit of resemblance to a cat he'd seen around on the journey. If you'd given him a lineup of all the cats he still didn't know well in the trials, he probably couldn't have picked him out. They'd never been on a team together, nor could he say he really spoke to him.

When the God finished answering the posed questions, Alek presumed it was time to ask his own.

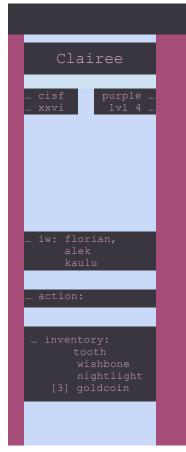
"So your only reasoning for helping Helena cause this plague is... what? You wanted to cause some chaos?" He asked, narrowing his eyes. He'd heard the stories of the Legendaries... heard what Oordeel and Helena had done to them. Quite frankly, he was pissed to find himself also in a twisted game played by the Gods. At least Oordeel's game had been played to restore a dying world. The game Kaulu was playing seemed to be for nothing more than his own amusement.

"Can I ask why you brought us here?" He asked suddenly, unsure where the thought or question came from. "Wait..." He continued, shaking his head and taking a breath. He'd almost forgotten who he was talking to. Any smart-talking God of chaos would exploit a question like that. Too many parts of that sentence weren't specific enough, and it would be easy to negate the question almost entirely.

"Let me rephrase. My question is this: why did you bring us to this city?" He asked more firmly.

> Alek approaches Clairee, he is happy to finally see her. He asks Kaulu why he brought them to the city.

Post 13 of 5 Tertiary Power Use: 0/3



Marauder had returned, brought back with the other prisoners, beaten bloody. The rings under Clairee's eyes had grown darker with every waking moment of worry that she spent roaming the streets, slowly growing mad as she searched the waters for any sign her friend-- but even after his resurfacing-- she remained restless.

The events of the night were as surreal as the city they found themselves in. A wild fever dream, a nightmare they couldn't wake up from, an episode of imaginations that came only to the greatest storytellers.

Now impostors lingered amongst their own trialmates, new gods that would never lend an ear to their pleas. New deities that cared only about themselves. Her trust was fading and with the blink of an eye... they were back at the docks.

The purple soul recognised most of the cats with her. Among her previous teammates at the deck were Florian and Alek, friendly faces from when times... weren't so grim. Her gaze grew hopeful upon seeing them and she stood with them in silent comradery. The chestnut tom seemed to have lost his trademark blindfold, revealing gentle pink eyes. A soft smile made its way to her face, and a notion nostalgia simmered in her chest-- she'd always wondered what colour they were

The heartbeat of serenity she shared among her fellow purple souls any trace of that positive sentiment, quickly vanished when her trialmates began asking *Kaulu* some questions.

She listened with interest, some questions more significant for her own objectives than others. Her eyes were heavy with exhaustion and frustration as the canid deity addressed their concerns with a tone so disgustingly light-hearted.

Cats had died to come this far, others had taken lives to be standing here today and all he could bring himself to do was joke around, and play himself up this way? The molly gritted her teeth. If looks could kill...

Clairee held on to the memory of Pidgey to keep a glimmer of composure amongst this storm. The hope that there was indeed a cure out there for her. That all this would be worth it.

She let Alek finish, before adding: "And what happened to our friends when they were gone?" A cough escaped her-- voice hoarse and broken from crying out a blue soul's name in the flooded alleys all day.

10/5

SHE/HER • LVL 003 • BLUE SOUL



SKILL CARD • APPLICATION

(Art by BreezyBlue22)

MENTIONS: Kaulu, Clairee POST 9/5

THE COYOTE god spoke, with a jarringly light-hearted tone, of the plague. I strained to listen against the roaring of the tide between my ears. But from what I could gather, the plague, in its entirety, was not Kaulu's doing. He was involved, though - to some degree, blame could be placed on his shoulders. The wind ruffled my fur, the great

swathes of grey and deep blue mimicking the froth of waves before a storm.

As Kaulu continued to speak, dancing around the answer like a rabbit weaving through thistles, my anger grew harder to contain. His remark proved entirely useless, and only frustrated me more - it had been a simple question. Yes or no. Yes or *fucking* no! My tail lashed, but I said nothing. I pressed my paws into the cold pavement in an effort to drive the despair mounting in my heart further down. He hadn't necessarily said no -- he hadn't said yes though, either. He had essentially said nothing at all. I could feel the rumble of another growl rising in my throat. I forced myself to take a breath.

Another question was asked, on our purpose for being brought here, spoken by a tom who's name I couldn't place. As my gaze wandered his way, however, I spotted someone familiar - Clairee. The molly looked worn and tired, and the events of, and following, the last trial seemed to weigh heavily on her shoulders. After she spoke her inquiry, I quietly made my way closer, sitting a few lengths away. I cast a nod in greeting and affirmation her way.

The thrumming of my heart had slowed, now, and I mulled over another question. Previously, when another cat had asked about his father, Kaulu just... seemed to *know*. He was a god, afterall. After a pause, I finally addressed him.

"My colony--" I started, swishing my tail, "--in the Sawtooth mountain range. Are you able to see them? Can you tell me- is Valya alright? Tell me--" I paused, not sure if I wanted to know the answer "--if she's alive."



SUMMARY: Mirte listens to the god's convoluted spiel, fur bristling with a quiet anger she finds progressively more difficult to contain. Unbeknownst to her, the older cat's pupils have lit up a vivid blue, as her powers react to her turbulent state of emotion. She then recognizes her previous trial-mate, Clairee, and moves a bit closer to sit near her. With her composure finally gathered, Mirte asks the god about her friend and colony.

Florian

Purple soul lvl 3
Post 20/5 | App | Skill Card

Interacting with: Kaulu

Mentions: tba

There was a cure... Maybe. Probably? It was up to them if plagued cats could be saved?

Florian felt like his paws would give out any minute now. Since it had become apparent that Barnabas couldn't do a thing for the plagued cats, Florian had feared in his heart there was nothing to be done. Since Helena's trial he had clung on to empty hope for a cure with unfathomable desperation, but now... now there was actually

something to cling to. A renewed hope, even if tainted by the possibility of a lie. Kaulu had done little else than lie to them for months. Why start being truthful now?

As much as he didn't trust the god, he desperately wanted to believe him.

And if it was truly up to him, he would do whatever it took to make things right and cure his family. Maybe then he could finally, *finally* go home again.

The news about his father made him release a breath he didn't realize he had been holding. Florian wondered, briefly, if his father knew he was alive. If he made it out of the trials, would his dad be happy to see him?

Did he... did he know what happened to mom?

Shaking himself out of his solemn thoughts, Florian pondered Kaulu's reply. So he wasn't the universe, so he could likely be killed without dooming everything in existence. While the thought of revenge warmed him, a shudder ran through him when he thought back to city center and Kaulu's pleading screams.

Was he still angry? Would he try to harm them? Florian glanced nervously at the other cats, then the otherworldly coyote. Would he stop them from saving the world?

Could they even do it?

"Can... can we save the world? Our world? Like the Legendaries want us to?" This time his tone is less aggressive, more unsure. Nervous, even.

He wanted to hope. He wanted answers. He needed to know if all of this was for nothing.

Distressed but determined to have his answers, Florian stares at the god, accidentally activating his tertiary power PREMONITION.

Summary: [introspection tba] Florian doesn't look quite so murderous as he asks Kaulu a question. He accidentally activates his tertiary power PREMONITION.



Kaulu nods casually at Aleks' question. "Yeah, pretty much. Just wanted to see what she'd do with it. And I brought ya here to discover me! I wanted to join in on the Trial fun; run my own Trial for a bit, let you find out the truth, and maybe give you some stuff along the way. You're welcome, by the way, for the piles of gifts I gave you all. And some of you have even discovered your combination powers, which is pretty sweet!" He beams proudly.

To Clairee, he says, "The three I captured? Oh, nothin'. They just found out my secret a little too early, so I put them out of the way. I put them in a little prison cell, which they eventually busted out of with the help of some other cats who found 'em. They're all good now! Alive and well."

He looks at Mirte, shrugging. "Hang on, I'll be right back." He vanishes for a few seconds again, just like before, then reappears. "Valya's good! Alive, well, waiting out the storm. Though some of the cats in your colony look *preeeetty* plagued, if you ask me!" He shrugs.

Finally, he turns to Florian with a smile. "Of course! Why else would you still be here? As long as you're on your own four paws, there's a chance you could still win. If there was no hope left, I promise you I wouldn't be standing here; I'd be standing with whoever won this war."

When you look closer at the god, you're surprised to feel...nothing out of the ordinary. Aside from the obvious ancient god sitting in front of you, there seem to be no secret weaknesses, no weapons, no soft spots, where Kaulu seems to be vulnerable. He also doesn't seem to be planning anything; you get the feeling that he'd sit here with you for eternity, just answering questions, if you gave him the chance.

Florian

Purple soul lvl 3
Post 21/5 | App | Skill Card

Interacting with: Kaulu, Clairee

Mentions: -

Kaulu seemed to be in this for fun. As if the fate of the world was entertainment for him. And, weirdly, as much as that made his fur bristle and blood boil, it made Florian believe the god was being truthful, at least in that they did have a chance to save the world. It would make rather boring entertainment for an ancient god to watch them struggle if he knew for certain they would fail no matter what.

Oh, for heaven's sake, what had his life become? A pawn for ancient gods' amusement. He'd escaped from being the puppet of a mortal cat only to fall into the claws of gods. What was the point of it all? Did their choices even matter?

Overwhelmed with divine matters and staggering from his premonition, Florian stepped closer to Clairee, awkwardly brushing his tail against hers. She, like all of them, seemed to be having a terrible time, and Florian didn't want his old teammate to think she was completely alone in this nightmare.

And, though Florian wouldn't admit it, he himself really didn't want to feel alone anymore in this game of gods. He glanced at all of his trialmates grimly, hoping his intuition was true and there would be no traps or hidden agendas.

Still shaken by his new found ability, Florian stared at Kaulu in disbelief. He could hardly believe the coyote didn't have nefarious hidden motives. Was he truly not out to get them? Then why murder?

To make them realize the gravity of the situation, one of his little lackeys had implied. Shit, couldn't he just talk to them? Bored old god or not, these were cats' lives!

"Do you really mean us no harm?" Florian asked skeptically, unable to believe his premonition. "Even though you *murdered* our trialmates? You expect us to believe that?"

He straightened up, meeting eyes with Kaulu in defiance. "And what's your plan now? Are you gonna stay with us when we leave this town? Are you gonna help us? Or stop us?"

Summary: Overwhelmed, Florian steps closer to Clairee to reassure himself of the trialcats' presence. He questions Kaulu about his intentions.

CHECKPOINT

When Florian speaks up, Kaulu turns to him. The coyote god shrugs. "I don't really expect you to believe it, no! But it's the truth. The murders are in the past now, and I have no plans to hurt any of you anymore. As of yet. I can't make any promises for the future, though! Who knows what'll happen? All I know is that as of right now, I know that I won't stop you if you try to take Helena down." His grin stretches wide, sharp teeth glinting in the night.

Kaulu stops then, his ear flicking and his expression stilling for a moment, like he's listening very closely for something. Then he nods. "Mhm, yep! Oordeel will be coming back soon. We better go meet him!"

A spinning sensation again, a brief moment of darkness, and then you're back in the city square.

[[The Trial Finale will be announced on Discord, please check for updates. Posts made after this checkpoint will not be counted!]]