

(Intro)

Wanderer opens with Jon and crew home in Greenville, recovering after Noah's attack. They've recovered - except for Greyson, who remains in a coma with declining health. Hannah is unable to heal him, and they have no other ideas for where to find a healer.

Aedan is fidgety. Jon presses him, and Aedan admits that he returned to Greenville with the intention of recruiting Jon's help. During his search for a relic to break his contract, he's left beholden to the information others provide, with no way to verify if they're lying - until Jon showed up. They argue. Jon doesn't want to go, and the others don't want to let him go, but Aedan convinces him that both Noah and Anke will lick their wounds rather than attacking.

(Trip 1)

Jon leaves with Aedan on an expedition. Aedan leads them to a town in the suburbs of Chicago, where they confront a crew, hoping to buy the services of their finder. The crew recognizes Aedan and the encounter turns violent. Jon is tackled and nearly killed, but Aedan talks them down. After tense negotiations, the crew leader works with Jon, and tells him that they have no information on either Aedan's impossible relic hunt or Jon's healer search. Dejected, they leave and return home.

(Interlude part 1)

When they arrive, though, Mason and Cathy are over, and the house is full. The next morning, Keira has a disconcerting incident where she witnesses Aedan's ghostly image walking the halls, despite Aedan having left hours earlier. Neither her nor Jon have an explanation.

Jon continues working a mundane job to make ends meet, but with his demi activity, his performance suffers. Leaving work late, he stops by the hospital to pick Hannah up for a crew meeting. She requests to stop by Greyson's home for some of his belongings.

There are others at Greyson's house, though. When Jon and her arrive, they're ambushed and attacked by a group of demis. They fight the demis off, but Jon is impaled in the process. Hannah keeps him alive while help arrives.

When Jon awakens again, Amber and the rest fill him in on the details. The demis were a crew of rogues, and had been tipped off by Noah that Greyson's house was filled with valuables and left unattended. Worse, during the process of healing, Jon had missed a substantial amount of work, and was fired from his job.

(Interlude part 2)

Upset but determined to end the feud, Jon decides the crew will make a decisive blow against the rogues by baiting an attack. Likewise, he's increasingly suspicious of his own origins as a

demi, and the likelihood of him happening to find his necklace in a pawn shop when he was with his grandfather. He makes himself the bait, and sets out for a storage locker filled with his grandfather's belongings to try to solve the mystery.

The storage locker is filled with useless possessions and little else - until Keira spots an illusion in the building's rafters. Beneath the illusion a box of books is hidden, written in a strange language none of them recognize.

Before they can sort through the books, Nox hears demi's approaching, and the awaited fight breaks out in full. They're confronted by another group of rogues, this time with the help of an enslaved finder. They fight the demi's off, but in the process, Amber accidentally kills the finder while trying to target his captor.

(Interlude part 3)

They return home with the books to start deciphering them. Jon calls Aedan to inform him of the discovery, and Aedan is oddly interested. Nox asks Jon to check on Amber, and he finds her in a drunken mess on the porch. She confesses that she's ashamed, and too afraid to see Nox again after she failed to save the finder. She blames Jon for her weakening and attachment to the idea of saving anyone. The quiet moment between the two is interrupted by the sight of Officer Baldwin scoping out their house. When he leaves, Jon comforts Amber, then carries her back to her room to sleep off the liquor.

The books prove to be a total mystery, and none of them have a clue what they are or why Jon's grandfather would have them. Aedan returns home to look at them, but is incensed at the sight of Hannah helping them. He rips Jon a new asshole for showing such important secrets to an outsider from a different crew, then starts inspecting the books.

Jon tells him about Keira's growth of power, but Aedan doesn't have an answer for him. His best suggestion is that Keira's magic is responding to her need for power to deal with current events, and that they'll monitor the situation going forward.

Aedan proposes a new trip - this time, to find a tool he can use to magically translate the old books.

(Trip 2)

Amber protests Jon leaving, and insists on coming as his bodyguard, but is refused. Jon and Aedan depart. Jon reveals with the difficulty in finding a healer, he's searching for anyone who can help Hannah, versus healing Greyson all on their own. He also asks Aedan to teach him to knife fight. Aedan agrees, with some amusement.

Jon reads through a set of journals his grandfather had written in english, detailing how he witnessed a fight between mages and had a curiosity about magic sparked in him. He searched the world for the forgotten places where magic might still remain.

Aedan explains the Cleaners to Jon, a group of demis who operate in complete neutrality and seek to clean up after demi battles to ensure magic doesn't become public knowledge. He then brings Jon to an acquaintance's house, seeking information about a new finder.

Aedan's friends are cordial, but don't know him as Aedan but a false name. Over the course of the night, Jon realizes that Aedan has kept them at arm's length, and that they don't know of Aedan's immortality. Jon claims responsibility for their finder search to protect Aedan's secret, and receives a tip-off about a finder who can see unbonded relics.

Aedan and Jon head straight to the motel where the super-finder is staying. He's being guarded by soldiers from the local primes and marketeers, but they manage to wrangle a direct conversation with him. He has no information on Aedan's relic hunt or Jon's healer search, but does give Aedan a lead on an illusory - a magically enchanted tool - which should help him translate the books. Aedan gives him a token as thanks - a whispered set of instructions the finder should pass on to the Legion if ever he finds himself in trouble.

Jon and Aedan leave, but have stirred the suspicions of the watching marketeers. They hightail it to a local collector's house, a wealthy demi with an array of valuable tools at his disposal. They break in, finding Aedan's illusory, but are attacked by a group of marketeers as they leave. They defeat them, but Jon's neck and wrists are hurt in the battle.

Jon and Aedan start returning home, but can't get in touch with the others. Upon arriving, they find the crew was attacked in their absence. Amber and Jake were injured, Jake severely.

Amber tends to her injuries and Jon's. As the two begin coming down off their adrenaline, the conversation turns intimate, and Jon spends the night with her.

(Interlude part 1)

The morning brings its own difficulties as Jon realizes the depth of Jake's injuries. He's lost an eye, and Loren is furious at Jake for trying to protect her during the fight, thus putting himself in harm's way. Nox, Kai, and Brendon find elsewhere to be while Jake and Loren fight. Jon comments on Nox's strangeness, but Amber rebuffs him, informing him that Nox is five years old as a demi. She also informs him that telepaths have a short lifespan, never surviving past ten years before their own powers drive them insane. Chagrined, Jon apologizes.

He returns to his journals - and learns of his grandfather discovering a relic hidden in the forests of eastern europe. Aedan is starting to piece things together with the stolen illusory, but seems more anxious and worried than ever.

(Interlude part 2)

Jon calls a group meeting, and tells them they can't risk being attacked like that again. They need Greyson, their finder. He suggests that if they can't find a healer, they can make one, by giving one of his friends a relic. The crew is initially appalled at the suggestion, but recognizes the need for something to end the current situation. Jon leaves a message for Mason, wanting to meet up.

While they wait, the crew stretches their magical limbs in a mock fight. Jon is surprised by Aedan remaining separate, still buried unhappily in his grandfather's books. Mason has not responded to his message, and seems to be ignoring him. Jon is further surprised when Cathy contacts him, wanting to meet for dinner.

Cathy tells Jon Mason is upset at him, that he feels slighted by Jon's lack of attention to their friendship, and that Jon should make up with him. Jon returns home to be questioned by Keira, and learns that Aedan vanished again. Jon decides that they've waited long enough for Mason, and it's time to be more forceful.

Jon and the crew stage a trap in the park, luring Mason out with a supposed invitation from Cathy, who is happy to help if it means mending Jon's friendship with Mason. When Mason arrives, Jon and the crew confront him, and reveal the true reason Jon has been so distant - magic.

Mason rejoins Cathy and leaves, pensive. Jon and the crew go home, but Mason arrives first thing the next morning, demanding to be let in. With the help of Jake's hypnotism and Nox's telepathy, they put Mason in a suggestible mental state, steering him toward the ability they need, and bond him with a relic with the intention of having the power to grant, drain, and transfer magic from one demi to another.

When it's done, they go to the hospital—and there, Mason and Hannah together are able to heal Greyson, although Jon winds up drained in the process. They return home to rest, and the next morning, Cathy shows up to see Keira. After a short visit, her and Mason leave.

(Interlude part 3)

Things settle back into a normalcy, with Kai training his fire under the tutelage of Amber. Brendon, Loren, and Jake continue their love triangle. Aedan has left, and this time, he took Jon's books with him. Jon catches Greyson trying to flee the hospital, and convinces him to stay until he's healed more.

He also confronts Greyson over his grandfather. With Greyson being an accomplished finder, there's no way he wouldn't have known his grandfather was a demi. Greyson is initially foggy, but at prompting, his true memories break through.

He reveals that Jon's grandfather was a bondworker, and could shape the way that other people viewed him. If he wanted them to see him as a god, he was. If he wanted them to forget he existed, they would. Through that, and with the aid of an illusionist named Silas, they ran a successful crew owning the region. He further speculates that his grandfather must have put a lingering compulsion on Greyson to look after Jon, his flesh and blood grandson. Exhausted and melancholy, Jon returns to their house to start building their defenses against a possible attack.

But before he can, he gets a call. It's from Mason - and Cathy has just gone missing.

Jon goes to Cathy's apartment to help, but is confronted by Officer Baldwin there, who is highly suspicious of Jon. He evades Baldwin's questions, searching Cathy's apartment, but there's no sign of her. Keira searches Cathy's apartment along with him, using the abilities of past sight she'd uncovered before, but finds little useable information.

Before they can act further, Aedan screeches back into town, demanding Jon come with him. He ignores Jon's protests, and calls in his debt. Although not unsympathetic, he informs Jon that he'll help him look only after Jon helps *him*.

Trapped and badly needing Aedan's resources, Jon agrees.

(Trip 3)

Aedan explains that he's gotten a lead on an old viking tome of magic. With his knife being of viking make, a tome like this could be the final puzzle piece - but the trader won't deal with Aedan, and if they delay, the book will likely vanish. Texts like that are unspeakably rare, and this may be Aedan's final chance to get that information.

He takes Jon to a house in a suburb, dropping him with an address, an envelope of cash, and instructions to get out quickly. Jon goes to the indicated house, and is greeted by an old man who states he has the book.

When Jon goes to pay him, the man pulls a taser, and knocks Jon unconscious.

Jon awakens in a concrete cell, chained down. A man casts some sort of spell on him, then leaves - and Cathy is put in his cell. Initially shocked, Jon tries to comfort Cathy, but is confused as to why she would be there. When he starts questioning things further, he reaches a single conclusion: this isn't Cathy.

When he asks her who she is, Cathy laughs, and transforms into another blonde woman, identifying herself as Anke. She cuts Jon, touching his blood, and then transforms into a perfect replica of him. Worse still, she takes his relic. Adopting his mannerisms and speech patterns

instantly, she tells him that his fate lies in Aedan's hands, and leaves - but not before she brings the real Cathy back.

Left locked away with the real Cathy, who is shocked and traumatized, Jon tries to cope with the deprivation long enough to find a way out, but is rapidly deteriorating. Before he can collapse, they're interrupted by someone at the door - Aedan, who initially freezes, but hurries to free Jon and return his relic.

As they return to Aedan's car, he tells Jon that Anke had returned to him in Jon's image, but that he figured it out eventually. He sent her packing, but has received word that things in Greenville have gone wrong. A worst case scenario has happened, and Loren and Kai were taken by hunters.

Still bleary and injured, Jon tries to get himself back up to speed as Aedan pleads for Keira's help. Together, the two of them track down the hunter's car, smashing into it and freeing their friends - after a fight. They wait for the cleaners to arrive, as well as their friends, and the group heads home.

(Interlude)

Upon returning home, Jon is still bothered by what happened to him, and motivated by the sudden realization of his own mortality, confesses to Amber, who is amused but accepts. They are then forced to have an uncomfortable confrontation with Nox, who would certainly have known 'Cathy' was Anke. Nox pleads forgiveness, that Anke was threatening him, and at Amber's urging, Jon reluctantly accepts.

Cathy is sent home, and allowed to keep her memories so long as she keeps her silence.

Jon and Aedan talk about Anke. Aedan reveals more about his relationship with Anke, telling Jon that they've been close through the years, as fellow immortals. He tells Jon that Anke is a doppelganger, and can assume the forms of anyone whose blood she adds to her relic - and that this 'claiming' of bodies is permanent, up until each of the bodies is killed. Jon is furious at the idea that Anke will have permanent access to his body, but there's little Aedan can do to remedy it.

When Jon asks if Aedan found what he needed, Aedan says that he didn't find what he wanted, and becomes more hopeless than ever. Jon gives him a pep talk, but declares it time to deal with Noah once and for all.

Under the pretext of returning Hannah to her home crew, Jon calls a meeting with Carl - and asks for Carl's aid in isolating Noah. Carl agrees to help pressure the marketeers. Jon then offers Hannah a permanent spot on the crew, which Hannah is very happy and relieved about.

Jon then calls Noah's crew, using his connections with Carl and Keira's abilities to pinpoint Noah's outposts and threaten his footholds in the region. With the push from Carl's groups adding pressure, Noah agrees to a truce, unhappily.

Jon realizes that Baldwin has started following him around Greenville, tailing his movements. On top of that, Aedan has started acting distant, unapproachable.

To finish off the night, Tyler approaches Jon, saying he wants to leave the crew. He cites instability, and his need to provide a safe home for Kai. Kai revolts, not wanting to leave his new home, but Jon agrees. With the crew descending into shambles, Nox approaches Jon, apologizing again - and telling him Aedan wants to talk.

Jon finds Aedan by the fire, quiet and diminished. Aedan asks for Jon's help once again. Jon objects, but Aedan tells him this will be the last time he asks for help, and that he won't bother Jon again after. He'll leave him and his crew alone.

Confused and unsettled by Aedan's demeanor, Jon tries to reassure him, and agrees to help. After sharing a tense night with Amber, he leaves with Aedan.

(Trip 4)

Almost immediately upon leaving, Jon finds himself overcome by drowsiness, and falls asleep. He awakes in a fugue, feeling himself dragged over uneven terrain and dropped from a height, but passes out again after something cuts his hands.

He comes to, relic-less, in what looks like an old storm cellar, the wooden door replaced with bars. His hands are badly slashed across the palms, with bandages wrapped over the wounds. Painted runes cover the walls.

While trying to figure out what's going on, Jon catches sight of Aedan returning through the bars. He tries to get Aedan's attention, but Aedan ignores him - and Jon realizes Aedan is the one who did this to him.

He continues trying to get Aedan's attention, finally succeeding Aedan into a vicious, scathing rebuke of Jon and their friendship. He leaves Jon a bottle of water, stalking off. When Jon drinks the water later that evening, he falls into a drugged sleep again, and a quieter, sadder Aedan enters the cell to change his bandages and apologize.

With his deprivation starting to grow more intense, Jon manages to get a proper explanation out of Aedan - who explains that Jon's magic is tied to relationships and bonds, not language, and that brings Jon's magic into the realm of useable for remolding his knife's magic and contract. Unfortunately, doing so will mean killing Jon. Aedan apologizes, leaving Jon a notebook to write his goodbyes, but refuses to stop his scheme. As the hours drag on, Jon claims a bottle of

liquor from Aedan, taking the opportunity to tongue-lash Aedan for the various ways he's wronged Jon over the months.

That night, Jon is seized by agonizing fits and seizures as his deprivation progresses. The next morning, as they move into the final day, Aedan offers Jon a drug that will render him unconscious until his collapse is complete. Jon refuses it, not wanting to surrender his final moments of life, and Aedan is sent into a fit of anxiety over the unnecessary suffering, leaving the cell.

Jon's collapse continues. When Jon offers his reassurances, and tacitly forgives Aedan for murdering him, Aedan breaks, and returns to fetch Jon's relic - but before he can pass it back, Aedan is jumped by a strange woman who pins him down and retrieves the necklace.

Anke appears, alongside two men Jon doesn't recognize, and apologizes to Aedan, taking Jon's relic. The two men approach Jon, introducing themselves as Madis and Liam, and Madis enters the cell to enter Jon's bloody handprints in a book he holds.

Resigned, Jon is left in agonized helplessness until, at last, the magic is complete, and he collapses.

(Interlude)

Back in Greenville, Keira awakens disturbed, and after going about her business, realizes she hasn't heard anything from Aedan or Jon since they left. Worried, she brings her concerns to Jake, who starts trying to contact them too. When hours pass and they have no reply, their concerns start to solidify.

They question Nox as to what he knows - and Nox crumbles, revealing Aedan's plan. He tells the others he couldn't bear to stop Aedan, since Aedan was in so much pain anyway. The others aren't so easily swayed, and lock Nox into a shed until they figure out what to do.

Using Keira's past-sight, Keira and Amber race off through the rain, hot on Aedan's trail following the image of his car. They trace him back to the farmhouse where he held Jon - but find only the painted, bloody cell, covered in ashes, with Jon's coat and the letters he left behind. Keira is utterly distraught, convinced there's a mistake. More wise to the realities of the world, Amber is numb, resigned to Jon's fate.

Keira refuses to cave, though, resisting Amber's efforts to get her back to the warm car. She falls back on her magic, and tries to see through Jon's eyes - and succeeds in catching a glimpse of a forest scene, somewhere entirely apart from her and Amber.

That's enough for Keira, and she takes off into the forest, searching for her brother. She convinces Amber to help her, and together, they find Jon, naked and unconscious in the woods

with a bloodied face and gouged, badly infected hands. They get him into the car and race toward home.

Once there, Amber gets him settled in the care of Hannah and Mason, then turns to Nox. She can't forgive him, but she can't kill someone she's cared for for so many years, so with Jake's approval, she exiles Nox instead, giving him a vehicle and casting him out into the night.

Jon awakens from nightmares with Amber at his side. As he recovers, he tells her and Jake what happened to him - and to Aedan. A team meeting is called. With enemy demis moving in to capitalize on the perceived absence of their leader, a hellish battle is likely around the corner. They can stay, or they can go.

After a debate, the crew decides to stay, and Tyler promises his help through the coming fight. Jon continues trying to mend from his hurts both physical and psychological, but the sound of gunfire brings those attempts to a halt.

(Climax)

Jon is left inside the house to shelter with the noncombatants as the fight breaks out in full. When Noah's teleporter jumps into the house, Jon tries to defend them, only to find that what he thought was clumsiness from bandages was actually damage to the sensation and mobility of his hands. Together with Mason, Hannah, and Greyson's dog, they fight off the deluge of demis who attack them from within, but their house suffers irreparable damage in the process.

Abandoning the now-burning house, Jon and the crew try to regroup and escape. Kai and Tyler are caught in the crossfire. Tyler shields Kai, and is killed in the process. They eventually rejoin their allies in the back of the house, and as a single crew again, start looking for a way out.

That way out comes in the form of a distraction - a cry that they've been spotted near the front of the house. Confused, Jon and crew watch as their opponents are drawn away, but don't question their good luck. They escape into the night.

Jon can't leave it like that, though. Sending their vulnerable demis to shelter with Carl, he turns back with Amber to hunt Noah down. They sneak back through the forest, hunting after Noah, but when they're interrupted by a demi, Jon splits off from Amber and continues the hunt himself.

He succeeds in finding Noah. He succeeds in beating Noah senseless, even - but Noah enspells Jon in the process, suffocating him where he lays. Unable to fight back against Noah's spell, Jon settles for reflecting it back onto Noah, smothering both of them. Before he can pass out and die, Amber catches up, shooting Noah and rousing Jon.

(Ending and Epilogue)

He awakens in Carl's infirmary, badly drained even after weeks of slumber. Carl explains that Jon and Keira are now 'dead' to the mortal world, dead as their house burned, and that he saw Officer Baldwin appear at the scene of the house fire. He chides Jon for coming so close to exposing them, but offers his crew a place among his own.

Jon calls his parents, entrusting them with the secret that him and Keira are still alive, and urges them to hide out until the worst blows over. Just as quickly, he's reamed by Amber for taking risks and deciding matters like involving his parents on his own. He admits to being wrong, and comforts her.

But as the smoke begins to settle, Jon finds a note on his desk - from Anke. She explains that she knew he lived, and states an unhappiness with Aedan being captured. She tells Jon that if he's interested in hearing her out, and moving to rescue Aedan from Madis, he should burn the letter.

After an internal debate, Jon does.

With the ashes fading, Jon and the crew decide to leave Carl's house behind and strike out into the unknown once their wounds have healed.

Where? Only time will tell.