

Your True Name

A full game based on my 1/12 play

The Beginning: I am brought into the world in the form of the word ATONE (2Y), which was heard when a Lelian spellcaster placed her ear to the mouth of the ancient gargoyles that line the waterfalls of her home. I am disappointed that this is what this spellcaster *heard*, for my True Name was so different, but I'm glad my most important vowels were carried into the physical realm. When this incarnation of me is Spoken by the Lelian, I seep into her hands to form pinprick stigmata, building a pound of flesh I have taken from her as an act of atonement for her wrongs in Spell College through the chanting of my name a million times. She will chant my name during every morning waterfall walk for thirty-two years.

The Sharpening: I am overheard by a band of young water-whisperers, who hear me Spoken by an aged Lelian, though they mishear amongst the mist and I take the form of the word SCOLD (1Y). When the water-whisperers Speak me in this incarnation, a low-grade chastisement spills out of their mouth like water, something they were withholding telling their friends or family: *you eat too loud, you never get my birthday presents*. It feels like an awful release, like a small betrayal of their own sensibilities.

I am recorded by the children of these water-whisperers, now young apprentices in the Lelian Spell College, who workshop me in their first year seminars into the form of YOWZA (2Y). Now when I am Spoken, a miasma is released from spellcasters mouths which hovers in the air. Enough YOWZAs and the mist supersaturates the air, condensing into a liquid that went drunk reveals a strange, surprising truth. I am most proudly spoken in Spell College Fraternities, where frat siblings hotbox rooms until they can create yowzajuice and feel more connected to the world.

I am studied by a team of frat house chefs, hired to feed the siblings all semester but now Speak me in the changed form of KABOB (2G) during finals weeks at the Spell College. Similar to yowzajuice, KABOB chanting creates a condensable gas that skips the liquid phase and materializes into a massive rack of lamb kabobs, each juicy, spiced-rubbed, and pierced with cast iron skewers. Although I bring great pleasure to the house chefs, I can only be used sparingly before the siblings grow dismissive of lamb kabobs and my succulence.

I am whispered to the major of the Military Spell College during an intramural magic ball competition, who hones me in private study into the more powerful form of myself, the word MAJOR (3G). This major strips the part of me that materialized meat but left the rest. Years after teaching entire Military Spell College classes how to Speak me, the major has enough troops to launch a bombing invasion of Lelia's waterless neighbors. Lifted in the claws of giant ospreys, teams of MAJOR chanters Speak me midair to drop heated iron skewers onto enemy towns. Lelian forces use me to use me to greatly expand their borders, though this would come at the cost of an insurgency many years later.

The Truth: I am Spoken in the form of my True Name, FAVOR (5G) by spellcasting students of the misty Spell College, each of whom see great worth in student organizing against an unjust war when taught about the MAJOR campaigns. When they Speak my True Name to anyone, they have the innate and sudden need to perform a favor for an oppressed group—to join their insurgency or advocate on their behalf. The outpouring of this need is as powerful but more subtle than my SCOLD incarnation's spell. My True Name was originally Spoken by an old civilization so thankful that they were saved from floods by winged creatures that they carved gargoyles into the cliffsides, so my current incarnation feels quite similar. But I am destroyed many centuries later, by my own choosing, when I feel the balance of the continent's people has corrected itself. I go in the night, with my last FAVOR being that everyone rests a good night's sleep.

A full game based on Monica Dix's 1/17 play

The Beginning: I am brought into the world in the form of the word YOUNG (0G), by younglings Speaking me as play to each other, though I do nothing but tickle their ears. I feel like there's something there, like there's a tangential connection, but it's barely there.

The Sharpening: I am turned into the form ADIEU (1G, 1Y), which when spoken makes anyone else in the conversation feel like they have to leave, some muddled feeling that seeps into their will to depart. This version is spoken by teenagers, aged younglings from before, who are finding this successful to get unwanted lovers away from them. But they're not that powerful in how they speak it, so it often only muddles it more.

I am Spoken in the form of FEIST (1G, 2Y), which is used by high-school aged teenagers, now a bit older, spoken to get amped up ahead of swim meets. It's a blunt-force spell, so it can be misdirected much like teenage angst. Teens using it in sports competitions Speak me, thinking it will empower their legs, but it will empower the arm. Or the other way around. Very confusing.

I am Spoken in the form of SPICE (3G), which obviously makes things spicy without spices. I am Spoken by the high schoolers, now young adults in their first apartment, who realize that they don't have any spices. It's used as mutual aid and Spoken amongst friends, with great pride.

I am Spoken in the form of SMILE (3G) after the young adults become postgrad students, feeling very upset and having trouble coping with life changes. They cast me on each other, and though they know this isn't the True Name of me, it meets their needs. And sometimes that's just as good as something being perfect.

The Truth: I am Spoken in the form of SHIRE, this is a spell for community and camaraderie with all those who identify with the communities where it's spoken. Incredibly power, young people use it to foster a better future for themselves and by perfecting the SMILE, they can instead bring SMILES for their whole community. And that was beautiful! I am happy to be five letters. I am built to be accessible. I am never destroyed.

