SHUFF

SATURN... REMEMBER...
I AM YOU...
AND YOU ARE I

PLEASE DON'T!
SATURN... LOOK...
REMEMBER...

REMEMBER WHERE IT IS...
THIS IS WHERE WE LEFT IT...

DO NOT FORGET NO!
WITHOUT IT, THERE IS NO CHANCE...

I AM YOU...
AND YOU-
EEYAAH!

W-WHAT WAS THAT? MY NECK FELT LIKE... URGH!

WAIT... IT... SEEMED FAMILIAR...

HAVE I HAD THAT DREAM BEFORE?
I... WHAT DID I DREAM LAST NIGHT?
I THINK I HAD A NIGHTMARE, TOO.

...WAIT, IT WAS THE SAME DREAM!

I-! I'VE BEEN HAVING NIGHTMARES A LOT LATELY, BUT I THINK THEY'VE ALL BEEN THE SAME!

WHY IS IT SO HARD TO REMEMBER?!
I'VE GOT TO WRITE THIS DOWN BEFORE I FORGET!

UGH, I'M SO TIRED...

GODS, I HOPE I CAN GET SOME DECENT SLEEP BEFORE CLASS...

...I'M NOT SURE WHAT'S WORSE FOR SLEEPING, THESE NIGHTMARES OR DANNI'S SNORING...
HMM...

ANOTHER NIGHTMARE... URRGH, AND WORSE, IT'S A SCHOOL DAY.

YAAAAAWN-

LOOOOOK!!

UURRGH... I'M UP...

HEY LOKI, ARE YOU TAKING SOME OF THE MONSTERS IN WITH YOU TODAY?

URRRH... I DUNNO... I'M STILL WAKING UP.

OKAY, HON! BREAKFAST IS READY WHenever YOU ARE!

PFFF FREAKIN' DRAGON...

FREAKIN' MORNINGS.

HMPh... MORNING.

MORRRRNINg LOKI!!

Meh.

Sit down and have a bite!

Nah... I'm running a little late, I'd better just head off. Bye, then.

Oh, hold on, Loki!

TAke this with you.

SMYAE!

...WHAT?
OH, THAT'S THE MONSTER I GOT FROM THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAM... HEYA FADE.
I DIDN'T ASK WHERE IT'S FROM. JUST TAKE IT.

MMM, SOUNDS ANNOYING. I'D JUST LEAVE HIM HERE WITH THE OTHER MONSTERS, JUST AS USUAL.

NO, DON'T. THE OTHERS DON'T LIKE IT.
YEAH! AND IT KIND OF CREEPS ME OUT TOO!

WHAT? HE SEEMS NORMAL ENOUGH TO ME. FADE? YOU'RE NOT TOO WEIRD, RIGHT?

OH SURE. THEN YOU DON'T MIND TAKING IT WITH YOU, HM?

WHAT?

AH, AND YOU'RE LATE, RIGHT? YOU'D BETTER HEAD OFF!

BYE, LOK!!

...RIGHT THEN.

THAT'S... UM...

GUESS WE'LL WALK TODAY, EH FADE?

MYA!

GOOD MORNING, FADE! READY FOR CLASS?

BLUH... TOOT!

TOO EARLY FOR YOU, IS IT? HEHE.

DON'T WORRY, YOU CAN WAKE UP IN CLASS!
...OR GO BACK TO SLEEP!
MORNING, KIDS!

WE'RE HEADED OUTSIDE FOR TODAY'S LESSON, SO PLEASE FOLLOW ME!

I THINK WE'LL NEED EXTRA SPACE TODAY, NOT TO MENTION LESS BREAKABLE THINGS...

I THINK I MIGHT TRUST YOU KIDS ENOUGH TO TEACH TODAY'S LESSONS ON WEAPONRY!

HELLO, DANCLAIR. I GOT YOUR THINGS OUT HERE AND SET UP LIKE YOU ASKED.

THANKS, AMHERST! DID YOU WANT TO HANG AROUND? I COULD USE AN EXTRA HAND, NOT TO MENTION A LITTLE HELP WITH FIRST AID...

HEH, NOT REALLY MY CUP OF TEA!

BESIDES, I JUST GOT A NEW SET OF CARDS, AND I TOLD TAIDE I'D PLAY A FEW ROUNDS OF TRIPS WITH HIM. GOOD LUCK, DANCLAIR!

RIGHT! SO THEN—UH, HEYA.

WHAT'S GOING ON? THERE A REASON WE'RE OUT HERE TODAY? WHOAH, WHAT'S WITH ALL THE SHARP AND POINTIES? ...DID I MISS SOMETHING?

HM. YOU HAVEN'T MISSED ANYTHING YET, MISS KIBORN. WE ARE JUST GETTING TO THAT... YES, THANKS FOR JOINING US.

WELL! I THINK WE'VE COVERED THE VERY BASICS OF FIGHTING IN THE CLASSROOM...

SO TODAY, WE CAN START LEARNING THE BASICS OF WIELDING WEAPONS!

NOW... JUST—PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME REGRET DOING THIS...
RIGHT, SO UM, YOU'LL FIND THAT EACH DIFFERENT TYPE OF WEAPON HAS ITS POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES!

NOW, WHEN YOU'RE OUT AND ABOUT AFTER GRADUATION, WORKING AS HEROES FOR HIRE, YOU'LL FIND SOME PEOPLE ASK FOR EXPERTISE IN A PARTICULAR WEAPON.

DELTA, I BELIEVE YOU'VE ALREADY EXPERIENCED THIS?

AH, YEAH.

YES, SO IT IS GOOD TO HAVE SOME BASIC KNOWLEDGE OF EACH WEAPON!

BUT HM, IT DOES NO GOOD TO BE A JACK OF ALL TRADES AND A MASTER OF NONE.

SO I'D LIKE YOU ALL TO TRY OUT EACH KIND OF WEAPON, GET THE BASIC SKILLS DOWN, AND THEN YOU CAN CHOOSE TO SPECIALISE!

WE'LL SPEND QUITE A FEW LESSONS ON THIS, SO DON'T FEEL YOU HAVE TO HURRY! I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO DECIDE RIGHT AWAY. IT IS MUCH BETTER THAT YOU TAKE YOUR TIME.

I CHOOSE TWO-HANDED SWORDS.

UHHH, YES, SOME OF YOU DO HAVE SOME PRIOR TRAINING. PERHAPS YOU'VE ALREADY CHOSEN YOUR FAVOURED WEAPON, BUT IT WILL STILL BE GOOD FOR YOU TO EXPAND YOUR SKILLS WITH OTHER WEAPONS.

HM, I'M STICKING WITH MY BOW!

BACK HOME, WE HAVE WAY MORE ADVANCED WEAPONS THAN THESE POINTY STICKS. GEEZ! AND I'D JUST FINISHED MY WEAPONS TRAINING, TOO....

OH, BLUFF! ONE OF MY AUNTS TAUGHT ME HOW TO USE A QUARTERSTAFF, I THINK THEY'RE FINE. THEY'RE NOT POINTEY, ANYWAY!

EH, IT'S ALL SO PRIMITIVE. I DON'T SEE THE POINT. GOING UNARMED WILL DO JUST AS WELL AS ANY OF THIS.

LOOK, UM, I THINK YOU'RE RATHER MISSING THE POINT OF THIS LESSON.

PFT, WEAPONS? WHO BLOODY NEEDS 'EM! I'D JUST CALL ONE OF MY MONSTERS-

AND THEN IT TAKES CARE OF THE FIGHTING FOR ME, NO WEAPONS NEEDED!

DANN!! PUT THAT MONSTER AWAY, THIS IS A CLASS ON WEAPONS!

WHA-?! C'MON, MISTER DANCLAIR! THAT'S NOT FAIR, LOKI'S GOT ONE!

HUUH?
AH YES, LOKI, PLEASE PUT YOUR MONSTER AWAY AS WELL.

MYA!

UNSUMMON!

HMMMM....

WELL? WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

THIS IS... A BIT ANNOYING...

WAIT, REALLY? ARE YOU...?

YOU CAN'T UNSUMMON THAT MONSTER, CAN YOU? GEEZ DON'T TELL ME YOU FAILED TO PROPERLY BOND IT? HAHA, BUT IT'S TINY!

WHAT WAS THAT, DANNI MARBLE?

LOK I KIBORN! PUT THAT SWORD DOWN THIS INSTANT! CRIPES, YOU CLEARLY HAVE A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT BLADE SAFETY.

PFFT. YOU'RE RIGHT, ANYWAY.

HE'S JUST A LITTLE MONSTER, BUT FOR SOME REASON I CAN'T SEEM TO BOND HIM SO I CAN SUMMON AND UNSUMMON HIM.

BECAUSE YOU SUCK? I REALLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE ONE TO KEEP HIM.

...I'VE STILL GOT A SWORD, DANNI.

AHHA... I ER, NO OFFENCE?

WELL, OKAY LOKI. IF YOU CAN'T PUT YOUR MONSTER AWAY, THEN JUST KEEP HIM OUT OF THE WAY.

THOUGH, YOU COULD HAVE JUST LEFT IT AT HOME...

SHOO! GO SIT OVER THERE, FADE. OFF!

HAA, YOU SURE ARE GREAAT WITH MONSTERS, LOKI.
Danni, you're...!

Uhhh hey Loki! Could you give me a hand? I want to learn how to use a sword, could you show me, please?

Ooh...

Oh, sure! No problem!

Thanks Saturn.

Here Danni, why don't you try using a spear? Monster callers tend to use them because of their reach... and because it can look intimidating!

You haven't used a sword before?

Never...

My family grows crops... so uh, not much call for it, really...

Oh, niice! You know my family's farm's for monster-raising, not nearly so good as crops. That's impressive!

What are you doing in a place like this with a family like that?

My family used to do that, generations ago... being light powers kind of worked to keep the weather more consistent, didn't have to worry about being good at magic to keep things growing when the goddesses are feuding randomly!

But... oh, I didn't notice you being that good at elemental magic.

Eheheh... y-yeah. That's why I'm here.

Oh, uh, whoops. Faux pas!

So uh, show me how to use this thing?

Oh, yeah, right!

Here, try a slash like this.

Shwak!

Um... sh!-OOPS!

Ok. First you need to work on your grip...
That was pointless. Only because you missed the point. You could have tried using a different weapon.

Yeah whatever. You ready for more pointlessness? We've got magic next.

Loki thinks she's better than she is. She could learn something paying attention to the basics. We all could, really.

...Um, except for you and snatch in Drake's class. You guys can't use magic, huh?

Doesn't matter. Learning to identify these spells so you can avoid them is worthwhile.

Or whatever, gods... hurry up and get seated. Let's get this over with.

Loki Kiborn, why did you bring a monster to class?

Uhhhhhhhh... sigh... just sit down.
OK then kids, put your quills away, today we'll try some real casting!...those of us that can cast, anyway.

Awesome!

Ahem.

What?

I don't think they're really ready for that, Drake. We'll tone it down a touch.

Quills and books out! Today we'll be looking at spell incantations.

Groaaan!

This freakin' sucks... bloody Dharf! Making everything boring.

H-huh? There's some new notes in my book, I don't remember writing this... I-

Ah!!
Hey Saturn, what's the matter?
I... errr...

Please, no talking! Be quiet, and pay attention! You may need to take notes.

No, no, no, don't worry, Dharfi! It's perfectly fine to chat if it's about incantations.

I expect that's exactly what they're talking about so go ahead, kids! I'm sure it's helping your understanding of the topic, right?

Sigh...
Heheh.

So then, speaking of incantations... what's the matter, Saturn? Did Danni graffiti your notes or something?

It—it's nothing important... just I was surprised. It's nothing.

Ooh, please tell us! Anything but incantations!

You can't react like that and then tell us it's nothing! C'mon, spill it!

Um...

Maybe I'll tell you after class.

Myas.

Truly good magi don't need to repeat incantations to cast spells, but they are extremely handy for focusing energy. Different people can use their own unique incantations, but usually using a standard set of components depending on the gods that they draw power from.

C'mon Saturn! This is so boring! Tell us!

Please?

Well... like I said, it's really nothing.

I've been having these nightmares lately... day in, day out, always the same dream... or similar, I think.

It's the weirdest thing though, I keep forgetting about them... and I don't know, they're about really weird things.

Huh. I can't say I find recurring nightmares odd. Ha, and you call traipses weird?

But what was it about?

It was... uh... oops. I forgot again! Lemme check, it's written down here...
Well, I'm not sure how long I've been having them for, but...

There's this human woman, a Traipse, I think... She looks kind of familiar, but I know we haven't met before.

She shows me this map, right? And it's marked, she says it's really important and I have to remember, but I have no idea what she's talking about... A-and then...

And then...?

And then she kills herself. And I wake up.

Wh... that's messed up!

Good gods, Saturn! Have you--

Quiet!!

It is okay for you to discuss the material if you need to, but do it quietly! Fels!!

Of all the-- feh! We should be holding classes on politeness around here, it's sorely needed!
SERIOUSLY SATURN, THAT’S NOT NORMAL. HAVE YOU TALKED TO ANYBODY ABOUT THAT? I THINK YOU SHOULD GET HELP.

BUT- BUT- LOKI, DON’T YOU HAVE RECURRING NIGHTMARES TOO? IT’S NOT THAT WEIRD...

UHH...

WELL Y-Yeah, I do... AND IF ANY OF YOU LAUGH I SWEAR I WILL SET YOUR HAIR ON FIRE... BUT THAT’S DIFFERENT. THAT STUFF IS BECAUSE OF BAD MEMORIES, THINGS THAT HAPPENED A LONG TIME AGO... A-ANYWAY...

A RECURRING NIGHTMARE WITH NO APPARENT CAUSE? THAT’S UNNATURAL, AND WORRYING, AND I’LL TELL YOU WHY.

HEY JINX- TELL HER WHY!

HUUH? WHAT?

SSH! I’M TRYING TO TAKE NOTES! TALK TO ME ABOUT WHATEVER IT IS AFTER CLASS!

WHAT A WEIRDO.
DHS: Where's the love?!

For a school full of adolescents, it sure is lacking an important element...

Like?

ROMANCE!

...you serious?

Absolutely! It's possible! Just imagine...

Like in books!

Oh, Bluff! I find your silence so very compelling... and romantic!

Oh, Delta. Your beauty is matched by no other student.

...and then she'll tell Big Blue her innermost feelings and then...

Ms. Shaun, while I do find your... speculations very interesting, I thought I should tell you that Drake left a few minutes ago.
Jinx! Hey Jinx! Foxtail! Fluffybutt!

Oh, right. What did you want to ask me?

What do you reckon of this? Recurring nightmares, the same each night, with a weird message that makes zero sense and has no connection to reality?

Oh, u-uh, Loki, that's really not a good sign! You should get help, really...

Oh no, not me. I was talking about Saturn.

Now tell her why that's a problem.

Well, you see... The god of nightmares is Jake, the trickster god! Bad news all round!

...You know all this, why did you need my input?

Hm, guess I didn't.

Mya.

W-what? There's a god of nightmares? And he's...

Of course there is. There's a god of everything, you just need to know who.

Wonder who's god of dreams...

Uh—Saturn, don't worry too much...

You should get help, but it'll be Ok. I had nightmares from Jake, and look at me!

Y-you...

But where can I get help...?

Um, I'd usually suggest a temple of truth, but I don't think there are any nearby... Maybe Miss Drake? Dharfi said she knew about tricksters...

Good plan, Jinx! I knew I needed your help for something!

But where can I get help...?

I just wish you'd come up with it while Drake was here.
URGH, SO GLAD I DON'T HAVE TO DEAL WITH IDIOT STUDENTS AGAIN TODAY.

UM, DRAKE, YOU SHOULD LOOK BEHIND YOU BEFORE YOU SAY THINGS LIKE THAT.

HI MISS PIPERION.

GEEZ, WHAT DO YOU KIDS WANT?

IF YOU WANT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT CLASS, I SWEAR IT'S NOT MY FAULT. FREAKIN' DHARFI!

OH YEAH, WHY'RE YOU STUCK WITH MISS VALCROSS AS A TEACHING AIDE, ANYWAY?

UHHHHHHHHH

HEH, NEVERMIND, THAT'S NOT WHY WE'RE HERE.

GOOD, BECAUSE I AM OFFICIALLY OFF-DUTY AND I DON'T WANT TO DEAL WITH THAT JERK MONKEYTAILED IDIOT AGAIN TODAY.

UMM, DRAKE?

REMEMBER WHAT I SAID ABOUT LOOKING BEHIND YOU...?

DRAKE.

DHARFI.

SO SATURN, LOKE, WHAT ARE YOU TWO POKEYING AROUND FOR?

UMMM, I NEED S-SOME HELP...

OOH! CAN I HELP?! I WANNA BE HELPFUL!

UM, I DUNNO...

SO WHAT'S THE MATTER?

UMMMMMMMMMMM.... I-... I'VE BEEN HAVING THESE WEIRD NIGHTMARES LATELY...
BAD DREAMS? WHAT AM I, A THERAPIST?

IF I MAY? SHE MAY BE WORRIED THAT THE NIGHTMARES HAVE AN EXTERNAL SOURCE. SAY, NIGHTMARE GOD, THE TRICKSTER JAKE?

Y-Yeah, that’s what we thought.

Well then, Drake will handle it. She has great experience with trickster matters, of course. Good luck, girls.

Gee thanks, Dharfi.

Ooh, I can help! I’ve been reading a lot of books on dreams lately!

Thanks, Shalini. And for once I don’t mean that sarcastically.

Right! Let’s relocate to the library! I’ll write you kids notes to get you out of your next class. It’s history, right?

Miss San, you’re the best teacher!

The library here has a lot of books on dream interpretation! If it’s just a recurring dream, it could mean something. And it doesn’t have to be bad, even if it’s a nightmare.

Tell us your dream on the way over, ok Saturn? That’ll help speed things up!

Ok... I’m not sure it’s a big deal, but...

Hey Miss, shouldn’t you be listening too?

-And then-

Eh, it doesn’t matter.

If her nightmares ain’t from the trickster god then Shalini can handle it. And if they are, then the content doesn’t matter.

Nice. How do you know so much about trickster stuff anyway?

Eehh that’s not important.
Right! Here’s a few books that should give us a rough start!

"Few"... sure. Do we really need this many, Miss?

You never know!

So no, not really.

You’re the expert, Shauni, where do we start this?

Hm? Didn’t you listen to Saturn’s dream? It’s really quite simple.

Uh... it is?

...huh?

Oh. I thought it was obvious.

We’ll start by having you draw that map from your dream. It’s important we find out if it’s a real place or not.

The what? Hmm, maybe I should’ve listened a little...
HERE YOU ARE, SAT! LET'S SEE THAT MAP!

Uh...

HMMMM....

WELL?

I CAN'T REMEMBER. I, I'VE BEEN HAVING THAT DREAM FOR A WHILE NOW, BUT...

I KEEP FORGETTING. I ONLY REALLY REMEMBER JUST WHEN I WAKE UP.

OH, IS THAT IT? THAT'S EASY TO SOLVE!

YOU HAVE THIS DREAM EVERY NIGHT, YES? YOU CAN JUST GO TO SLEEP NOW, AND THEN WHEN YOU WAKE UP, DRAW THE MAP. WE'LL CONTINUE ANALYSIS FROM THERE!

Uh... Y-yeah... I can't really just fall asleep right now though.

OH, OF COURSE NOT. THAT'S WHY IT'S A GOOD THING WE BROUGHT A MAGIC TEACHER!

Uh... what?
Wow, Miss. You can use sleep magic?

Uhhhhhhhh...

Remind me—what kind of magic is sleep magic?

Uh, huh... I don't know. Maybe one of the movement gods? Hmm...

Well, of course it's perception magic. One of uh, one of the god of knowledge's little-known spells, isn't that right?

Okay, yeah. That works... of course. Sure.

...I just gotta say, your third eye freaks me out sometimes. Can you really see what—?

Draaaaake! Quit fiddling with your regs and cast! We can talk later!

Oh, right.

Sleep.

Er, oops.

I'm sure she's fine.

Saturn?

Nice cast, Drake! Does that spell use sand as a reagent? How long did it take to learn? Did you hear it from...

Saturn...

A-aaah! Why do you forget?

You must remember... or everything we fought for is nothing...

It is hidden here... do not forget. I am you... and you—

Gyaaaah! Oh! That didn't take long.
S-Saturn!!

My- my hands!!

Wh- is that blood?!

I'm not injured... I... I don't think this is my blood... It, it was my dream...

Here, you can use this to clean up.

Thanks, Loki, but-I think I'm fine...

Saturn, do you think you could draw that map? It could be important.

Or... not? Take your time...? I just wanna help solve this...

What's-?! Ooh, that's weird. Drake? The nightmare god can cause objects to be taken from dreams, right? Could it be...?

I- I don't...

Mya?

Are you okay??! Ah! Oh my god! I-I-it's not my fault!!
IS THAT THE MAP FROM YOUR DREAM?
Y-Yeah...
LET ME SEE IT.

HMMMM...

I CAN'T SAY IT LOOKS FAMILIAR...
IT'S KIND OF VAGUE.

MYA-

HERE SATURN, YOU'D BETTER HOLD IT.

Huh? Fade, you wanna see?

W-Wait! Where did that weird monster-looking thing come from?!

...He's been here the whole time?

He's one of my monsters, I brought him to school today. I got him from the school's entrance exam...?

Why's everyone saying he's weird?
HUH? C'MON, DON'T DO THAT...

MRFF--

LET HIM HAVE THE MAP, SATURN! JUST DROP IT! BOTH OF YOU GET AWAY FROM HIM!

COME OFF IT, MISS. WHAT ARE YOU-- UHHHH

W-WHAT THE-?!

Puff

WHAT THE... WHAT THE HELL
WHAT AM I MEANT TO DO WITH THIS?

EH, SORRY! IS IT A BAD LETTER? I HATE DELIVERING BAD LETTERS!

HMPH.

I DO NEED A RESPONSE RIGHT AWAY, SORRY.

SOME CHOICE THEY GIVE. I CAN'T REALLY SAY NO, AND I REALLY DON'T WANT TO SAY YES.

HMPH. NO NEED FOR A WRITTEN RESPONSE, JUST TELL THEM "YES".

OUT OF THE WAY!!

RIGHT AWAY! THANK YOU FOR USING MONSTER MAIL!

MISS-MISS RYUSHIN!! BIG PROBLEM!

OH GODS, WHAT IS IT NOW....?
S-S-S-Saturn's gone! gone!!

...what?

What?!

The- the monster! in the library!!

What?!

No monster can attack a student inside DHS! If they did, I'd know, but it can't-

No, no, not like that.

It, it was weird-

I don't, it- it-

How did he even... ugh!

Calm down! Tell me what's going on, I can't do anything if I don't know about it! Can you tell me exactly what happened?

Only if there's tea! It'll help calm things down!

Ooh, good idea.
SO THIS MONSTER VANISHING WITH SATURN... AND A DREAM FROM THE GOD OF LIES... MUST BE CONNECTED, BUT HOW? AND WHY?

WELL, THE FIRST QUESTION TO ASK IS EASY TO SPOT.

WHY IN GAEA'S NAME DID YOU USE A DEITY FOR THE ENTRANCE EXAM?

...WHAT?

YOU LOST ME. WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

THAT LITTLE GREY CRITTER THAT LOKE APPARENTLY GOT FROM THE SCHOOL EXAM. THAT WAS NO MONSTER, THAT WAS A DEITY! A SERVANT TO A GOD! WHERE DID YOU EVEN GET IT?!

...WHAT? BUT THAT— IT WAS—

F-FADE?

A CELESTIAL BEING?

HOW CAN YOU KNOW THAT?! IT JUST LOOKED LIKE A MONSTER OF SOME SORT.

UM... IT'S KIND OF HARD TO LOOK DIRECTLY INTO A DEITY, BUT ONCE YOU SPOT IT, IT'S OBVIOUS. WHEN YOU HAVE A THIRD EYE.

A DEITY...

THAT LITTLE GUY? HE WAS FOLLOWING ME AROUND SINCE... FOR SOME TIME. HE SEEMED HARMLESS, AND IT WAS CONVENIENT, SO I JUST USED HIM FOR THE TEST... A DEITY, HUH...? WHICH GOD DOES IT SERVE? THE GOD OF DEATH?

UM... I DON'T THINK SO. MAYBE? I'D PROBABLY GUESS A PERCEPTION GOD INSTEAD.

NOT THE GOD OF LIES...?

OH GEEZ. I HOPE NOT. BUT MAYBE... WE NEED TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO SATURN, FAST!

DRAKE? WE NEED THE TRICKSTERS IN THIS SCHOOL TO HELP, RIGHT NOW.

DISGUISSS H-H-HUH?
M-miss! Are you—?

Insanely good at finding tricksters? Yes.

Loki, you'd best head to class, we'll take care of things, ok?

But I—

Tell Miss Valcross to come here, her history class should be almost over.

But I—!

Hey, Loki.

Do as you're told.

There's one problem down. Now what are we going to do about Saturn...?

Hey! Let me in! I wanna help!!

Urrgh!! Go away, Loki. Go get Dhafri and go to class.

Saturn's my friend, I've got to help find her!

But where could fade have... ah!

She showed me that map... maybe... that's got to have something to do with it, I'm sure...

There'll be maps in the library! I can find out where it is, if it's real...

And when I find fade I'm gonna kill that little fuzzball! Argh!

Is Loki gone?

Is she going to get Dhafri?

Yup.

Hahaha, probably not.
...Am I dreaming again?

Ah! It's her!

Hm?

Saturn...

Wake up... you're almost there...

Huf!-

H-huh?

Where am I? What the-?

Fade?!

Smum-!!

G-get off!

You did this! You brought us here! But how- what are you?!

............

Mya!

...I don't know what I was expecting from that. Gods, what is this place?

Wait... this...?

This is from my dream... is this where she left it?

...I wish I knew what "it" is...

Myaaaa.

...I guess I'd better start digging.
SO, Drake Piperion...

This seems to be a Trickster-God related problem. I really think we need you and that other trickster to help.

Oh, Ryushin, thanks so much for outing me to Shauni.

Aw, gimme some credit! I know these things without being told! Third eye!

PSH, RIGHT... Anyway, there's two problems with that, kiddo.

I don't want to hear silly excuses.

No, really...

Sorry to say, but that sort of dream magic ain't my forte.

 Drake—

Ah, look, the other trickster, they're a favourite of Jake's. I bet they could do it fine.

Which brings us to problem two... I'd sooner die than tell you who that is. Mainly because if I did Jake would kill me, literally.

...really? But... Hmm, what am I to do, Drake? A student is gone.

Oh, Drake! That's no problem!

We can go get him to help us find Saturn! Mana doesn't need to know who, so the secret is kept!

Him-?...ah well, I guess if that will do... thank you, Shauni. Please do your best. And uh, tell Dharfi to come up here.

Dangit Shauni...

C'mon C'mon! We've gotta help Saturn right away!

Sigh... Shauni, you know about...? Tch! That sort of thing is crazy super secret, Jake would kill anyone who revealed that, it's...scary, you know??

Heheh, don't worry. Jude only gives eyes to the worthy, right?

I would never tell a big secret like that! It's like when you're reading a book and somebody comes and tells you who killed Dumbledore! That's just not fair! I wanna read the book to find out what happens!

......what?
...it took four years for the treaty to be signed, but only one before it was broken. The den—

Pssst! Valcross!

What is it? Be brief, I hate interruptions.

Sorry, Dharrf! First up, Mana wants to see you in her office, there's a situation.

No, no!

Oh?

First up we need to borrow Jinx. Mana's second to that.

H-huh?

What's that about?

I don't know...

Look, it's super urgent. Talk to Mana.

Sigh. Very well.

Jared Stone! Miss Piperion and Miss San wish to speak with you. You're excused from class.

Eep.

The rest of you stay seated, we still have more material to cover.

Uhh, w-what do you want...?

We should probably talk privately. My office is just down here.

Wait, you have an office?! Ripped off.

Eeh, no need to look so nervous.

Jared, we know you're a trickster, and we just—

Shaun!!

W-what? I'm not a trickster! I-I didn't!! I—

It's okay, Jinx. I'm a trickster too, see?

I... I...!!!

Blind!

Gah! Jared!! Wait, don't run!! We need your help!!!
...COUGH...COUGH... FELS!
WELL, THERE'S ONE OPTION GONE...
GOOD JOB SHAIN!! YOU SPOOKED HIM!
WHAT, BUT YOU'RE A TRICKSTER...
REMEMBER HOW I SAID JAKE'D KILL ME IF I TOLD?
HE GIVES THAT CURSE TO HIS FAVOURED, NOT TO HIS ENEMIES...

...AND THAT IS NOT THE SORT OF THING YOU WANT TO BE MOUTHING OFF WITH. THAT'S SOME SECRET.
HMPH. IT'S A LITTLE OBVIOUS WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT THOUGH.
JAKE? OBVIOUS? PFFSSSHHH.

ANYWAY, WITH THAT BIG SECRET HANGING OVER HIS HEAD, IT'S NO SURPRISE JINX RAN OFF.

Yeah, especially since mana and dharfi will know his big secret now too.

...WHAT?!

You told dharfi that we wanted jared, she'll tell mana, and mana knows why we need a student....
Which was why I wanted dharfi to leave first.
But what's done is done! So... what do we do now?
Poor saturn, disappeared to Jake-knows-where and our only decent chance of helping her run off....

Oh dear god! Please don't kill me!

...Do you think that'll help?
Couldn't hurt.

...Maybe you could pray for Saturn a bit too?
Couldn't hurt though, right?

I don't think it'll do any good, coming from me. If it was jinx...

Dear lord, this sucks.
GODS, THIS SUCKS....
I REALLY WISH I HAD A SHOVEL!
YOU COULD HELP, FADE.
MYAAAAAAAAHHH

THANKS A LOT, YOU WEIRD, STUPID LITTLE-
H-HUH?
WHAT-? IS THIS IT? WHAT I'M MEANT TO BE LOOKING FOR? ...WHAT IS IT? I--
OH FELS
NOT AGAIN!
MYA-RK!

YOU DID IT AGAIN, HUH?
YOU HERE TO CONGRATULATE ME TOO? YOU'RE WELCOME, I GUESS.

NO, NO... HOW MANY DIED THIS TIME, SWORDBEARER?
I... I DON'T KNOW, LESS THAN LAST TIME, I BET.
YOU DON'T REMEMBER?
WHO ARE YOU?
A FRIEND, YOU MIGHT SAY, OR AT LEAST AN ENABLER.
A JACKASS?
I HAVE BEEN CALLED THAT.
WHY ARE YOU HERE?

YOU DON'T REMEMBER. OF COURSE. AH, IT'LL COME BACK. EITHER ALL AT ONCE, OR IN BITS AND PIECES.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

WHY, THE SAME AS LAST TIME. IF YOU'LL RECALL, SWORDBEARER.

I... W-WAIT... YOU... YOU'RE---!!

HM? SOMETHING COME BACK?

YOU'RE HERE TO... OH FELS, YOU. YOU'RE HERE TO HELP ME? THAT'S...

OH COME NOW. DON'T BE RUDE. YOU KNOW THAT YOU'LL NEED THAT SWORD AGAIN NEXT TIME. AND I CAN HELP YOU PASS IT ON, JUST LIKE I ALWAYS DO.

I'LL MAKE SURE TO PASS ON YOUR MESSAGE, TOO, SO YOU REMEMBER TO PICK IT UP.

...MY MESSAGE... IS IT REALLY SO SOON?

HM? OH! NO NO, DON'T WORRY. I SHOULDN'T BE TELLING YOU THIS, BUT YOU'VE GOT TIME. YOU'LL KNOW WHEN YOU'RE READY. BUT NOW IS THE BEST TIME FOR ME TO TAKE YOUR SWORD.

OH... WELL... I GUESS I WON'T NEED IT UNTIL NEXT TIME.

...YOU'RE WELCOME?

SHUT UP. THIS IS YOUR FAULT. ALL OF IT.

...YEAHHHH. SO YOU DO REMEMBER.

GIVE ME THE SHADOWSLAYER. I WILL PASS IT ON FOR YOU.

WAIT WHAT THE-
WHAT THE HECK?! WHAT WAS THAT?! IT WAS LIKE-LIKE REMEMBERING AN OLD MEMORY, BUT- BUT... WHA...

AND- AND NOW I HAVE A SWORD?!

MYAAA FADE WHAT THE HELL DID YOU DO TO ME?!

WHERE ARE WE?

IT FEELS... WEIRD. IT LOOKS WEIRD. ALMOST LIKE A DREAM, BUT... WEIRD.

DREAMLIKE... HA, THAT'S NOT A GOOD SIGN, I'VE HAD SO MANY NIGHTMARES.

AROWF ROOF! EEIAA!

MYAAAAAR!

STOP

RRRRRR? GRAAANWRRE!

HE'S RIGHT YOU KNOW.

YOU SHOULD NOT BE HERE, MORTAL.

AAAAAAHHH!

DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHERE YOU A-

OY. ALWAYS WITH THE SCREAMING.
HA...HAH...
HM? THAT SWORD...
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE THAT, YOU-
AH!!
HMMMM...
OH I SEE.

YOU ARE TERRIBLE WITH SWORDS.
DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT.

ROWNF!
HM?
YOU.
Mi-MYAAA!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER.

YOU HITCH A RIDE WITH THIS MORTAL?
IDIOT.

DID YOU TELL MARIE ABOUT THIS YET? NO, I SUPPOSE NOT...
PFFT, I THOUGHT YOU WERE MEANT TO BE TRAILING THAT GHOST.
MYYAAA

TRYING TO ESCAPE?
HA, YOU'RE SILLY.

DON'T WORRY... I'LL LET MARIE KNOW.
YES, KILLING YOU WILL LET HER KNOW RIGHT SMART WHAT HAPPENED, HEHEH.

WELL, SHE'LL KNOW SOME THINGS.
BUT THIS,... HA HA HA HA HA....

S-STAY AWAY FROM ME!!

YOU- YOU GAVE ME THOSE NIGHTMARES! YOU-
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU-
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!

OH I DID, HUH?
YOU-- YOU'RE THE GOD OF NIGHTMARES!

THE GOD OF--

I AM THE GOD OF DREAMS!

AND YOU ARE IN THE WORLD OF DREAMS, MY DOMAIN...

EEK!

LIKE... ALL OF YOU. PHYSICALLY.

QUIT A FEAT, MORTAL. YOU'RE NOT MEANT TO DO THAT, YOU KNOW.

AH, BUT SEEING AS IT'S YOU, I SUPPOSE THAT IS FINE.

A-AH!!

YOU SHOULD WORK ON YOUR GRIP, SWORD-BEAERER...
WHAT DID YOU CALL ME...
HERE, YOU'LL BE NEEDING THIS.
BEST OF LUCK, EH?

W......... WAIT!!
H--HOW DO I GET OUT OF HERE?!
WAIT, PLEASE!!

URRRRRGGGH THIS SUCKSSSSS
W-what can we even do for her? Frig... Saturn!

I mean- gods! She gets a recurring, magical nightmare and pulls out a map and a knife and blood from it! And then she gets taken away?? By a deity?!

That would be messed up if it happened in a story, but this--!

Yes, only a really good trickster would be able to help poor Saturn now.

Ok now you're just being mean.

This is a hero school, it'd be great if a trickster could be a hero for Saturn.

Ok now you're just weirding me right out.

Drake, that blind spell wore off.

Yeah, a while ago.

It affects the third eye a little longer.

Yeah, so?

And with my third eye, I can see through illusions.

Yeah, so?

Uummmmm

You sneaky little twerp! You didn't run off after all!

Surprise?
Y-yeah, I thought I should run, but-

I had to make sure that Jake wouldn't- that... that you knowing was okay...

He ain't struck us down yet, that's a good sign!

Ah, y-yeah... so, uhh... about Saturn... is she-?

Is she really-?

I saw it! It was totally nuts!

Jinx, you'll help, won't you?

Uhhhh

Jared Stone!!

I'm sorry!

I just— I really... it's Lord Tricky! I don't want to owe him a favour!

I can see that.

Well, just tell him Drake'll owe him one.

Hey!

Or me! Or Dhaffi! Or Mana! Anything!

Y-yeah... that might work.

Saturn, huh? Who'd have thought?

...right. I guess I need to speak with our Lord anyway... need to ask if he'll kill us for telling his curse's secret...

Ooooh! How do you guys pray? Wow! I bet not many outsiders get to see this!

Ah... n-no... it's less prayer, more like... grovelling.
...GUESS THE QUICKEST WAY WOULD BE A DREAM. MISS, CAN YOU?

SURE! I GOTCHA!

SL!EPP!

OOPS. I ALWAYS FORGET TO CATCH 'EM...

HUH... WHY DOES IT FEEL LIKE I HIT MY HEAD...? AND WHAT... UH... DISORIENTING DREAMS...

THERE WAS SOMETHING I'M MEANT TO DO...

YOU'RE HERE TO SEE ME, RIGHT?!

AW! MY FAVOURITE TRICKSTER'S COME TO VISIT! HOW DELIGHTFUL!

AH THAT'S RIGHT, YOU DON'T LIKE HUGS.

NOW DON'T WORRY. I FORGIVE YOU.

F-FORGET...?

YES, FOR LETTING THOSE PEOPLE KNOW THE TRUTH OF YOUR CURSE.

TH-THAT WAS DRAKE'S FAULT! NOT MINE!

YES. IT IS FORGIVEN.

UHHH... TH-THANKS.
YOU ASK DUMB QUESTIONS.

TH-THEN, WHAT SHOULD I...?

IT'S MY BUSINESS. YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW.

HAHA, BUT I'LL TELL YOU! YOUR FRIEND IS TRAPPED IN THE DREAM WORLD!

H-HUH??

AND WHILE IT IS MY FAULT, IT'S KIND OF... NOT?

IT IS COMPLICATED! IF I WERE TO DESCRIBE IT IN A WORD... SHADOWY!

WHAT- CAN YOU- L-LET HER GO?

OF COURSE I CAN THROW HER OUT, QUITE EASILY.

OF COURSE I COULD LEAVE HER, TOO. WHY, ARE YOU ASKING A FAVOUR?

I-I!! MISS DRAKE CAN - OR SHAUNI, TH-THEY'LL REPAY YOU!

SHAUNI SAN? THREE EYES? THAT WILL DO YESSS.

GIVE SAN THIS LETTER, AND I'LL SAVE YOUR FRIEND. INCIDENTALY, SHE WOULDA FREED HERSELF EVENTUALLY.

SWORDBEARER!

GAH!!

YOUR FRIEND IS HERE TO RESCUE YOU.

AH! H-HELP!

J-...JINX?!

RIGHT! EVERYONE OUT!

>OOOF<
MISS SAN! ARE YOU IN HERE?

I'VE GOT THIS BOOK, AND A ROUGH IDEA OF THE MAP, AND WITH A LITTLE HELP I-

-I THINK...

SATURN??

URGH... W-... WHAT?

UGH! THAT'S THE WORST DREAM I-

...... FFFFFFFF

WHOAAA THAT IS A NICE SWORD! HOW DID YOU-?

SAT, I'M GLAD YOU'RE OK! WHAT HAPPENED?

I'M... NOT SURE.

IT WAS LIKE... I WAS DIGGING A HOLE, BUT THEN IT WAS LIKE I WAS DREAMING, AND I-

-SOOF-

IS EVERYTHING ALRIGHT IN HERE? WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH- UHH...

AH, SATURN! YOU'RE OKAY?

I... GUESS I'M OKAY? I'M NOT REALLY SURE...

OH, NICE SWORD.

SATURN, WE NEED TO KNOW, PLEASE TELL US WHAT HAPPENED. AND... WHERE IS FADE?
HEY, IT'S GOING TO BE FINE. WHATEVER IT'S ABOUT, WE'LL GET IT SORTED OUT.
PSST, MISS SHAJNI.

HUH?
FOR THAT FAVOUR.

WHY DON'T YOU START FROM THE START, AND TELL US ALL WHAT--

UH, IT'S A LITTLE CROWDED IN HERE.

NO PROBLEM! ME AND JINX CAN GO.
AH, Y--YEAH.

YOU SAVED ME.
THANK YOU!!

PLEASE LET GO!
OH... SORRY.

YEP! AFTER ALL THE HERO WORK JINX NEEDS A BREAK, SO EXCUSE US!

...I AM NO CLEARER ON WHAT HAPPENED.

UH, ME NEITHER.

WHY DON'T YOU TELL US WHAT WENT ON SINCE YOU DISAPPEARED IN THE LIBRARY?
OK SO FADE TELEPORTED US TO THIS ISLAND...

IT WAS LIKE WHERE I WAS TOLD TO GO IN MY NIGHTMARE...

BUT THEN WE WERE IN THE DREAM WORLD??

AND I GOT THIS SWORD...??

AND THE GOD OF LIES WAS WEIRDLY FRIENDLY??!

AND... I DON'T KNOW....

WHERE'S FADE? IT'S JAKE'S DEITY, YES?

UH... J-JAKE SAID IT WAS MARIE'S, THE GODDESS OF TRUTH.

BUT THEN HE, UH, KILLED IT....

O...OH. IT'S PROBABLY FOR THE BEST.

UH... WHAT?

SO... JAKE... DID HE SAY WHY HE GAVE YOU NIGHTMARES? USUALLY HE WOULD, HE'S PROUD OF THAT SORT OF THING.

UH... NO, I ASKED, BUT HE JUST LAUGHED.

I THINK... I THINK IT WAS JUST SO I'D RETRIEVE THIS SWORD.

YOU ASKED?

...indeed. IT IS A VERY FINE SWORD. MAY I SEE IT?

SURE....

HMM... THIS SWORD....

MANA, LOOK AT THESE RUNES....

GOODNESS, THOSE ARE PRE-JUDAEN. AND SPECIAL SET, THEY APPEAR THE SAME FROM EVERY ANGLE....

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

IT MEANS YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TO ENOUGH HISTORY.
IN THE BEGINNING—

-THERE WAS ONLY THE SUN, MOON AND
CREATION GODDESSES! AND THE FIRST
PEOPLE WERE FEATHRIES AND SCALERS!

BEFORE THE LOWER
GODS WERE
CREATED, PEOPLE
WROTE LIKE THIS!

YES, THANK YOU. AS I SAID, THIS SWORD
MAY PREDATE THE GODS THEMSELVES.

[IMPROPTU
HISTORY LESSON]

[IMPROPTU... HISTORICAL LIT LESSON?]

SATURN... I MAY NEED TO HOLD ONTO THIS
FOR A WHILE WHILE WE LOOK INTO THINGS.

N-NO, YOU CAN'T!

HM?

JAKE SAID— I NEED IT?

...EESH.

OK YES, YOU'D
BETTER HOLD
ONTO THIS.

WELL. IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU SAFE,
SATURN TECHQUI. BUT FOR NOW IT SEEMS
THAT ALL WE CAN DO IS WAIT AND SEE
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT. I SHALL SEE WHAT I CAN
FIND OUT ABOUT THAT SWORD, TOO.

THERE IS SOMETHING FAMILIAR
ABOUT IT.

I'LL GET YOU A SHEATH FOR IT, TOO.
WEAPONS THAT OLD SHOULDN'T BE
STORED MAGICALLY.

IF ONLY THERE
WAS A WAY WE
COULD SEE...

OH!

MISS SAN, CAN YOU SEE—

SHAUNI! ARE YOU OKAY?

I'M JUST FINE!
I'm sorry, Saturn! I don't mean to be rude, but I, uh, hh...

I can't actually look at you...

Ex... excuse me?

Shalini-san... just... what?

Well...

I had to promise a favour so that the God of Lies would let Jared rescue Saturn from the Dream World.

What?!

And the first part of the favour is that I- here, I'll read it out...

'For one year you must not intentionally look at the Swordbearer'.

Miss San!! Isn't that just as bad as being a trickster?!

Ah, no Loki, it is sometimes permissible.

Yeah, didn't you have a pact with Jake?

That was more than sixteen hundred years ago and how do you even know that?!

Well, I probably wouldn't be able to tell anything anyway...

But it'll be fine. Through the mist of time, all is revealed.

Saturn, you are strong. I have faith that you'll be okay!

Uhhhh thanks...?

Right. I guess we're back to waiting. If anything out of the ordinary happens, come see myself or Miss Ryushin.

Miss San, how are you gonna teach like that?

I don't know.
SO HOW ABOUT THAT—

OH! G—GODDESS OF TRUTH! UH, HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN— DID YOU SEE THE—

WHAT?

NOTHING!

SORRY ABOUT YOUR DEITY.

WHAT’S UP?

TRICKSTER...

I CAN’T HELP BUT NOTICE ALL MENTION OF TRICKSTERS HERE IS GLowing; YOU NEVER LOOK BAD.

YEAH, ’CAUSE WE’RE GREAT.

NOT SO. LET ME LAY DOWN SOME TRUTH FOR YOU.

TRICKSTERS LIKE THIS ONE LIKE TO GO ON ABOUT OH HOW SAD IT IS THAT THEY ARE KILLED FOR BEING FOLLOWERS OF JAKE... BUT THOSE DEATHS ARE A MERE DROP IN THE OCEAN. EVEN COUNTING THE INITIAL PURGE OF HIS NON-TRICKSTER FOLLOWERS, JAKE IS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR MORE DEATHS THAN HE HAS LOST FOLLOWERS.

WHAT’S GOING ON?

YOUR SISTER’S MAD YOU KILLED HER DOG.

THOSE WHO WORSHIP JAKE GIVE HIM MORE POWER. YOU CAN UNDERSTAND WHY THIS MAY BE VIEWED POORLY.
SO WHAT SORT OF WEAPONS DO THEY USE WHERE YOU COME FROM, BLUFF?

EH, JUST THE STANDARD STUFF, I GUESS. MAINLY GUNS, RAYS, RAYGUNS...

HAH. THAT KIND OF WORKS OUT, YOU KNOW? I USED TO USE OUR STANDARD-ISSUE GUNS, BUT NOW, I USE-

THESE GUNS

....WHAT'S A 'GUN'?
MEANWHILE...

WHAT DID THAT MAP LOOK LIKE?!

CRAP

I HAD A REAL GOOD LOOK AT IT! BUT NOW I CAN'T FRIGGIN-

W-WAS IT...?

AAAAAAAAAAAXX

AAAAAAAAAAAXX