

GERARD'S TEA

Campaign 2 · Session 6 · February 4th, 2026

Suzail, the Feywild, and Gerard's iced-in pleasure ship



Gerard begins with history, which apparently requires drugging everyone first.

By the time **Suzail** understood what had happened at the **Brass House**, it was over. The performance had succeeded, the king had lived and applauded openly, and the **Curator** had watched every second, not from the shadows, but from exactly where he wanted to look. **Faz**, locked away in the bag-of-holding jail, was already obsolete. So the party went to **Gerard** for answers, and Gerard, settled beside a snowy street fire with a strange stringed instrument across his lap, promised them the story of the Curator at last. "So, five hundred years ago..." is roughly as far as the waking world ever got.

THE LESSON BEGINS

Instead, there was tea. Warm, mulled, poured generously around the fire while Gerard strummed. Everyone drank deeply, including the one party member who pointedly did not, because dosing people is apparently a service Gerard provides whether or not it is requested. The warmth spread, the street tilted, and just before the dark closed in, the old turtle whispered his thesis for the evening.

"First, friends: to know one's history, we must first learn about yourself."

GERARD, IMMEDIATELY BEFORE EVERYONE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS

The world they woke into was wrong in careful, deliberate ways. Stars drifted overhead like fish. Moons overlapped, separated, and seemed to argue quietly with one another. The air smelled of crushed mint, rain, and possibly laughter. This was the **Feywild**, or at least something that pretends to be, and the party no longer had hands.

The dice assigned forms. **Balbi** was a goat, and not a dire or noble or even especially large goat, "just a regular goat," to his open disgust; he has been better animals. **Ferrick** was a white wolf with an intimidating glare. The two high rollers were permitted to choose any creature up to CR 2, and both chose great birds, an eagle and a hawk, one of whom, when asked its name, would answer only: "**William was my father.**"

The rules arrived quickly. Animal bodies, mutual understanding within the party, no magic of any kind, and flight capped at roughly ten feet, to the lasting grief of the birds. One rule mattered more than all the rest: **if you die in the dream, you die in real life.** "Inception rules," as they apparently say in the Feywild. Time might pass strangely. And somewhere out in the wrong-starred dark, a task was already waiting for them.



The Lord of Beasts governs with kindness and absolute teeth.

THE RABBIT KING

The forest funneled them to a circular field around a single trunk that rose into the clouds: an infinite tree. At its base stood a small robed figure. When it turned and stepped down off its box, the robe fell away to reveal a very small rabbit with long, pointed ears, and several of the party went on edge at once, which is the correct response to a god you could fit in a saddlebag. Yes, he confirmed mildly, he is the rabbit: the **Lord of Beasts**, ruler of this forest. Offered tea, he declined; lately, neither does the party.

Asked how he governs, he was expansive. "Well, first and foremost, I govern with kindness." Every beast under his rule roams free and happy. It is the trees he cannot abide: "They are racist." They pretend to be older than the beasts, who, he insists, came first. Predator and prey is not cruelty in his telling but the very will that lets the forest live.

Then came the task. "There is a creature in my forest who has lost his face." A lovely, lovely deer, devoted to his brethren for the longest time, had recently taken on a dark demeanour, probably possessed by darker spirits, and was slowly turning the forest against its lord. The rabbit paused to savor his own wordplay; the deer "used to be quite a deer." Find him. Do not die. Bring him back alive.



The five trees offer a different law: not hierarchy, but collective will.

THE TREES DISAGREE

The trail led to a ritual clearing: five enormous trees in a ring, **oak, ash, pine, willow, and birch**, surrounding a plinth with a shallow bowl of water. The trees turned to watch the party arrive. A few politely extended branches so the birds could land. The clearing smelled of fur, of many animals come before, and beneath that, of blood.

The inscription read: "**Four are living. One is what remains.**" The party reasoned it out: what remains after a fire is ash. Speak now, goat. Balbi said "the ash," and the ash tree erupted into an inferno a hundred feet tall. Out of the flame drifted a small **green wisp**, which calmly diverted the tiny bowl of water and put the whole tree out. The charred bark flaked away over new growth already rising. "Interesting, the way that things regrow. Isn't it?"

The counterargument followed. The trees stood here long before the beasts and will stand long after. The Lord of Beasts rules through hierarchy; the forest offers collective will, eternal memory, no one above anyone.

"Do you wish to stand with the eternal forest, or do the bidding of a rabbit who may not be here tomorrow?"

THE WISP OF THE FIVE TREES

The party chose to debate ecology with ancient trees, noting that birds spread the forest's own seeds. "**A convenient truth!**" roared the collective, and the whole forest shook. The offer stood regardless: bring the trees the false Lord of Beasts to join their collective, and receive a gift from the forest, "**a choice.**" When the party hesitated, the clearing went cold. "To be an enemy of the forest is not to live at all." Then, more gently: "Sorry. Sorry. I got angry." The party walked out without a deal, and so, as Gerard would later confirm, made an **enemy of the trees.**



Every absorbed beast is named Rodney, which does not make the collective less alarming.

ALL NAMED RODNEY

Deep in the thicket, animal limbs jutted from bark: deer, rabbits, birds, a rhinoceros, absorbed and sharing one brain. Each is named **Rodney**, six hundred strong. A chicken, only its rear absorbed, dissented loudly, "**Don't join us!**", and, when prodded: "I was here first, mother-fucker!" Balbi nearly joined them, falling into a hollow.

Rodney One, the missing deer, was the collective's influencer, the only member allowed to leave, "purely on missionary business." Flattered and frankly deceived, he followed the party back and made his demand. "**I am a proud deer. I will never be prey!**"

The **Lord of Beasts** answered with sorrow: a predator carries every life he takes. He gently crushed and ate a beetle, then drew live mice from a bag deeper than it looked. Ferrick-wolf lunged to stop it and was monk-punched on the nose for exactly one damage. "**Do not tamper with the order.**" Rodney devoured the mice; one was named Herman. A turtle face pressed through the bark: "You made an enemy of the trees today." Time to wake up.



Rodney returns later with bark, a pipe, and a 200-gold Apple Store gift card.

WAKING CHANGED

Morning. The same street, the fire out, Gerard smoking a pipe. Asked for more of that tea: "**There was no tea.**" The party came back altered. **Balbi** has a new goat tattoo and can no longer influence other animals. **Irofine** found a mouse in her armor: **Rod**, "Hot Rod when he does well," through whom she can see and hear. **Art's** mouth is simply wetter now, permanently. And **Ferrick** lost his guilt, the thing that held his chaos in check. He is now formally **chaotic neutral**.

Aboard Gerard's iced-in pleasure ship, all sunken couches, lava lamps, and bunk beds, he tucked everyone in with giant turtle hands and gave the real briefing. The **Curator** is known by many names and takes on many faces. He was a man once; all agree he was a collector who forwent mortality. "He could be anyone, at any time, in any place." His telltale sign is **chaos of structure**: governments falling, monarchies crumbling, businesses failing. Hence the two lessons: not all chaos needs solving, and not every situation needs a hero, because the **Weeping Mercy** will be loud, wrong, and full of tempting problems. The tell that matters most: **he never leaves his collection**. Watch for the weird and wonderful; he is usually around.

That night, one of the party woke, or dreamed of waking, to find Rodney in the chair: half bark now, smoking a pipe, walking on hind legs. He winked, handed over a small black envelope, and left. Under the pillow come morning: a glossy card embossed with an apple, one bite taken out. "**Worth 200 gold of merchandise at your local Apple Store. Sincerely, Rodney.**"

GOING FORWARD

- **Curator tell:** he never leaves his collection; watch for collapsing structures.
- **Changes:** Ferrick is chaotic neutral; Irofine has Rod; Balbi bears the tattoo; Art salivates.
- **Threads:** the trees hold a grudge and an open offer; Rodney walks free with dream access.

✦ NEXT SESSION: THE ARCHIVIST OF MOMENTS ✦