

Simargl (269.1)

You dream that the night sky is dusted with stars. Their arrangement is unfamiliar. Rather than a random scattering from which patterns emerge the longer you look at them, these stars are laid out with geometric precision. The pattern is immediately obvious but it's meaning is beyond you. Or perhaps of no interest.

You are in a desert of white sand. It is fine, white, cool. It runs through your fingers like water. Columns of translucent crystal jut from the desert, apparently at random but with the suggestion of intention. They are angular, smooth sided, and vary between half a dozen feet tall to looming three-storey towers.

There are bats flying overhead. A small handful at first, then increasing numbers. They bicker and flutter, zipping across the night sky on some urgent errand. One slaps against the side of a nearby column of clear stone, clinging with it's clawed wings, and glares balefully at you from eyes the colour of the sun just before it drops below the horizon. It chitters, agitated, then launches itself into the air again. It circles above you, still chattering and shouting, and is soon joined by several others. You determine that it might be an idea to move on before even more bats arrive. Someone is in a bad mood, it appears.

You make your way across the desert. It is parched, but not especially warm nor cold. You do not feel not thirsty, even though you seem to travel for several hours. It is heavy going, the sand shifting beneath your feet, occasionally having to detour around a cluster of crystal pillars. Sometimes a nearby dune shifts and settles, as if something is moving around underneath the desert.

When the sand moves, it hisses like a snake.

The wind picks up a little, bringing the faint noise of waves, and after a few more moments you find yourself atop a jagged cliff. Below, breakers of dark ocean water crash against sharp-toothed rocks. You pick a direction, and follow the cliff along. At least the bats have pissed off. The sea air is actually quite bracing. You fancy you can hear the cries of gulls.

After a short time you start to encounter outcroppings of thick grass, and then the sand gives way entirely to a rough, rocky terrain that is slightly more annoying to traverse. Ahead of you is a lighthouse, white stone, seven sided, with a dark beacon atop it. You can see movement, and for an idle moment wonder about why it is wizards so often default to towers for their residences.

The door is open when you arrive. There is a small, tidy room and a narrow staircase.

“Come up!” calls a voice from above. “I'm at the light.”

The stairs are tight, steep, passing open arches into other rooms. A well-organised library, a tasteful gallery, a neat bedroom. You are a little winded when you reach the top.

There is a woman here in the timeless garb of Urizen. She is tinkering with a great globe of tempest jade, carefully smoothing it, running clever fingers across its surface, whispering words of power. A dim radiance begins to blossom in its depths and she is quite happy.

She is older than you, face lined, grey hair tied neatly back. She talks intently, maintaining eye contact, and actively listening to your replies. She is arbiter of her spire, and waiting for her covenmates to join her. She intends the light to serve as a beacon to guide them home.

From her conversation, their spire was besieged by invaders. Terrible enemies who herded hordes of the ravening unliving to their doors, slaughtering anyone they could catch. Faced with no alternative, the coven came together and opened the Door of Dreams and walked through it.

They thought they would arrive together, but they did not. She is not sure how long she has been here, but estimates perhaps half a decade. She is very keen to learn about how the war with Axos turned out, and whether the Urizen still hold Icarion.

She is an adept of Day magic herself, but knows enough Night magic to be able to participate in the Sifting of the Sands, but her true love is the light of reason, the steady path, the clarity of thought.

As you talk, the first bat appears and starts to circle the lighthouse, chittering. She seems surprised - .it's the first bat she's ever seen here. Another arrives, and then another.

Then you wake up, the sound of the waves still echoing in your ears.

Effect: Until the start of the next Profound Decisions Empire event you can perform the ritual Sift the Dreamscape's Sands (Night: 20) as if you had mastered it; if you have already mastered this ritual, you may perform them as if you have one additional rank of Night magic, subject to the normal rules for additional ranks of lore. This is an enchantment. You should keep this vision and show it to a referee if you perform this ritual.

Roleplaying effect: When you awaken, you are under a roleplaying effect that persists for at least an hour: You can hear bats, and occasionally hallucinate that you see them flying overhead or hanging from corners. They are very unhappy with you.

In addition, as long as you are under the effect of this enchantment, you are keenly aware of how important it is to keep those you actually care about close-by where you can keep an eye on them. When someone you are fond of is not near you, you find it increasingly easy to assume they are probably in danger.