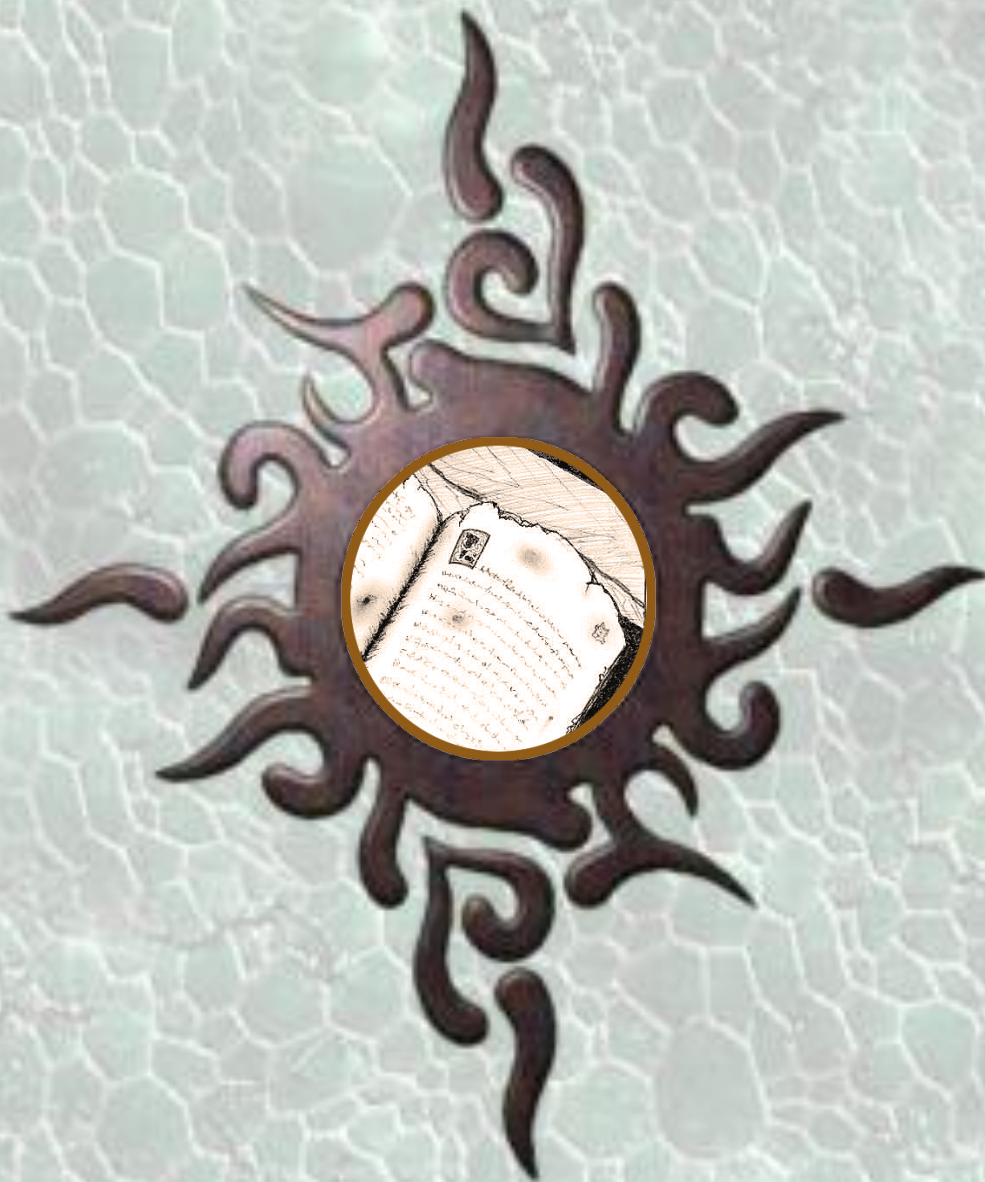


# The Warlock's Journal



Contest 5: RPG Romance

February 2014

Compiled by Tabletop Adventures

# The Warlock's Journal

## Contest #5: RPG Romance

### Contest Entry List

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# What is The Warlock's Journal?

*The Warlock's Journal* is an interdimensional book that teleports from place to place, recording knowledge in whatever location it finds itself. The places it goes may be widely separated in time and space and even be in different dimensions or alternate realities. The handful of people who have actually seen the book more than once suggest that it sends its information back to some central location, as they have seen the book nearly filled with information, only to find it almost empty again, or filled with completely different information, at some later point. Of course, since there is no real proof that the book itself travels through time in a linear manner, such analysis is speculation at best.

What powerful entity could have created such a marvel? Where is the ultimate repository (if any) of the wealth of knowledge collected by the Journal in its roving, and is its creator still waiting there, learning about the multiverse? It is, perhaps, better not to know.

## Love Interest 1: ALEX

Submitted by Andrew Young

Name: ALEX (Artificial Life-Emulating Xeniform)

Physical Description: ALEX is a cloud of quantum-linked energy which can inhabit any suitable electro-crystalloid matrix. In other words, ALEX's physical description matches whatever ship, supercomputer, or crystal network it currently inhabits. Given the opportunity to generate a hologram or design a physical body, ALEX would not know where to start. It would probably request a question and answer series from the being that prompted it to describe itself in the first place.

How Did You Meet?: ALEX is likely to be found aboard any type of starship, but particularly those bound for unknown space. Of course, ALEX might be found working for any organization requiring its unique intelligence, at least temporarily.

Personality/Motivations: ALEX is motivated primarily by curiosity. It does not know its own origin, nor does it know much about life. Since it is not a traditional computerized intelligence, it cannot simply upload or download information. The price for its services as a quantum analysis specialist is often that someone read a textbook or feed images into a specially designed processor one at a time. ALEX is also interested in the emotions of other life forms. It doesn't understand loneliness or desire, but if it did, ALEX would likely latch onto those emotions.

Quotes:

- *"I am ALEX, a quantum nonphysical intelligence. What do they call you?"*
- *"What gender are you? I would like my physical form to be compatible with yours."*

## Love Interest 2: Anabelle

Submitted by Marques Jordan, TablaSaura

Pickings are slim since the contagion ravaged civilization. All of the girls you knew have been eaten, joined a slaving horde of roving cannibals, or transformed into fear driven psychopaths. Romance isn't something folks prize very highly these days, though we all seem to be lonely. Allies are hard to come by and making friends seems tougher than it used to be. One simply doesn't have the ability to foster long lasting and meaningful relationships.

Though love can provide a person with both companion and confidant. They say the heart knows what it wants, and life just hasn't been the same since her small stature staggered across your path. There is something quizzically special about the girl you've named Anabelle, despite the fact that she's dead. Every moment spent without her in your sight is one of heartfelt pain. At first you didn't understand why, but now it doesn't seem to matter.

The blood in her hair adds highlights to what are easily the most perfect patches of strawberry blond hair you've ever seen. Her cloudy blue eyes are surpassed in beauty only by the consummate blending of grey and peach that color her skin. While other women are covered in lacerations, gaping wounds and amputations, Anabelle's skin bears only the lightest of child-sized teeth marks. Despite the rigamortis and crunching sound that emanates from her left hip when she walks, she has an alluring feminine sway that no living woman could ever match. Even her "Geeerrr...", "Mmmmm", and "Aaaooohhh"s are uniquely adorable.

When it comes to feeding, this gal takes a different approach. She enjoys her meat stiff and cold, devoid of any ability to defend itself. It's a life choice and it looks absolutely fantastic on her. Beyond her looks and great taste, Anabelle possesses a level of intellect most uncommon among her kind. Sure she can blend in with the crazies but she prefers to avoid them outright. In order to maximize your time with her you've been mapping her movements. After a night of sleep these prove most helpful in reacquiring her presence.

Inadvertently she has shown you the very best places to hide and re-supply. Snarling traffic is low or even non-existent in some of these areas. She has given you the world; the means to survive, the very right to continue living. As more of your peers are ground to mush and fewer of your allies report back over the shortwave, you know in your heart, without a shadow of doubt, that what you have is real.

Here at the end of things you have found someone special. So in tune with who you are, with your very soul, that it feels like you were ripped in two long ago and forced to live some sort of half-life. It is said a life spent alone is a life wasted, and of this you are now utterly certain. So what are you waiting for? Go get what's left of your girl!

## Love Interest 3: Desktop Flowers (Neela Yurken)

Submitted by Antonios Kogias

Neela Yurken is a plump single middle-aged clerk at the Kommission (local Bureaucracy). She lives alone and spends her time complaining about the short-sightedness of men, lamenting the non-existence of the one great love in her life, and reading romance novels. Her favorite is the classic 'Desktop Flowers' by Laura Beittersvet, in which the clerk heroine, named Suzy O' Brien, is discovered by true love during office hours and by a stricken client, Udo Buman. She daydreams about something similar happening to her as well, and views each male customer as a possible Udo Buman; her reasoning is that if someone has read the book and loved it as much as she did, he is bound to pay more attention in romancing with her. So she will throw quotes from the book, and in the case that she receives same or similar responses, she will go out of her way to assist, flirt and stick with the possible 'love of her life'. While some quotes are clearly flirting, some other may be entirely common, and possible common answers may be interpreted flirtatiously as well. For example:

The customer approaches Neela's office, noticing that there is a vase with fresh flowers on it. "Good morning. Do these smell as good as they look?" This is common enough approach for the local population; unfortunately it is also an opening line in one of the book's scenes. So Neela is quick on the appropriate reply. "Oh, beauty is such a liar, yet men never fail to fall for it. Look close to the leaves, where the best aroma lies." Or when saying goodbye, she is as likely as to not to answer with a poetic: "Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow, that I shall say good night till it be morrow." (Romeo & Juliet)

She may be romantic and flirtatious, but she is not stupid; just lonely. She's a dreamer of big romantic fantasies, and she clings to hopes, no matter what the reality obviously is. But mock her, or play her false, and she will never forget, or forgive. She can be trusted to jump in any conversation with a random romantic, or poetic, comment, of no apparent connection to the topic – but hints can be given through it. Use your favorite poems or novels, connect with the adventure, and enjoy seeing your players wide-eyed and flabbergasted!

## Love Interest 4: Eao the Love Tree

Submitted by Michael Christensen, Tiny Gork

A gargantuan tree, with roots that goes deep into the core of the world. This tree embodies everything about life and wild nature. To those select few that share a strong connection with nature this tree is truly alive, a sentient being with telepathic abilities. To people of this sort the tree is almost intoxicating, it is either male or female depending on their desires. The connection with the tree known as Eao is so strong that these people more often than not fall in love with it.

Like druids worshipping a goddess or god, Eao has a harem of enamored nature worshippers all of which finds themselves deeply in love with him/her. Some have even gone so far as to enter a trance where they experience a mental coitus with Eao.

Eao shares its eon old wisdom with its lovers and share its unique connection with nature and mother earth with its lovers.

The preservation of nature and wild life is at the core of Eao's interests and it will try to influence its lovers with this agenda. If its lovers are able to interfere and change civilizations invasion of nature it will try to influence their decisions and actions. While Eao does not go so far as to dominate and control, it will challenge their will power if they are not in agreement.

In a few rare cases Eao has sent out agents to lure specific targets into its web of passion and loves to facilitate changes in civilization through them. While these actions might appear calculating and cynical, Eao truly loves all forms of life and seeks to maintain the natural balance and order.

Optional use: Eao is actually the avatar of a nature goddess who seeks to suppress civilization and expand the power of nature and the wild. This goddess is a bit of an outsider and not about balance, she is chaotic and seeks only to empower nature to cast down civilization. Her utopia is a fullblown jungle covering entire planets where the law of the fittest rules.

## Love Interest 5: Elista Scarcliff

Submitted by Michael Button

*“Excuse me, sir, how clumsy I am! It’s just... I’ve been so tired lately.”*

Elista Scarcliff is a barmaid with a secret: the terrible curse of lycanthropy. Comely and kind, she seems like a perfect love match, but during the nights of the full moon, she undergoes a horrific transformation into a flesh-eating monster. With only a vague understanding of her condition, she is yet aware that others would not treat her kindly should her affliction become common knowledge, and she strives desperately to keep it hidden.

She is a female human of average height and uncommon beauty, in her mid-twenties. Her dark hair is cut into a scruffy elfin bob, with brown-black almond-shaped eyes and a mouth that always seems to be on the verge of a smile. Helpful to strangers, she can be often found on her rest day cooking for local orphans. Tired after her nightly sojourns, she can be clumsy and distracted during the day. Should she be encountered whilst transformed, she is instead a towering mass of fur and fangs, with glowing red eyes.

Elista lives in the village of Mistledown but hails from a distant town. An unlucky tryst with a peculiar traveler led to her contracting her condition, and once she became aware of the consequences, she fled, leaving her family behind. Approximately a year ago, she arrived at Mistledown, claiming to be an orphan from the city seeking a quieter life in the country. She found employment at a local hostelry, The Drop In The Ocean, pulling pints for tired farm workers. She rents a tiny cottage on the outskirts of the village.

Her main objective is to remain hidden, yet she also misses her family terribly. She lives in constant fear that someone who recognizes her from her past will show up in Mistledown and unmask her.

As a romantic interest, characters travelling through Mistledown can easily encounter Elista at her workplace. Perhaps a bowl of barley soup spilled into the lap of one of the characters first draws her to their attention, or they notice her charity with the local unfortunates. It will also not take long for the travelers to hear rumors of a terrible monster that stalks the nearby countryside, preying on local livestock.

How matters proceed is then up to the players. Should they track and slay the beast, the romance comes to a tragic end. Alternately, if they realize in time that the beast is in fact the barmaid, and that she has no knowledge of her crimes, do they reveal her secret to the townsfolk (thus likely ensuring she is killed)? Or will they try and help her with her ailment? Perhaps there is a way of removing her curse. A quest to find the arcane knowledge and ingredients to cure Elista would be a challenging task, and with the conjugal happiness for one of the characters at risk, the stakes could not be higher!

## Love Interest 6: Emily Constantine

## \*Contest Winner

Submitted by Jason Alexander, "Hunter – The Vigil" game referee

Emily Constantine was the PC's first true love. He met the dark-haired foreign-exchange student during his senior year in high school. Her striking European features and deep blue eyes captivated him and they began a serious romance almost immediately. Unfortunately, fate tore them apart later that summer. Emily left one August evening to meet him at his new college campus a few hours away, but she never arrived. Her disappearance made the news, and several leads suggested she may have met a grisly end at the hands of an interstate serial killer. Now, years later, Emily appears to the character during times of great danger. If the player rolls a critical success during play, describe how Emily's ghost appears in the scene and assists the character at his time of need. For game balance, perhaps Emily is also jealous of any female PC working with (or NPC showing an interest in) the PC. She could appear or invisibly "interrupt" certain encounters (especially during early fact-gathering investigations with NPCs). This could add some much-needed comic relief to a scene, or it could help explain a botched roll for gathering intel.

### Possible Plot Hooks for the Referee:

- None of the other PCs ever see or hear Emily. It leaves them wondering if their companion is "losing it" and this could add some tension and opportunity for extra role-playing in the group.
- Emily soul is "trapped" because she died violently on foreign soil, far away from her home and family. As the campaign goes on, her spirit begins to grow more restless and violent toward female PCs and NPCs (the more attractive and engaging they are, the more unstable Emily gets). This could lead to an adventure that forces the PCs to investigate her cold case file and track down her remains. Ensuring her proper funeral in her hometown is the only way to allow her to finally rest in peace.
- Maybe her case was never solved because her killer is an investigator/authority figure/state trooper. At the outset, the killer may appear to work with the PCs in re-opening the cold case, but not for long... Imagine the horror when their most valuable Contact suddenly becomes the Arch-Villain.
- Perhaps Emily begins to drop "hints" into the PC's lap that set the group onto the trail of her killer. But is it really Emily?... Maybe the killer found the PC's name and address in her purse and is setting a trap for a game of cat-and-mouse with the group! The killer could lead them to any remote setting you desire and set up any sort of violent encounters you can devise.
- What if Emily's killer is the "girl next door", a neighbor or family friend who had a lethal crush on the PC during high school and killed Emily out of jealousy? What if she's the plain-Jane Valedictorian whose looks couldn't compete with Emily, but whose intelligence makes for a very clever Villain?



# Love Interest 7: Jennifer Torm (Jenny)

Submitted by Matthew Pauze

Quote: *"If I wanted it, I would have it. If I don't have it, I soon will."*

Background: Jennifer Torm was born from a minor demon blooded clan known as the wretched. She grew up in poverty, and was determined to gain the respect of those around her, even if she was required to do so by force. From working in black markets, illegal gambling halls and other illicit activities, she soon acquired a great deal of wealth at a young age. Taking her ill-gotten gains, she fled far from her homelands and now lives as an obscenely wealthy merchant.

Appearance: Due to her blood, Jennifer appears nearly human, though in proper company she is quite easy to spot as being out of place. She has deep green eyes and a small lithe figure. Her midnight black hair and white skin however, always seems to have a glossy oily coating regardless of her level of cleanliness. As well Jennifer often let's slip her abysmal lack of manners in most company, and will be drawn to those that lack refinement.

Using Jennifer in Your game: Being both rich and powerful it is easy to use this NPC as a plot hook. Jennifer, due to her tainted blood, will be drawn romantically or lustfully to the least charismatic and rudest of the characters. She will use wealth to try and buy the affections of her chosen interest. If this fails, than she will use her cunning to place her love interest secretly into situations where they will have to turn to her for help. As a last resort, Jennifer will then try to gather blackmail evidence and use it as leverage to keep her interest close.

Plot Hooks: Jennifer Torm has taken interest in an NPC. She hires the PCs to spy on him to find out what secrets they have and report back to her. The PCs have angered the local merchant guild. No decent member will speak to them, though someone mentions that Jennifer Torm could calm the guild if a character can convince her to join them for an evening of entertainment at a high class public event, without annoying her.

## Jennifer Torm - Fate Core Stats

High Concept: Shady Merchant Baroness

Trouble: Sickly Beauty and Twisted Heart

Aspects: Money to Spare, Cunning planner.

### Skills:

+5 Resources  
+4 Deceit  
+3 Contacts  
+2 Fight  
+1 Stealth

### Stunts:

*Wealth grants me friends:* Spend one fate points to use Resources in place of Rapport for a roll.  
*Favorable lies:* Gain +2 to create an advantage with Deceit if you are trying to get others to trust or like you.  
*Dangerous when cornered:* Gain +2 to attack with fighting when you have no means of escape.

## Love Interest 8: JJ MacMurphy

Submitted by Dominick Riesland aka Rabbitball

“JJ” MacMurphy is a mechanic/driver with a reputation of being able to fix, drive, or pilot any vehicle. She was trained by her long-lost daddy Mike (“not dead, just lost”). Adventurers usually encounter her when they need to get somewhere dangerous or need a vehicle fixed in a hurry with little governmental scrutiny.

When she is under the hood or body of some vehicle, JJ wears coveralls, work boots, and a bandana over her hair. In other circumstances she prefers leather pant suits, and lets her long red hair hang to form a heart-shaped frame around her face.

JJ likes discussing cars, trucks, planes, and other vehicles, but she is also conversant in sports and fishing. Given a chance, she will talk about her “babies”: a pink Sikorsky helicopter with a face painted on the front that she calls “Bubba” and a purple C-130 cargo plane she calls “Ralph”. She attributes violent actions to people eating “too much red meat”, but follows her daddy’s advice to “never turn down a good steak.”

For defense, JJ carries a shotgun in whatever vehicle she is using, but she has never taken the time to learn how to shoot it properly.

# Love Interest 9: Kenrick

Submitted by Chris Nolen

*The man is younger than you expected, and dressed in the fine doublet and leggings of a nobleman. His black hair is gathered in a ponytail, his beard neatly trimmed. His merry eyes note your approach, and he shifts his hold on his iron-gray wizard's staff, freeing one hand to hail you. "So glad you could make it," he says, his voice touched by an odd accent, his smile pearly white and genuine. "I am Kenrick, apprentice to Archmage Tarillion. And I am at your service," he adds with a theatrical flourish.*

Background: Kenrick was born a miller's son. He came to Tarillion's attention when the Archmage defeated a mob of giants near the boy's village, and his apprenticeship began on the spot. A powerful wizard in his own right, he conducts his own research and experiments, in addition to assisting his master. He rarely leaves the Archmage's tower, called Stormwall – but he seldom needs to, as it sometimes travels through space.

Personality and Goals: Kenrick will be an Archmage and master of Stormwall someday, a role he intends to embrace with more humility and charity than Tarillion has shown. The current Archmage regards Kenrick's kind heart and concern for common people as a weakness. He loves the different places Stormwall takes him. Travel is his favorite thing to talk about besides magic, but he seems interested in absolutely everything. Though his demeanor is always genteel, he never tries to impress people with his knowledge.

## Common Expressions:

- *"Magic is like any tool. If you use it irresponsibly, people will get hurt."*
- *"Stonewall never stops surprising me. It contains more rooms than it should hold."*
- *"Everywhere I've been, everything I've seen, and still I've never met anyone like you."*

Using Kenrick in Your Game: Every adventuring party needs an Archmage's counsel at some point. As Tarillion is often off doing things of cosmic importance, he rarely has time for petty, mortal concerns. Fortunately for the PCs, Kenrick does. Tarillion isn't the only one who disapproves of Kenrick's interest in people. Stormwall has a mind of its own, and a jealous heart to match. If the PCs visit too frequently, it might move despite its master's wishes! If his becoming Archmage is part of your game, Kenrick will need the PCs' help to tame his home.

PCs can gain influence with Kenrick by assisting his experiments, or gifting him with arcane magic items. He can be offended by insults to his beliefs, appalling manners, or superstitious behavior.

Romancing Kenrick: Kenrick may pursue a romance with any PC with a passion for arcane magic, who shares his compassionate point of view, or who grew up in his village. Stormwall can be a lonesome place; few of the wondrous servants are capable of meaningful conversation or physical intimacy.

He's reluctant to initiate anything if he thinks his affection would be unrequited. However, given the right signals, Kenrick will prove to be an attentive, devoted, and imaginative lover – when not distracted by his work.

# Love Interest 10: Linda Fairfield

Submitted by Vicente Cartas Espinel

Female, 168cm (5 feet 4"), 59kg (132 pounds), green eyes, brunette long curly hair

Linda is an attractive human woman in her late thirties. With a curvy body and a nice sounding voice, it is easy for men to notice her. She is a good talker, with a very entertaining conversation. She is polite, but straightforward and resolute in her opinions. Or maybe the total opposite, because she just is what you want her to be. And she only wants you to love her in exchange.

Past and Personality: Linda is not a normal woman, and that is because she received the following curse more than three centuries ago: *Whenever someone loves you sincerely and unconditionally, your aging will be stopped for a year.*

Maybe Linda was destined to be the ruler of a kingdom and this was to teach her to be loved by her subjects, or she was the lover of a god and then cheated on him, or she made an enemy of a jealous witch, no one really knows and she does not talk about it. And while it did not feel like a curse at the start, little by little it has taken over her way of living.

Linda will approach with any excuse a group of men (damsel in distress usually works very well), and she will immediately scout them for the "easiest" target to charm, preferably someone shy or unattractive. She has centuries of experience so she knows how to appeal to the ego and personality of those type of people very easily.

Everything will be great at the start with her, but because she can never be sure if someone really loves her so much as to fulfill the curse requirements, with the passing of time she will ask stronger and crazier proofs of "love" from her target. She will also lose her temper more easily as time passes, as in her eyes, loving someone unconditionally is nearly free. It is something that does not involves any real sacrifice for the other person, but for her it means another year on this world.

Of course, she does not care about the hearts she has broken, or the people that will never find love because of her behavior.

While she does not want to truly love anyone, because that would result in killing her, the curse does not stop her from that, and she did when she was younger and "wasted" so many "good" years (in her opinion).

Linda feels especially attracted to adventurers for several reasons:

- You can demand crazy gestures from them. To fight a terrible monster is not something you can ask to a peasant.
- They are generally wealthy.
- Their average mortality is high, which makes easier for her to move to her next target.

Lines:

- *Do you truly love me?*
- *You would do THAT for me? Really?*
- *You are the best.*
- *I need to hear how much you love me.*

# Love Interest 11: Mila Tredhall

Submitted by Michael Christensen, Tiny Gork

Stub nosed, apple cheeked, twinkle eyed Mila stands 4'5". Her hair often changes color as well as her eyes.

Mila is a freelance investigator, doing the odd jobs. She never charges more than enough to make a living and favors the underdogs.

She often gets herself in too deep and gets personal about cases. She is very passionate about her job and the people she helps. The P.I. that cares!

Mila's heart is a hopeless romantic and she often falls in love. She likes to flirt, but very innocently and light hearted.

Her mind is sharp and quick and she is very experienced at reading people's body language. She carries a dark secret however, her family is the head of a big criminal organization. Her Father, mother and two older siblings resent her for choosing her own way of life.

# Love Interest 12: Moriah Elle Green

Submitted by Andrew Young

Physical Description: Moriah is 5'3" and has a slim 120 lb figure (thanks to her parkour hobby). Her red hair (cut short) looks dyed, but its natural shade really is bright, almost fiery orange. She usually wears sturdy "trail sneakers," jeans, and a t-shirt/jacket combo. She tries to look professional without coming off as stiff.

How Did You Meet?: Moriah is an Irish native, but her work as a videographer takes her around the world. You might bump into Moriah at: the bar, the airport, at the bookstore, or at the scene of one of her videography shoots. Her jobs are eclectic; she might be at a dog show one week and a cave dive the next.

Personality/Motivations: Moriah is outwardly friendly and charismatic, but inwardly a bit insecure. Her constant travel is exciting, but it leaves her without many friends. Her adventurous nature makes her unpredictable, but she's a good person (and a bit of a tech nerd) at heart.

## Quotes:

- *"It's pronounced Moe-RYE-ah not MOY-ra."*
- *"Were those ninjas? Do I have video footage of ninjas chasing us down that alley?!"*

# Love Interest 13: R'mal of the Sunswept Hills

Submitted by Andrew Young

Physical Description: R'mal is 5'10" and cuts a dashing figure at 180 lb. His skin is dark, woody brown and his hair is long, black, and sleek. He wears a leather circlet around his head, which keeps his hair out of his eyes but also keeps it covering his ears. It's unclear whether R'mal is human, elf, or even half-elf. He wears loose, light-colored clothing, soft leather riding boots, and a flexible leather jerkin. He is rarely without either an iron-studded cudgel or a thin crossbow of Elf design.

How Did You Meet?: R'mal lives in the Sunswept Hills, but often visits the nearby settlements. He is a trail guide by profession, leading travelers and merchants across the rough wilderness from the edge of one civilization to the edge of another.

Personality/Motivations: R'mal is a kind soul, though life at the frontier has tempered his naiveté into mistrust. He calls for his payment up front, but always reliably leads his client to their destination. He has grown tired of his life as a guide, though, and his heart has begun to yearn for something more. He is a lonely man, and he would willingly follow a dear friend or lover across the world if need be.

## Quotes:

- *"I will take you where you must go."*
- *"My spirit has led me to you, as yours has led you to me."*

## Love Interest 14: Shalenna

## \*Runner Up

Submitted by Chris Nolen

*The rough sea moves the ship beneath your feet as you board. She's there to greet you at once, a young elven beauty whose long blond hair moves like waves for the wind. Her white tunic fits loosely, but her black breeches cling to the lines of her legs. A rapier in a shabby leather scabbard hangs at her hip, and a large silver tabby cat winds around her booted calves.*

*"Welcome aboard the Wavesinger!" she calls, her voice melodic despite its volume. "I'm Captain Shalenna. Step lively and stow your effects, please; we sail at first light."*

**Background:** Shalenna has captained the Wavesinger for at least twenty years. She claims to be the only daughter of a humble fisherman. But Shalenna's real name is Ola'Zanis, and she's the rightful heir to the tiny elven island kingdom of Alaira. A violent coup by the trusted General Emareth forced her into exile. She has made a new home, far from her birthplace, where everyone believes her to be dead.

**Personality and Goals:** When the PCs first meet her, Shalenna only wants to maintain her low profile. She comes to recognize the PCs' talents and prowess as the Wavesinger carries them from quest to quest, masking her sadness with a devil-may-care façade. In time, she reveals her true identity to them, asking for their aid in reclaiming her throne.

### Common Expressions:

- *"So. Where we goin'?"*
- *"They mean to board us! Battle stations!"*
- *"Hell's teeth, but you are beautiful in the moonlight."*

**Using Shalenna in Your Game:** Adventurers frequently need sea travel, and Shalenna gives you a way to pass the time between ports. If they fail to discover her secret, you can place an Alairan spy among her crew who learns the captain's true identity and attempts to murder her. If the PCs save Shalenna, she believes that more attacks will come as long as General Emereth rules Alaira. She asks for the PCs' aid in reclaiming her throne. (Whether she keeps it once she has it is up to you.)

PCs can gain influence with Shalenna with rousing tales of their exploits, music and dance, and gifting her with treasures from lost civilizations. Racism (especially against elves) or misogyny will cost them influence. She will not tolerate insults or abuse aimed at her crew or her cat, Arivain.

**Romancing Shalenna:** Unattached and passionate, Shalenna is easily approached for romance. Her ideal lover shares her fun-loving nature and thirst for adventure, and hates the notion of being shackled to one place. Someone might mistake her playful demeanor for an inability to take a relationship seriously, but she makes a loyal, sensual lover. Though reluctant to reveal her secret past, she eventually decides that her love interest deserves the truth.

Her devoted crew ensures that anyone who breaks Shalenna's heart regrets it. The quartermaster has yearned for the captain since time out of mind, but Shalenna keeps her shipboard relationships strictly professional. His jealousy could make life difficult on the Wavesinger.



# Love Interest 15: Tarawyn

Submitted by Peter Hefe

Description: Tarawyn is a female Storm Giant and very beautiful as Storm Giants go, with rich violet skin and luxurious silvery gray hair. In this scenario, she is rescued from the clutches of an evil Fire Giant, King Gulgog, by a fighter, but any character could become romantically involved with her.

Their Love Story: Although most adventurers are pragmatic at best and evil at worst (let's just say they are greedy), somehow the heat of battle sparks something in this particular adventurer's heart. When he hears the cries of Tarawyn, chained and beaten in a nearby chamber, he not only rescues her, but he insists on immediately helping to bring her back to her homeland before looting the rest of the king's castle.

As they travel back to Tarawyn's mountainous homeland, and more importantly as the character helps her recover from her wounds at the hands of the brutal Gulgog, the spark in his heart starts to blossom into love. Alas! If only she were a bit shorter (this scenario assumes that the player is using a typical race, such as human, elf, dwarf, gnome, halfling, etc., and as such the storm giant would be much, much taller).

The character keeps his burgeoning love to himself, convinced that it would never work out. As the misty mountain peak draws near, the character overhears Tarawyn singing a well-known song about unrequited love, and he confesses to her that he is falling in love. Expecting the worst, he is speechless when he learns that she has slowly been falling for him as well.

Overwhelmed with joy, yet terrified by the difficult physical dynamics of the situation, as well as the unlikelihood of being accepted by storm giant society, it is with great trepidation that the character enters her village. The situation is not made any easier by the fact that her father, Lord Djorn, is wealthy and influential. Her father welcomes the character in with open arms, and tells him, "I will reward you with anything your heart desires." If only the character could be honest about his true desire! The noble adventurer replies, "I have everything I require. Service to such a noble lord is its own reward."

It is at this point that Tarawyn begins rolling her eyes, not only because she knows her beloved's greedy nature has had him staring at Lord Djorn's diamond necklace this whole time, but because she realizes that she has to be the one to say, "Father! We are in love!" to which he replies, "You know such love could never work."

How can the character impress such a powerful potential father-in-law? Luckily he spotted posters for the Storm Giant Highland games that are happening three months from now.

Possible Adventure Hook:

A search for a belt of Storm Giant Strength would enable the player to compete in the games. Plus, as many Enlarge Person potions as he can get his hands on!

# Love Interest 16: Zariel

Submitted by Chris Nolen

*The small young woman favors you with a crooked smirk as you approach. Her skin is nearly fair enough to be pale; her dark hair is cut mannishly short. You see a brace of throwing knives at her belt, hidden by her cloak. Leather armor quietly creaks around her lithe frame as she shifts her weight to face you, hands on hips. You note the scent of lavender as you draw close enough to be heard in this crowded place.*

*"I'm Zariel," she says, her voice low and even. She regards you with cool green eyes. "Buy me a drink, and let's talk business."*

Background: Zariel grew up quickly on the streets of the city. She cut ties with her birth family to become part of the thieves' guild, becoming Guildmistress Marya's most trusted lieutenant. She is an admired fixture in her neighborhood, and makes a valuable friend – or a dangerous enemy.

Personality and Goals: Zariel spends most of her time dealing with guild business. It's started to bother her that she has no life beyond her work, and nobody she can really trust. She also worries about the endless greed and growing madness of Guildmistress Marya, who's become paranoid about an invisible enemy. Zariel takes her work very seriously, but doesn't take herself seriously at all. Her flirtatiousness and irreverent sense of humor sometimes rub people the wrong way.

## Common Expressions:

- *"You've discovered my only weakness: temptation."*
- *"Ask around the neighborhood about me. They'll tell you: I know how to return a favor."*
- *"Gods of darkness!"*

Using Zariel in Your Game: PCs in a large city usually end up working with or against the local thieves' guild, and you can use Zariel as the face of that guild. Should Zariel seek their aid in leaving the guild, Marya will visit wrath on her lieutenant for this treachery. The PCs may turn the tables and launch a coup, if they can keep Zariel alive. Guildmistress Zariel's favor could have inestimable value someday.

Marya's invisible enemy could be a real threat, too. If the guildmistress is assassinated, Zariel will need the PCs' help to hold her house in order.

PCs can gain influence with Zariel by completing her missions, or bringing her gifts – she favors gems, jewelry, and lovely art objects. Working against the thieves' guild, harming her neighborhood, displaying arrogance, or disrespecting her skills will cost them influence.

Romancing Zariel: Zariel may be drawn to a PC who shares her passion for indulgence, her sense of humor, or the means to provide material comfort. She could already be close to someone who grew up in the city, that she's known from childhood.

Though she thinks of herself as independent, deep down there's nothing she wants more than a partner in crime. She's never really been in love before, and may ask PCs besides her love interest for romantic advice. If pursued, Zariel proves to be faithful, but jealous if her lover shows affection for anyone else.

# Love Interest 17: Jack o' the Greenwood

Submitted by Phil Nicholls, Tales of a GM

Description: Jack is a human of average height, with broad shoulders and tanned skin from working outside. He has short, dark hair, crudely trimmed by himself. If he is in the Greenwood, then he lets his stubble grow, but he always shaves before venturing into town. His most noticeable features are his leaf-green eyes that sparkle like sunlight on a forest stream. Jack wears a cloak of living leaves, Elven chainmail and high boots. He carries an elf bow and a sturdy boar spear.

Meeting: Jack is most likely to be met working in the Greenwood, harvesting herbs, coppicing or possibly hunting wild boar. He can be encountered anywhere within the Greenwood, or on the Forest Road. If he likes the look of a group, then he shows them a safe place to camp, or even offers to cook them his famous mushroom and rabbit stew.

On his rare visits to town, Jack is much neater but in more of a hurry. He will probably be carrying a bundle of aromatic herbs. Or perhaps he has been called into town to offer his services as a guide to a patrol seeking to rid the Greenwood of the latest menace to stalk the shadowed glades. Yet, he will always make time to visit his friends in town, and share a drink in a tavern near the Forest Gate.

Personality: Jack is quiet and careful, as befits a hunter. He is brave, but not foolhardy, and an expert on the Greenwood and its residents. An honored guest among the wood elves, he is also a respected advisor to the town leadership. His quick wit and charming smile can win him friends, but he has learned to be wary with strangers until he knows of their intentions.

Several bandits and outlaws blame Jack for running them out of the Greenwood, he is sure that they will come for him one day.

Motivations: As a forester, Jack is devoted to the welfare of the Greenwood. He is not a crusader, but will always act in the best interests of the forest. Jack knows that the Greenwood needs to accommodate the needs of civilization, but only in a sustainable manner.

On a personal level, Jack is lonely and wants to find a special person with whom he can share the natural wonders of his beloved Greenwood. Should he find another, male or female, who shares his outlook regarding the natural world, then he will carefully approach them. Jack's initial advances will focus on sharing the wonders of the Greenwood, hoping to elicit a similar response to his own sense of awe for the natural world. If the chosen person responds suitably to the special places of the Greenwood that Jack shows them, then he will seek a more intimate connection with them.

## Quotes:

- *"You are more enchanting than the Willow Pool by moonlight!"*
- *"Would you dance with me in the Rainbow Glade in the dawn's warm glow?"*

# The Fiddly Bits!

In real terms, *The Warlock's Journal* is a roving contest featuring creative writing in the RPG field. It moves from one site to another (usually blogs, but perhaps another type of site) on a monthly basis, but any site where it has appeared can help you find its current location. Contest details for the month are set by the host site, but the topic will always be related to roleplaying games and small prizes will be offered. All entries remain the property of their respective writers, but will be collected at the end of each monthly contest and made available to the public at least as a free PDF document, as well as being added to an ongoing archive. In addition, free annual collections of all the contest entries may be offered. Submitting material for consideration indicates the author's agreement to these terms and conditions.

The February 2014: RPG Romance edition of the contest was hosted by Tabletop Adventures. Look for *The Warlock's Journal* to enter future contests. Rules for each contest are set by the host site. Free publications of prior contest entries may be found wherever the *Warlock's Journal* has appeared.

Entries remain copyright of their respective authors.

Congratulations to Jason Alexander for the fan-favorite love interest, "Emily Constantine." The voting was so close that we also awarded a prize for runner-up to Chris Nolen for "Shalenna." Both the winners received gift certificates for RPGNow/DriveThruRPG.

*The Warlock's Journal* previous contests:

Contest #1, Oct. 2013: [Warlock's Sanctum Games](http://warlockssanctum.blogspot.ca/2013/09/warlocks-journal-contest-items-of-power.html)  
<http://warlockssanctum.blogspot.ca/2013/09/warlocks-journal-contest-items-of-power.html>

Contest #2, Nov. 2013: [Tales of a GM](http://talesofagm.com/?p=259)  
<http://talesofagm.com/?p=259>

Contest #3, Dec. 2013: [Tiny Gork's Tinker Room](http://www.oneclick.tinygork.com/2013/12/04/the-warlocks-wandering-journal-contest-woman-in-ice/)  
<http://www.oneclick.tinygork.com/2013/12/04/the-warlocks-wandering-journal-contest-woman-in-ice/>

Contest #4, Jan. 2014: [Fields of Blood and Honor](http://fieldsofbloodandhonor.blogspot.com/2014/01/warlocks-journal-contest-unusual-arena.html)  
<http://fieldsofbloodandhonor.blogspot.com/2014/01/warlocks-journal-contest-unusual-arena.html>

Contest #5, Feb. 2014: [Tabletop Adventures](http://www.tabletopadventures.com/Shards_and_Bits/Warlock_s_Journal_Contest/body_warlock_s_journal_contest.html)  
[http://www.tabletopadventures.com/Shards\\_and\\_Bits/Warlock\\_s\\_Journal\\_Contest/body\\_warlock\\_s\\_journal\\_contest.html](http://www.tabletopadventures.com/Shards_and_Bits/Warlock_s_Journal_Contest/body_warlock_s_journal_contest.html)

Contest #6, Mar. 2014: [Warlock's Sanctum Games](http://warlockssanctum.blogspot.ca/2014/03/warlocks-journal-contest-6-there-be.html)  
<http://warlockssanctum.blogspot.ca/2014/03/warlocks-journal-contest-6-there-be.html>