

3433 Team 4

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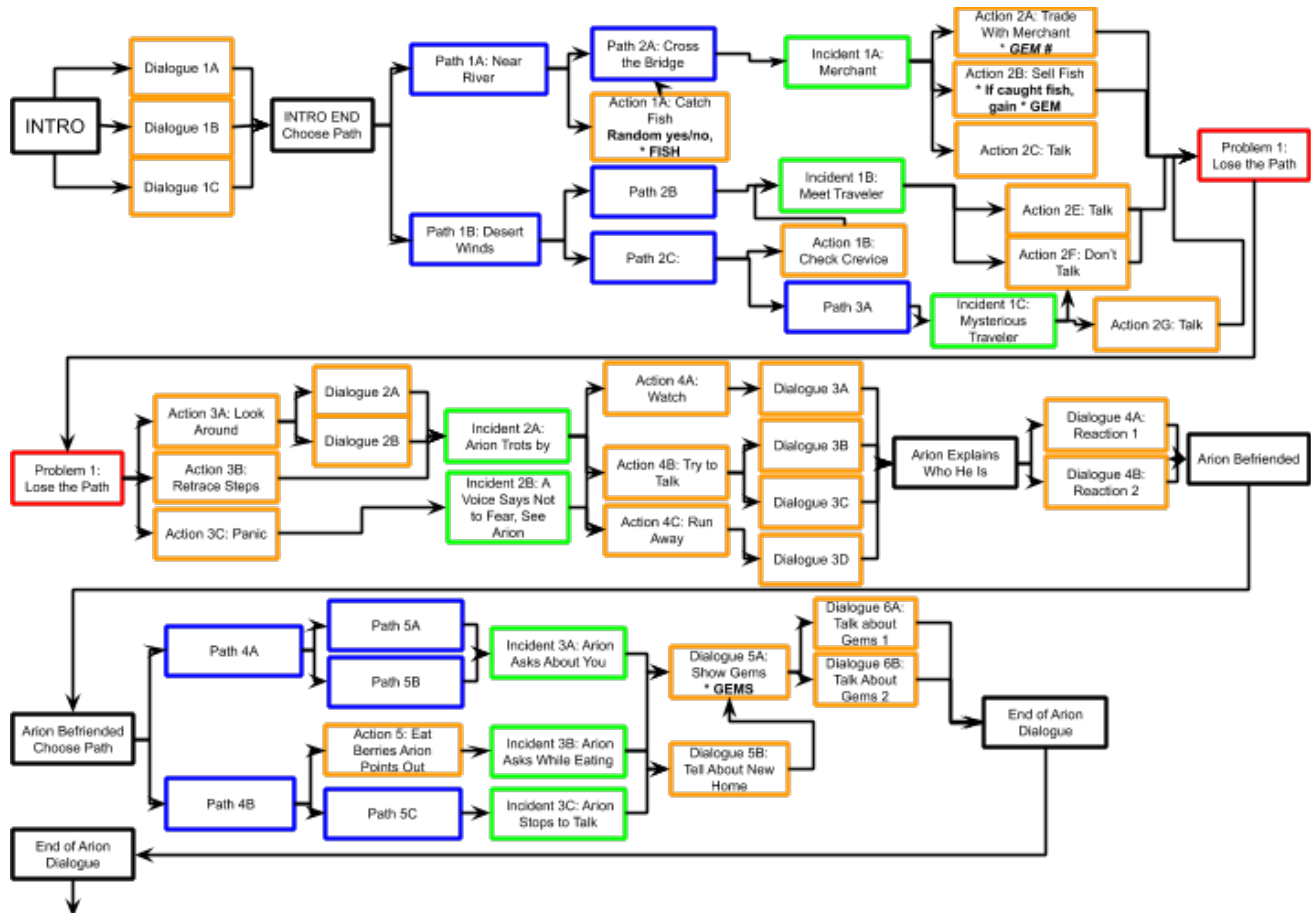
DIG 3433 Digital Storytelling

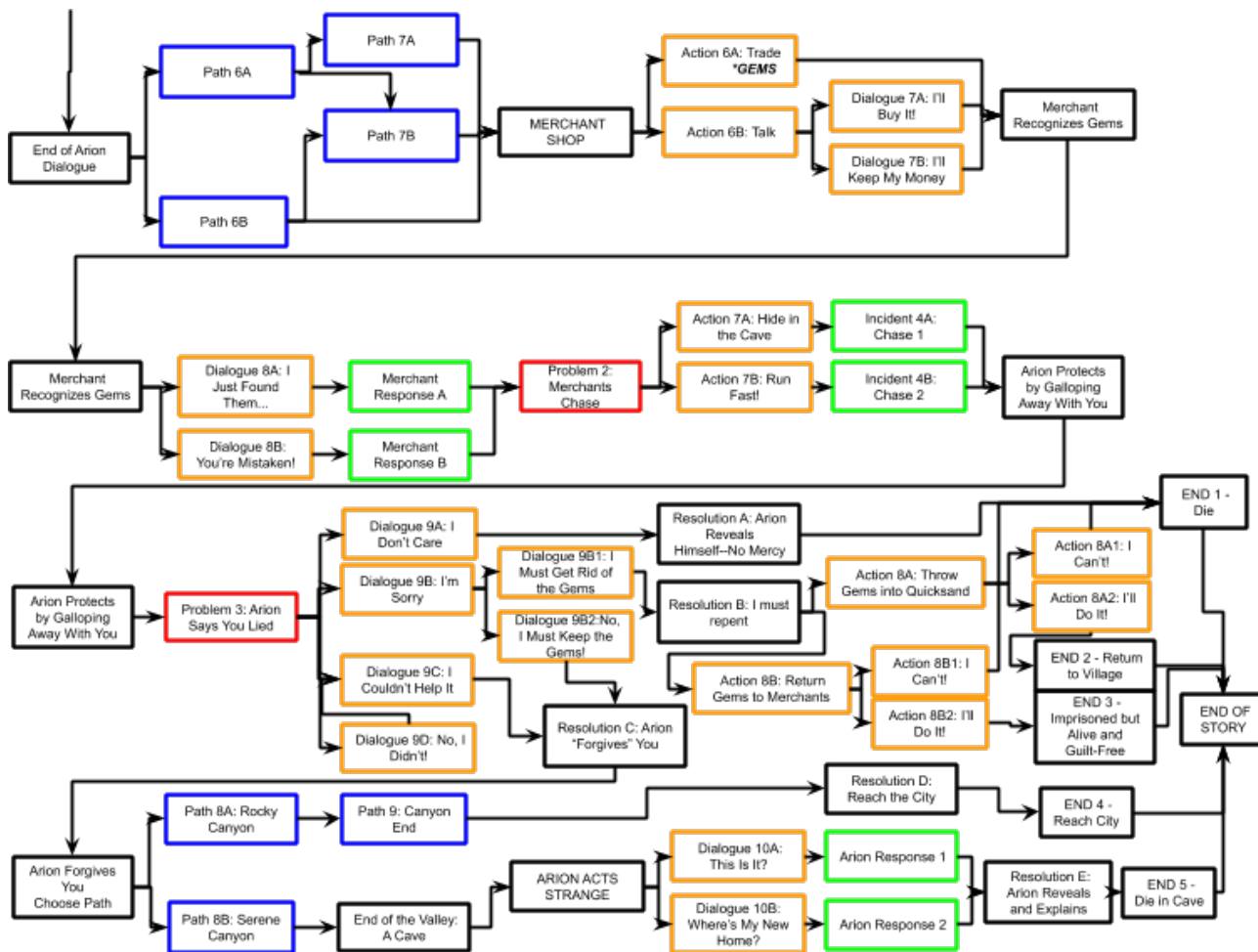
27 October 2019

First Story Draft: "The Valley Voyager"

Summary: You are crossing the Valley, meet a magical horse, and reveal hidden motives.

STORY FLOW DIAGRAM:





Key (box labels correspond to story sections below):

- Black: Big points in story--may be reached or not
- Red: Major problem points (also fixed)
- Dark blue: Location changes (May or may not have complicated introspection)
- Green: Incidents that pop up
- Orange: Player choices (may be action or dialogue)

STORY SECTIONS

Key (section labels correspond to boxes in Story Flow Diagram above):

- Hypertext narrative -- written on screen and will be created in either Twine or Unity
- *<Player choice/action, music/effect being played, or what to read next>*
- **Variable* -- something triggered or influenced by an action that affects coding/gameplay
- **Section Heading Labels:**
 - **Dialogue** — Player chooses what protagonist says
 - **Action** — Player chooses what protagonist does
 - **Path** — Location player chooses for protagonist to go
 - **Incident** -- Happening the player may or may not encounter
 - **Response** — Reply from NPC based on protagonist dialogue/action
 - **Resolution** — Major choice of protagonist/player that determines the ending path of the story
 - **OTHER** -- Big moments in the story the player may or may not encounter
 - **# Letter** -- Varying choices, locations, or happenings in roughly the same point in the story

INTRO:

<Gentle but hopeful music plays.> The bright, hot sunlight beats down on the sand of the Valley that lies ahead of you, the one you had always heard about. *<Advance>*

Yes, that long, huge canyon to the north, where the refreshing winds of winter blow through to caress your run-down, little village. It seems to stretch off into infinity. Those endless

paths weaving in and out of its dusty crevices are as numerous as those dreams you have always had--the dreams of making a home in that glistening city on the other side. <Advance>

<Establish ***GEM** count variable on screen> With those gems you earned tucked safely in that leather pouch, you can finally step into those dreams: to live among the shiny buildings, to bathe in the clear, blue water of the bay you have never seen. To let your tired feet rest on the velvety carpets like kings and princes do. You have waited so long, and now the day has come...

<Player chooses: "...to go out on my own." (**Dialogue 1A**) OR "...to forge my own way."

(**Dialogue 1B**) OR "...to leave this behind." (**Dialogue 1C**)>

Dialogue 1A:

You: "The day has come to go out on my own."

Yes, you will finally be your own person, never having to answer to another. No one is there to remind you of your faults or those shortcomings they imagine that you have. No one to yell at you to work harder when you can barely lift your hand to wipe the sweat from your brow. No more orders or rules to follow. <Advance to **INTRO END**>

Dialogue 1B:

You: "The day has come to leave this behind."

Yes, far behind. Those days of tending the land like a mere peasant are over. Even now, those shacks of your old village have faded into the distance like the swift, sandy winds. Soon, those luxuries of the city will be all you remember. <Advance to **INTRO END**>

Dialogue 1C:

You: "The day has come to forge my own way."

Yes, it is time that you become exactly who you want. For your voice to be heard over the noise and opinions of everyone else. They never thought you would become a wealthy city-dweller. You were just a nobody, a lazy good-for-nothing in their eyes.

But now, you will make something of yourself and prove them all wrong. *<Advance to*
INTRO END>

INTRO END:

It will be a little voyage through the arid paths of the Valley, only a short time to traverse those pathways to reach the other side, but soon it will be over. *<Advance>*

And that new life will begin.

Choose the path you will take: *<Players choose: Path by the river (**Path 1A**) OR Path across the desert (**Path 1B**)>*

Path 1A: Near River:

You make your way to the river and follow its path. The hazy clouds part just enough to let a ray of sunlight shine down upon its waters. The calming sounds of the current flowing remind you of why you chose this route. You feel a certain safety in its presence.

Through the clear waters, you notice some fish swimming by alongside you, and as you reach further down the bend, a quaint bridge comes into focus. *<Players choose: Cross the bridge (**Path 2A**) OR Try to catch a fish (**Action 1A**)>*

Path 1B: Desert Winds:

You make your way to the arid desert, preparing yourself for the journey. As you reach its open skies, you quickly cover your head from the sun's wrath. You only take a few more steps before being broadsided by a chaotic wind, pushing and shoving its way against your body.

You harshly plant your foot with each step, covering your face from the sand it brushes by.

Somehow, you vaguely see a fork in the path ahead.

Choose the path you will take: *<Players choose: Left desert path (**Path 2B**) OR Right desert path (**Path 2C**)>*

Path 2A: Cross the Bridge:

Crossing the bridge, you listen to the creaking of its wood with each step you take. It's an old bridge but a sturdy one. The fading of the wood shows its time and the curling sculptures of vines on each end stretching toward its center create a rather beautiful appearance. *<Advance to **Incident 1A**>*

Action 1A: Try to Catch a Fish:

Before making your way across the old bridge, your eye catches the gleaming scales of yet another fish making its way down the river. Feeling clever, an idea gathers in your mind about the value of such a fish--or at least that it could provide sustenance to you in your journey.

You take a nearby stick and position its pointy end in your hand like a spear. You watch the fish's path carefully, and with a snap, you thrust the end of your make-shift spear to the area you guess it would go next.

*<If caught: (Random); establish *Fish count on screen?>* To your delight, the spear catches and pierces its way through the fish. You pull its remains out of the water and off the spear and pack it in your belongings. A grin forms on your face. *<Advance to **Path 2A**>*

<If not caught:(Random)> You sigh as the spear smacks the river bottom, and the fish escapes. You sigh and slouch forward, your stomach rumbling, as though in protest. *<Advance to **Path 2A**>*

Path 2B: Left Desert Path

As you travel along the path, the sands die down. You brush the grains out of your hair, and you grasp your bag of gems. Feeling the bag's weight, you sigh in relief, knowing that they are all still there. *<Advance to **Incident 1B**>*

Path 2C: Right Desert Path

You continue walking in the sandstorm. The blurry shape of a crevice in a nearby rock makes you stop. You think you see something shiny inside. *<Players choose **Continue on the path (Path 3A)** OR **Check the crevice (Action 1B)**>*

Incident 1A: Merchant:

The wind creates ripples over the water. The tinkling of chimes from somewhere nearby buzz in your ear.

You look up and see the tent of a small merchant shop. The colors of its canvas have faded in the hot sun.

You curiously walk up to the merchant tent. A little man greets you with a wrinkled smile and invites you inside. Your eye quickly scans the shiny trinkets and tantalizing baubles lined on his display.

Merchant: "Ah, there is something that has caught the eye of the young traveler, eh?"

*<Players choose: **Trade with merchant (Action 2A)** OR (If caught a fish (**Action 1A**)) **Sell Fish (Action 2B)** OR **Talk (Action 2C)**>*

Path 3A: Continue on the Path

You decide to continue on the desert path. The sand begins to die down, but not before you topple over in its strong winds. Your pouch of gems flies open, and several are strewn onto

the ground. You hurriedly pick them up, but as the sands settle, you realize two are missing.

<*Gems -=2> <Advance to **Incident 1C**>

Action 1B: Check the Crevice

You decide to check the crevice in the rocks. It is narrow, but you are able to squeeze your body inside and have some relief from the strong winds. <Advance>

You gasp as you see a gem lying on the ground, half-buried in the sand. You dust it off and store it in your bag. <*GEM count += 1; Advance to **Incident 1B**>

Action 2A: Trade:

<* Traded Gem variable true -- triggers event later> You feel the weight of the leather pouch hanging on your side and smile. You have plenty to spend in the city; why not splurge now? You fumble in your bag and feel the cool facets of a gem in your fingers. You pull it out and drop it on the counter with a satisfying clink.

You: "I would like to trade." <*GEM count -= 1>

Merchant (smiling deviously): "Oh, my! What an expensive item you have! I will give you only the best for an item of such quality!"

You grin happily as he showers you with trinkets. You tuck them all in your bag and feel refreshed as you leave his tent. You will look so stylish when you reach the city. <Advance to

PROBLEM 1>

Action 2B: Sell Fish:

<Only triggered if caught fish> Your mind returns to the fish you just caught. You pull it from your belongings and show it to the Merchant.

Merchant: "Oh, that's a very valuable fish!"

He placed a handful of jewels into your palm, and you smile, knowing how wealthy you already are. You tuck them all in your bag and feel elated as you leave his tent. <***GEM** += 5; ***FISH** -= 1; Advance to **PROBLEM 1**>

Action 2C: Talk:

Merchant: “You don’t see anything to buy? That is fine. Watch yourself out in the desert, young one. There are many thieves lurking out there.”

You feel a stir in your chest as you leave his tent. <Advance to **PROBLEM 1**>

Incident 1B: Meet Traveler

As you stop to wipe the sweat from your brow, you see another traveler up ahead dressed in dark clothes. Grains from the sandstorm are still caught in his garment and on the several canvas sacks piled on his back. He notices you, and you see his eyes peek out from behind the black cloth of the turban that covers his face. <Players choose: Talk (**Action 2E**) OR Keep walking (**Action 2F**)>

Incident 1C: Mysterious Traveler

As you stop to wipe the sweat from your brow, you see another traveler up ahead dressed in dark clothes. Grains from the sandstorm are still caught in his garment and on the several canvas sacks piled on his back. He notices you, and you see his eyes peek out from behind the black cloth of the turban that covers his face.

You are still panting from losing your two gems. Your hands start shaking. Maybe this fellow traveler can help you look for it? <Players choose: Talk (**Action 2G**) OR Keep walking (**Action 2F**)>

Action 2E: Talk to Traveler

Traveler: “Hello, my fellow voyager! It is odd to see someone as young as you coming through here. Be careful! There are many dangers lurking through here. Thieves hide around every corner.”

His eyes narrow as though he is smirking. He turns and walks off and you clutch your pouch of gems close to you. You would have to be on your guard. <Advance to **PROBLEM 1**>

Action 2F: Keep Walking

You wave to the traveler, but you choose to keep walking along. You surely wanted to get to the city as quickly as you could, and there was something off about him. Those beady eyes that peered back at you seemed untrustworthy. <Advance to **PROBLEM 1**>

Action 2G: Talk to Traveler

You shout to the mysterious traveler and wave for him to come closer.

You: “Hey, can you help me?! I’ve lost something valuable in the sandstorm! Have you seen it?!”

The mysterious traveler’s eyes grow wide. You see something sparkle in his clenched hand. He quickly hides it beneath his garment and begins to run. <Advance>

You realize he must have stolen your two gems in the confusion. You try to run after him, but your legs are still weak from bracing yourself in the sandstorm. The thief scampers off into the distance, and you sigh. At least you still had a bagful that were all yours. He wasn’t that lucky. <Advance to **PROBLEM 1**>

PROBLEM 1: LOSE THE PATH

You suddenly look around. Wait a minute! Wasn’t the path here a second ago? You just took your eye off it for a moment, and now it’s gone. You know the path is vital to reaching the

other side of the Valley. If you lose it, you may never find the way out! <Players choose: *Calm down and look around (Action 3A) OR Retrace my steps (Action 3B) OR Panic! (Action 3C)*>

Action 3A:

You take a deep breath. You start to look around you. The path has got to be somewhere close. However, everything looks the same, where could the path have gone? <Players choose: *“I better go back.” (Dialogue 2A) OR “I better stay here.” (Dialogue 2B)*>

Action 3B:

Yes, that’s the best thing to do. You were always so logical.

You turn around and start to head back, determined to find what is familiar. But all the rocks look different! Didn’t you just come this way? <Advance to ***Incident 2A***>

Action 3C:

That’s always the best thing to do in times like this, right? You start to hyperventilate and sit helplessly on the ground. Your head hangs. You can’t die now! It all can’t end this fast! You can’t lose your dreams of seeing the city! <Advance to ***Incident 2B***>

Dialogue 2A:

You: “I better go back.” Just not all the way back. You know you can never return there. You never want to see those faces again. Even thinking about them--about *him*--makes you wince. <Advance to ***Incident 2A***>

Dialogue 2B:

You: “I better stay here and look around more.”

Yes, you can’t be too far away. But how come every rock looks just like every other rock, and there’s no path in sight? <Advance to ***Incident 2A***>

Incident 2A: Arion Trots By

<Mystical music plays> As you keep looking around, you suddenly hear the sound of hoofbeats. Someone must be nearby! You whirl around, and your eyes suddenly fall on this unexpected sight.

A horse trots by up ahead. You are almost blinded by its coat of hair. It is golden in color, unlike any horse you have ever seen. It almost glows with every move it makes. <Players choose: Watch (**Action 4A**) OR Try to talk (**Action 4B**) OR Run away! (**Action 4C**)>

Incident 2B: A Voice Says Not to Fear, See Arion

<Mystical music plays> ???: “Do not fear, young traveler. You are not alone.”

Your head lurches up. Your eyes glance around. Who was speaking to you? As you keep looking around, you suddenly hear the sound of hoofbeats. You whirl around, and your eyes suddenly fall on this unexpected sight.

A horse trots by behind those rocks up ahead. You are almost blinded by its coat of hair. It is golden in color, unlike any horse you have ever seen. It almost glows with every move it makes. <Players choose: Watch (**Action 4A**) OR Try to talk (**Action 4B**) OR Run away! (**Action 4C**)>

Action 4A: Watch:

From behind the rocks, you watch the golden beast in awe. Never had you seen something as amazing as a horse that twinkled like a star. Its fur seems to flash like lightning. Then it stops. You tense as the magnificent creature turns its long head towards you. Then you see its shimmering lips begin to move like a person.

???: “My young, lost traveler. You may come out from the rocks. Please don’t be scared.” <Advance to **Dialogue 3A**>

Action 4B: Try to Talk:

You don’t know why, but something inside of you calls out to the beast.

You: “H-hello...?!”

The horse skids to a stop, its hoofs kicking up dirt. Its mane flutters as it looks in your direction. Its dark eyes almost seem more human than beast, as it watches you intently. <Players choose: “I Don’t Want to Hurt You.” (**Dialogue 3B**) OR “Are You Lost?” (**Dialogue 3C**)>

Action 4C: Run Away!

Fear stirs inside of you at the weight of the creature’s stare. You feel your feet shake as you begin to run. Then all of a sudden...

???: “Please stop. There is no need to be afraid.” <Advance to **Dialogue 3D**>

Dialogue 3A:

Your jaw slowly falls open, and you stumble out in a daze towards the creature.

You: “Did you just talk to me?”

The horse nods stoically. <Advance to **ARION EXPLAINS WHO HE IS**>

Dialogue 3B:

You: “I don’t want to hurt you.”

You hold your hands out, hoping to soothe the startled beast. Yet the beast does not seem to be frightened. It cocks its head and seems to smile, showing its teeth. Then you hear it talk.

???: “I know you won’t hurt me.”

Your eyes widen. <Advance to **ARION EXPLAINS WHO HE IS**>

Dialogue 3C:

You: “Are you lost?”

You stare at the creature, not really expecting a reply. Then you actually hear a voice.

???: “No, but you are.”

You gasp. Did the horse talk?! <Advance to **ARION EXPLAINS WHO HE IS**>

Dialogue 3D:

You: “Wh-who said that?”

You turn back and see the horse begin to move his lips.

???: “It is only me. I promise I won’t harm you.”

You (gasping): “You can talk?! This can’t be possible!”

You figure the Valley heat must have gotten to you, and you almost turn to run again when the horse speaks again.

???: “I am real, young wanderer. Do not fear.” <Advance to **ARION EXPLAINS WHO**

HE IS>

ARION EXPLAINS WHO HE IS

???: “I am here to help lost travelers like you.”

You: “R-really? Who...or *what* are you?”

The horse bows its head towards you.

???: “I am Arion, one of the spirits that inhabit the Valley.” <Players choose: “Really? A spirit?” (**Dialogue 4A**) OR “That can’t be...” (**Dialogue 4B**)>

Dialogue 4A:

You: “Really? You’re a spirit?”

You shudder slightly and feel your skin grow cold.

Arion: “Yes, but I am not here to hurt you.” <Advance to **ARION BEFRIENDED**>

Dialogue 4B:

Arion: “I protect mortals like you on their journeys through this land. You have lost your way.”

You: “That can’t be...”

Arion: “No, I am not lying to you.” <Advance to **ARION EXPLAINS WHO HE IS**>

ARION BEFRIENDED

Arion: “I sensed you had lost your way, and I heard your distress.”

You: “You mean...you’re here to help me?”

Arion: “Yes. I will take you back to the path. I cannot choose the paths you will take from there, but I will protect you, until you reach the other side of the Valley.”

He turns and begins to trot away. You are still quite stunned, but you follow close behind. After several minutes of silence, you see the dusty path up ahead. You smile in amazement at your new traveling companion. Choose the path you will take: <Players choose: Path along the ridge (**Path 4A**) OR Path through the grove (**Path 4B**)>

Path 4A: Path Along the Ridge

<Adventure music plays> You walk with Arion trotting beside you along the ridge. You feel the gentle breeze as it dances across your skin. You feel reassured to have your friend accompanying you.

A large boulder splits the path ahead. <Players choose: Left ridge path (**Path 5A**) OR Right ridge path (**Path 5B**)>

Path 4B: Path Through the Grove

<Adventure music plays> You make your way into a lush grove of berry bushes. The sight of their green leaves are refreshing after the monotony of tan of the sand and rocks. Round, little scarlet fruits hang across the thin branches.

Arion: “Young traveler, these berries are the finest in the whole Valley. If you are weak, please stop and eat.” <Players choose: Eat some berries (**Action 5**) OR Continue along the path (**Path 5C**)>

Path 5A: Left Ridge Path

<Sweet music plays> You take the left path. As you crunch over the rocky terrain, the breeze begins to kick up dirt in your face.

Arion leaps ahead and shields you from the rubble. You smile at his kindness.

You: “Thank you.” <Advance to **Incident 3A**>

Path 5B: Right Ridge Path

<Sweet music plays> You take the right path. You are cut off from the breeze, and the sun begins to burn against your skin.

Arion scampers ahead and shields you from the sun. You smile at his kindness.

You: “Thank you.” <Advance to **Incident 3A**>

Action 5: Eat Berries Arion Points Out

<Sweet music plays> You stop and pick a handful of the scarlet berries and eat one after another. You feel the sweet juice of the tiny fruits tickle your tongue. It seems to energize your aching muscles with every bite. <Advance to **Incident 3B**>

Path 5C: Continue Along the Path

<*Sweet music plays*> As the berry bushes fall behind you, you gaze at your amazing friend trotting there beside you. Questions stir in your mind like the Valley sands, but your tongue holds still. <*Advance to Incident 3C*>

Incident 3A: Arion Asks About You

Arion looks toward you and smiles. In a concerned tone, he begins to speak.

Arion: “You are on a deep quest in your voyage. Tell me what has led to you being here.”

<*Players choose: Show gems (Dialogue 5A) OR Tell About New Home (Dialogue 5B)*>

Incident 3B: Arion Asks While Eating

Arion waits patiently nearby as you eat. He watches with the gentle eyes a father would have--or *should* have.

Arion: “My traveler, please tell me about yourself. Why are you journeying to the city?”

<*Players choose: Show gems (Dialogue 5A) OR Tell About New Home (Dialogue 5B)*>

Incident 3C: Arion Stops to Talk

As you near some rocky terrain again, Arion suddenly stops.

Arion: “Let us stop and rest for a moment. Tell me about yourself.” <*Players choose:*

Show gems (Dialogue 5A) OR Tell About New Home (Dialogue 5B)>

Dialogue 5A: Show Gems

You reach for your leather pouch and pull out a handful of gems. Their facets glitter almost as brightly as Arion’s fur as they lay your hands. He watches inquisitively.

You: “I collected these and am now wealthy enough to live in the city.”

Arion: “Ah, I see. How did you obtain such precious stones?” <*Players choose: “I earned them myself.” (Dialogue 6A) OR “I just found them.” (Dialogue 6B)*>

Dialogue 5B: Tell About New Home

You: “I have decided to leave my village and make a new life for myself in the city.”

Arion: “That is admirable, but how has a young traveler like you been able to afford such a thing?” <Advance to *Show Gems (Dialogue 5A)*>

Dialogue 6A: Tell About Gems 1

You (stating proudly): “I earned them myself.”

Arion: “What hard work you must have done to do so. You have certainly earned your life in the city. Let us journey on.” <Advance to **END OF ARION DIALOGUE**>

Dialogue 6B: Tell About Gems 2

You (speaking with awe): “I actually just found them. Can you believe it?”

Arion: “What luck and blessings you have in your quest. Let us continue and see it through.” <Advance to **END OF ARION DIALOGUE**>

END OF ARION DIALOGUE

Choose the path: <Players choose *Sandy pass (Path 6A)* OR *Swampy bog (Path 6B)*>

Path 6A: Sandy Pass

<Adventure music plays> Cacti dot the landscape before you. A whirlwind begins to blow. <Advance to **Path 7A**>

Path 6B: Swampy Bog

<Adventure music plays> Muddy swamps bubble around you. The stench stings your nose. <Advance to **Path 7B**>

Path 7A:

You hide close to Arion as a sandstorm lashes against you. As it settles, your body stings. You brush the dirt from Arion's golden fur and sigh. <Advance to **MERCHANT SHOP**>

Path 7B:

You cough as you and Arion tiptoe through the rough terrain. You sigh as you shake out your aching legs. You slip, nearly dropping your pouch of gems, but luckily, you catch it just in time. <Advance to **MERCHANT SHOP**>

MERCHANT SHOP

You realize to journey on and survive, you and Arion must find the best path to reach the city in the quickest and easiest way. Although he is a spirit, knowing far more than you, he is only allowed to help you so much. You look up and see a large merchant shop ahead. Maybe someone there can help.

You enter the old merchant tent and see one of the owners standing behind a counter across the shop. He looks lifeless and sunburned as if he has been here a lifetime. However, numerous knickknacks, treasures, and supplies line their shelves. <Advance>

You scan the shop for a map to cross the valley. After a moment of searching, a gasp escapes your lips. They have a magical path finder map that will guide travelers through their most desired paths. Could it really be true?! <Players choose Trade Gems (**Action 6A**) OR Ask Merchant (**Action 6B**)>

Action 6A:

You rub your hands together and already begin pulling out some gems. This was going to be the best purchase you made, and you knew you had plenty to cover it...and so much more left for your life in the city. <Advance>

<Tense music plays><*GEM -= 15> You give the merchant several of your gems for the magical guide. When he looks at them, the merchant is suddenly startled. His pale face turns red as anger spreads across his face. <Proceed to **MERCHANT RECOGNIZES GEMS**>

Action 6B: Talk

_____ After all the dangers you've faced, you must make sure this isn't a fluke. You decide to directly approach the merchant. After you briefly explain your voyage to him, you ask him about the map.

Merchant (in a lifeless and dry tone): "Yes...yes, it truly is a magical map."

You eye him with confusion.

Merchant: "If you do not believe me, I can show you." <Advance>

He opens the map and spreads it on the counter. The old parchment suddenly begins to light up, showing a golden route across the Valley right to a black dot labeled, "The City." Your eyes light up, but the merchant quickly pulls the map away.

Merchant: "I warn you, this will cost you a fortune...but you see how valuable it is?"

You fiddle with your bag of gems, wondering what to do. <Players choose "I'll buy it!"

(**Dialogue 7A**) OR "I'll keep my money" (**Dialogue 7B**)>

Dialogue 7A: "I'll Buy It!"

_____ <*GEM -= 15> You: "I have something that will be worthy of this magical map.... (you take out some of your gems and place them on the counter) see for yourself." <Advance>

<Tense music plays> Merchant (opens the pouch and is taken aback... anger spread across his face...he yells): "You thief!" <Proceed **MERCHANT RECOGNIZES GEMS**>

Dialogue 7B: "I'll Keep My Money"

_____ You: “Well, that’s really interesting, but...actually, I think I’ll save my money for my new life in the city.”

You begin to tuck your pouch away, when the merchant suddenly cries out in surprise.

<Advance>

<Tense music plays> <*GEM -= 2> The merchant grabs two of your gems out of your pouch and is taken aback. Anger spreads across his face, and he yells:

Merchant: “You thief!” <Proceed **MERCHANT RECOGNIZES GEMS**>

MERCHANT RECOGNIZES GEMS

_____ Merchant: “These are the Gems that were stolen from us in a little village south of the Valley, aren’t they?!”

He motions for the other merchants to approach, and they nod their heads as they examine them. Fear spreads over you, and you stand there in shock.

<If * **Traded Gem true from Action 2A**> Another merchant: “Yes, there was a fellow merchant told me there was a young traveler spending our stolen gems!” <Player choose: “I just found them!” (**Dialogue 8A**) OR “You’re mistaken!” (**Dialogue 8B**)>

Dialogue 8A:

• You (trying to keep calm): “No. No. No... I am not a THIEF! I just found them!”

<Advance to **Merchant Response 1**>

Dialogue 8B:

You (trying to keep calm): “No. No. No... I am not a THIEF! You are mistaken!”

<Advance to **Merchant Response 2**>

Merchant Response 1:

_____ Merchant: “No, you lie, young insolent! You will pay for stealing these from us!”

<Advance to **PROBLEM 2**>

Merchant Response 2:

_____ Merchant: “No, I am not mistaken, you thief! You *were* the one who stole these from us!

You will surely pay for your evil deeds!” <Advance to **PROBLEM 2**>

PROBLEM 2: MERCHANTS CHASE

You burst out of the merchants’ shop, panting wildly. Your body is shaking in fear. You see Arion standing there watching you calmly. Your chest aches. You can’t call to him for help. He is a spirit of goodness. He would never protect someone like you!

You hear hoofbeats around the opposite end of the merchants’ tent. They must be mounting their horses to chase after you! What do you do?! <Players choose: *Hide in the nearby cave (Action 7A) OR Run fast! (Action 7B)*>

Action 7A: Hide in the Cave:

In a panic, your eye spots a cave in the rocks behind the merchants’ shop. You strain to run for it as quickly as you can and dive inside. <Advance to **Incident 4A**>

Action 7B: Run Fast!

With no other options, you decide the only thing you can do is to run as fast as you can! The sandy breeze stings your eyes as you push harder and harder...<Advance to **Incident 4B**>

Incident 4A: Chase 1:

In the darkness, you hear the merchants’ yells getting louder. You squish yourself into a crevice along the cave wall as they gallop past, nearly clipping you. You dash out of your hiding place and try to make a break for it before they notice you.

Merchant: “There’s the thief!”

They begin to charge for you. Is there any escape?! <Advance to **ARION PROTECTS**>

Incident 4B: Chase 2

As you keep running, you hear the hoofbeats thundering louder and louder. You know they will soon catch you. Several of your gems fly out of your bag onto the ground in your haste.

Is there any escape?!

<***GEM** count -= 3> <Advance to **ARION PROTECTS**>

ARION PROTECTS

As the merchants nearly catch you, you squeeze your eyes shut in fear.

That’s when you suddenly feel yourself swept off your feet. <Advance>

As you open your eyes, you realize you are draped across the back of a golden steed.

You: “Arion!”

He is thundering like lightning, galloping over the sand. His shining mane laps against you as he spirits you away.

You look back and see the awestruck faces of the merchants staring after you quickly fade into the distance.

<Advance to **PROBLEM 3**>

PROBLEM 3: ARION SAYS YOU LIED

<Somber music plays> Arion’s gallops slow into trots. Soon, he stops altogether, and you slide off his golden back. You cannot make eye contact with your friend, knowing what he must think. He huffs.

Arion: “Why did you lie to me?” <Players choose: “I Don’t Care” (**Dialogue 9A**), “I’m Sorry” (**Dialogue 9B**), “I couldn’t help it” (**Dialogue 9C**), OR “No, I didn’t!” (**Dialogue 9D**)>

Dialogue 9A: “I Don’t Care”

You stare back at Arion’s golden coat. Knowing that he is a spirit of goodness makes you uneasy, yet suddenly, you feel the guilt leave you. It falls away like the old leaves of that tree you would tend to in the fields of your village. Just thinking of it makes your skin crawl, as you think of how the sweat would pour off every day in the hot sun...how your father still called you lazy.

You bite your lip and lock eyes with your friend.

You: “Yes, I lied to you, but I don’t really care. I did what I had to do, and that’s all.”

<Advance to **Resolution A: Arion Reveals Himself--No Mercy**>

Dialogue 9B: “I’m Sorry”

You: “I’m really sorry.”

Your voice shakes, and you still can’t lift your head.

You: “I knew the truth, and I couldn’t tell you. How could I tell you that I...that I stole them from my own village shop?!”

You feel a pain stab through your chest as you admit the truth that has been buried in your mind. It mixes with the fearful emotions still lingering from what has just transpired, and you begin to cry. <Advance>

Arion: “You feel the guilt, don’t you?”

You: “Yes.”

Arion: “It hurts, doesn’t it?”

You: “Yes...a lot...”

Arion: “There is a way to fix it. You know what to do.” <Players choose “I Can’t Keep the Gems” (**Dialogue 9B1**) OR “No, I must keep the gems” (**Dialogue 9B2**)>

Dialogue 9B1: “I Must Get Rid of the Gems”

You: “I can’t keep the gems...I could’ve died back there...”

You shiver in fear, and your skin grows cold. <Advance>

You (sighing): “I must get rid of the gems. I can’t survive like this...”

The weight slightly lifts off your chest, even just through admitting it. You couldn’t keep those gems. Their expensive facets, their attractive sparkles, all represent your hopes and dreams.

But it was wrong. You couldn’t steal your way to a better future. <Advance to **Resolution**

B: I Must Repent>

Dialogue 9B2: “No, I Must Keep the Gems!”

Your face grows long with horror. You blink away the tears.

You: “No, I must keep the gems! Don’t you know what they mean to me?! I can’t get rid of them, even if it is wrong for me to have taken them.”

Your mind thinks back to those days when your father would punish you in the fields.

You flinch as you remember the sting of his hand. <Advance>

You: “Please believe that it was the only thing I could do! My father was so oppressive to me! When I saw those gems they had in the traveling shop outside my village, I saw my freedom sparkling back at me!” <Advance to **Resolution C: Arion Forgives You**>

Dialogue 9C: “I Couldn’t Help It!”

You fidget, your hands instinctively snapping to the bag of gems. You untie and retie the laces. Arion just waits patiently, and the tightness in your chest is overwhelming, just like those days when your father would punish you in the fields, apart from the yelling. You flinch as you remember the sting of his hand. You quickly shake off those feelings.

You: “I-I couldn’t help it! Please believe that! My father was so oppressive to me! When I saw those gems they had in the traveling shop outside my village, I saw my freedom sparkling back at me!” <Advance to **Resolution C: Arion Forgives You**>

Dialogue 9D: No, I Didn’t!

You: “No, I didn’t!”

You insist, but Arion just stares back at you unmoved. His dark eyes glisten like black coals.

Arion: “Are you really sure?” <Players choose: “I Don’t Care” (**Dialogue 9A**) OR “I’m sorry” (**Dialogue 9B**) OR “I Couldn’t Help It!” (**Dialogue 9C**) >

Resolution A: Arion Reveals Himself--No Mercy

Arion tilts his head and stares coldly with those dark eyes.

Arion: “Such proud words coming from someone who nearly died just now.”

You fidget, pulling your bag of gems closer.

You: “It...it doesn’t matter. It only makes me stronger.” <Advance>

You close your eyes and nod your head with sincerity. Arion is strangely quiet. All you hear is the whistle of the desert winds.

That’s when you hear a cold voice.

???: “Not strong enough.” <Advance>

Was that Arion's voice? It didn't quite sound like him. <Advance to **End 1**>

End 1: Die

You hurriedly open your eyes. All that is before you is empty sands. Arion is gone.

You gasp and look around wildly, searching for your friend. You begin to sweat as you see nothing. No one. Had he really abandoned you? Could he really hold this against you? You only did what you had to do. Anyone would do the same thing. <Advance>

You suddenly hear a hiss behind you, a guttural moan. You slowly look back.

Red eyes are staring back at you from between some large boulders, shrouded in shadow. They begin slithering closer, and a huge black serpentine head emerges. The creature hisses again, showing its fangs. You are paralyzed in fear. <Advance>

The creature moves its lips, just as Arion did, and you realize your friend's voice is coming from this beast!

Arion: "Now you realize what your quest for greed has really given you: nothing."

<Advance>

With that, the beast's head lunges at you.

A swift snap. Those powerful jaws crack. A heap of gems fall to the ground.

Another valley voyager lost forever.... <Advance to **END OF STORY**>

Resolution B: I Must Repent

Arion: "Very good, my child. You have indeed learned your lesson. What will you do now?"

You: "I...I don't know. If I return the gems to the merchants, they'll lock me away for sure. But..." <Advance>

You spy a vat of quicksand nearby. The dark, bubbling muck seems like it would decimate anything unfortunate enough to get caught within it. You glance down at your bag of gems. *<Players choose Throw Gems Into Quicksand (Action 8A) OR Return Gems to Merchants (Action 8B)>*

Action 8A: Throw Gems Into Quicksand

You run to the edge of the quicksand. The gunk bubbles, almost eager to engulf your treasures, your dreams of seeing that beautiful city. *<Advance>*

You unfasten the strap of your bag and cradle it in your hands. You can't look at the beautiful gems inside--those purples, pinks, yellows and golds...each one step closer to that luxurious future, never having to work in those fields again or be beaten by your father.

You hear Arion sigh behind you. It almost sounds like a hiss. *<Advance>*

Arion: "Are you going to do it, young traveler?" *<Players choose I Can't! (Action 8A1) OR I'll Do It! (Action 8A2)>*

Action 8A1: I Can't!

Your hands clutch onto your bag, fingers cramping as they bury into the fabric. You can't let go.

You: "I can't do it!"

Your words seem to echo off the canyon walls in the distance. You feel tears stinging your eyes. You feel evil, unclean. All of this was so wrong, but you couldn't let it go. *<Advance to End 1>*

Action 8A2: I'll Do It!

Your hands clutch onto your bag, fingers cramping as they bury into the fabric.

But you know what you must do. <Advance>

You squeeze your eyes shut and turn your head away. Your arms fling forward, as though they were possessed by an outside force. But you know that force is goodness. <Advance>

<***GEM count** = 0> The bag hurtles out of your grasp, making an arc through the air before landing with a slap into the muck. You watch the gunk slowly engulf your future.

<Advance>

You stand there silently for several moments. A hiss makes you jump, like an angry snake is nearby.

Yet nothing seems to be there--not even Arion! You glance around, but your friend has gone. <Advance to **End 2**>

End 2: Return to Village

<Hopeful music plays> You wonder for a moment what has happened. It felt strange, not like a departure of a friend. Maybe he had fulfilled his purpose, or had not done so at all...

You shrug and begin wandering, not really sure where you are going. <Advance>

Soon, you see the shacks of your old village in the distance. Somehow, you knew you would end up back here. Why did the way home seem so much easier than it had been to leave?

You step into the dusty streets and are soon met by a crowd, all buzzing with excitement that you have returned. In the huddle of people, your father's face immediately jumps out. He leaps forward and wraps his arms around you with a squeeze, like a real parent would.

<Advance>

Strangely, you have this feeling. It flutters inside like the butterflies soaring off into the bright blue sky.

Maybe things will be different now... <Advance to **END OF STORY**>

Action 8B: Return Gems to Merchants

You glance back at the quicksand and shake your head. You knew had to face your problems, not bury them away. Even if it was dangerous, even if it meant you had to go to prison...

It would be freedom compared to the suffocation you were feeling now. <Advance>

You climb onto Arion and ride back to the large merchant shop. Their horses, those ones that had been chasing you are tied up outside. You know they have returned.

You slide off of his golden coat and slowly creep towards the merchants' tent. Every step seems forced and afraid. Your stomach twists as you remember their shouts and how they chased you. You wonder what would become of you...or could you really just escape now...?

<Advance>

You hear Arion sigh behind you. It almost sounds like a hiss.

Arion: "Are you going to do it, young traveler?" <Players choose **I Can't!** (**Action 8B1**)

OR I'll Do It! (**Action 8B2**)>

Action 8B1: "I Can't!"

You unfasten your pouch and hold it in your hands. Your fingers cramp as they bury into the fabric. You can't let go.

You: "I can't do it!"

Your words seem to echo off the canyon walls in the distance. You jump at the loudness of the sound, and you freeze in fear, hoping the merchants didn't hear you.

Luckily, no one emerges, but you run away into the desert, anyway. Tears sting your eyes. You feel evil, unclean. All of this was so wrong, but you can't let it go. <Advance to **End 1**>

Action 8B2: "I'll Do It!"

You stand there for several moments, within paces of the tent, thinking it over. A sigh escapes. You nod.

You: "I'll do it..." <Advance to **End 3**>

End 3: Imprisoned But Alive and Guilt-Free

You walk towards the entrance and hear a hiss. Was it Arion? You look back, but he has gone. You supposed he must not need to guide you anymore. <Advance>

You tiptoe inside. Hearing you, the merchants immediately leap up and begin to run towards you, shouting and cursing.

You quake in fear, swiftly pulling the bag of gems off and holding it out shakily in front of you. <Advance>

<***GEM count** = 0> The next thing you knew, you were riding in a wooden cart with bars on its windows off to some cold cell somewhere. You sighed, at least you hadn't been hurt.

The weight of guilt begins to fall away with every clack and clatter of the cart's wheels. You smile softly. You did the right thing... <Advance to **END OF STORY**>

Resolution C: Arion Forgives You

Arion tilts his head. His dark eyes sparkle softly.

Arion (gently sighing): "I understand. I can see that your situation was a difficult one."

You look up at him, still shaking in fear. Luckily, he doesn't make a move towards you.

<Advance>

Arion: "I forgive you of your lies. Good often comes out of things that were once evil.

Let us continue. The end is near."

You breathe a sigh of relief, glad to be spared the punishment you were used to. Choose the path: <Players choose Canyon 1 (**Path 8A**) OR Canyon 2 (**Path 8B**)>

Path 8A: Rocky Canyon:

<Adventure music plays> You see the canyon walls begin shrinking lower and lower.

The path is taking an upward climb. The end must be close.

However, the way is rocky, and you feel the sharpest stones on your tired feet. But you can't give up now! You press on. <Advance to **Resolution D**>

Path 8B: Serene Canyon

<Adventure music plays> The path climbs higher and higher out of the Valley. You can already smell the luxuries of the city. <Advance to **END OF THE VALLEY: A CAVE?**>

Resolution D: Reach the City

<Hopeful but somber music plays> The path climbs higher and higher out of the Valley. You can already smell the luxuries of the city.

You see the golden hills begin to part. The sun reflects off of something metallic, shimmering. There are the buildings of iron you had only ever heard about. They glow like the brightest treasures, like those gems that brought you here, like the spirits of goodness. <Advance to **End 4**>

End 4: Reach City

You look over to Arion, knowing that none of this could ever compare to your friend's glory. But he has gone. Vanished into the sands of the valley.

You glance around, seeing only dust. You hear something--a hiss? No, it must have been the wind. *<Advance>*

He had helped you this far, and you didn't even get to say goodbye. You smiled, remembering how merciful he had been to you.

A strange pain bundles in your chest, a weight. It almost feels like your bag of gems has migrated to your stomach. You try to shake the feeling, yet it sticks like the muck of the fields always would on your cracked skin.

You look down at your bag, letting your fingers drift inside and slide across the surfaces of the *<NUMBER OF GEMS*>* gems that you have collected. You grasp one in your palm. It feels colder, maybe heavier than it truly was. *<Advance>*

You frown and turn back to the magnificence of the city, its shining buildings, its glittering blue bay, its sparkling promises. You thought this moment would be the happiest one of your whole life.

Yet somehow...it was a little less than what you had hoped for. *<Advance to **END OF STORY**>*

END OF THE VALLEY: A CAVE?

At last, you and Arion have come to the end of the Valley. The ground is sloping upward, higher and higher. Finally, you see it. *<Advance, creepy music plays>*

But wait...As you scale to the top of the slope, the city is not in sight. You cannot even see out of the Valley. A rocky hill blocks your path. Pitch blackness floods a cave ahead of you.

It descends into the side of the hill for what looks like an eternity. You look around. You had never heard that a cave led out of the Valley. <Advance to **ARION ACTS STRANGE**>

ARION ACTS STRANGE

Arion: “Why are you stunned? Didn’t you guess this was where the Valley ends?”

<Players choose: “Is this it?” (**Dialogue 10A**) OR “Where is the city?” (**Dialogue 10B**)>

Dialogue 10A:

You: “Is this it? Is this the exit out of the Valley?” <Advance to **Arion Response 1**>

Dialogue 10B:

You: “Where is the city? Where is my new home?” <Advance to **Arion Response 2**>

Arion Response 1:

Arion: “Yes, this is the end of the Valley. But it is not the exit.” <Advance>

You: “What? I know there is an exit!”

Arion: “There is no exit out of the Valley...at least for you.” <Advance to **Resolution E**>

Arion Response 2:

Arion: “Your new home? Oh, no, young traveler. Your new home is not in that city.”

You: “What are you talking about? That’s where you were taking me.”

Arion: “No, your new home is here.” <Advance to **Resolution E**>

Resolution E: Arion Reveals and Explains

You: “What are you saying?! Arion what’s wrong?” <Advance>

You: “Why are you looking at me like that? Why are you acting so strange?”

Arion: “Acting strangely? Strange for what? The spirit of goodness that you think I am?”

A cold laugh escapes from the horse’s wide jaws as you try to grasp what is happening.

Arion: “You have been so foolish, young traveler. You made it too easy for me. You believed every lie, even more than I believed yours.” <Advance to **End 5**>

End 5: Die in Cave

You leap back against the cave wall, startled, as Arion’s body begins to mutate. The shimmering golden hair melts, morphing into thick black scales. Those lithe limbs dissolve into a long, ropelike body. His muzzle distorts into a serpentine stare. This new Arion lets out a hiss and shows his fangs.

Arion: “Didn’t you guess this was how your voyage would end? That your evil deeds would never lead you anywhere? Some mortals are granted second chances, but others like you never live to see them.” <Advance>

A swift snap. Those powerful jaws crack. A heap of gems fall to the ground.

Another valley voyager lost forever... <Advance to **END OF STORY**>

END OF STORY

List of Team Roles

Story editor(s): Tara, Yamira

Coders: Tara

UI and Button designer(s) (if we can’t just use text on the buttons as the buttons themselves):

Rose

Find free sound effects/music: Rose - [SFX plan](#)

Logo design: Maisha