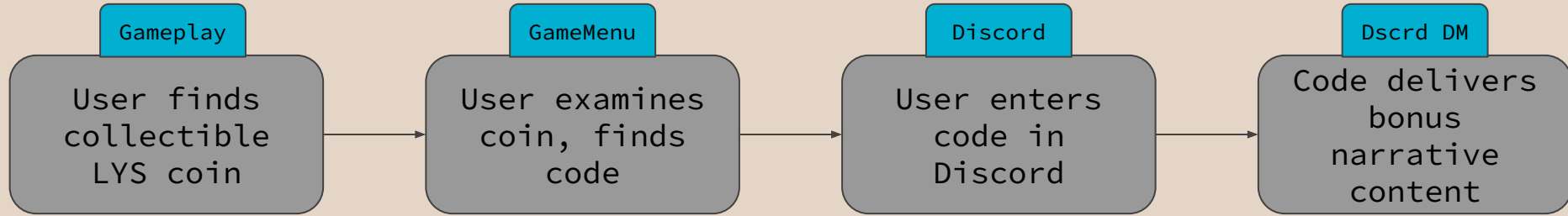


Awakening Coins

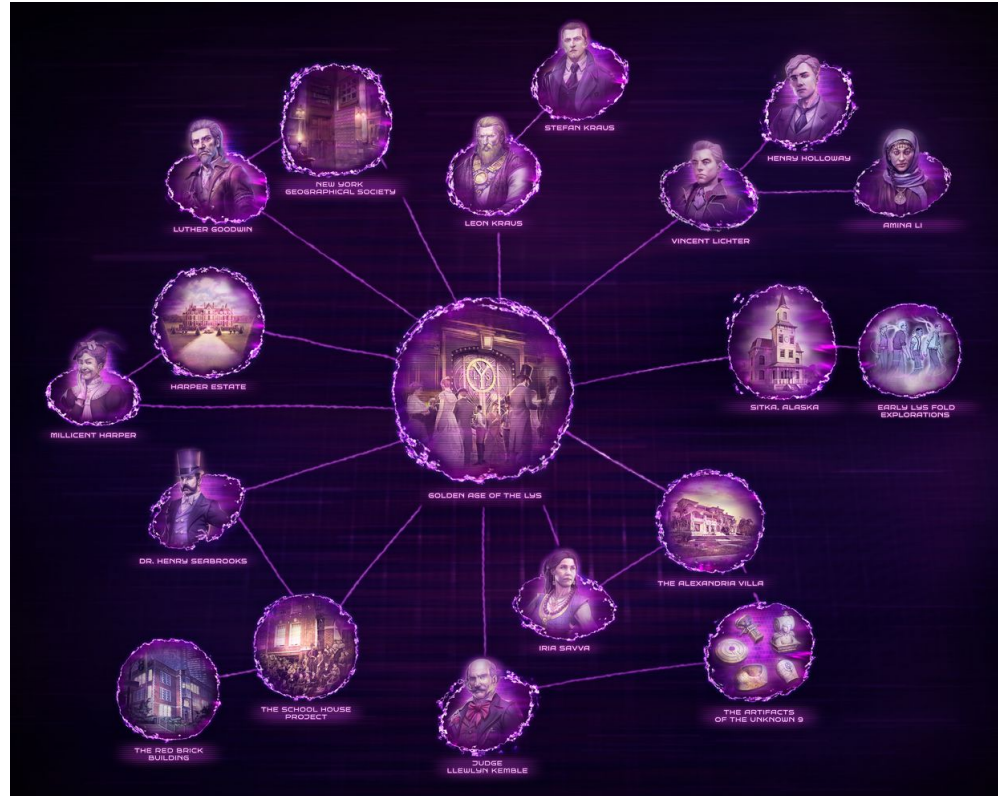
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Simplified User Journey



Narrative subroutine designed to reinforce engagement behaviour.

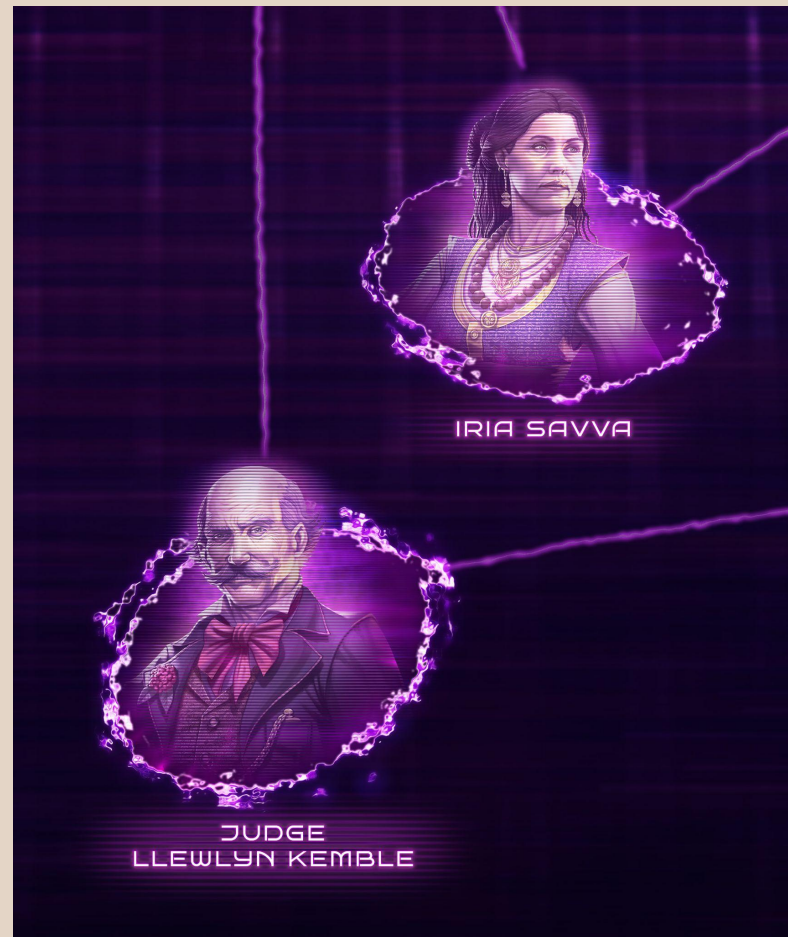
LYS Coin Collection



IRIA SAVVA

“Many thanks to Iria Savva for her efforts in loaning this magnificent ‘Stella Machina’ that her Cypriot forebears have maintained for millennia; the heart breaks to think that without them all we’d have is that utterly ruined replica recovered off the coast of Antikythera not long ago.”

– Judge Llewlyn Kemble



IRIA SAVVA (cont)

During the Golden Age, LYS chapters all over the world had an insatiable hunger to study the ancient artifacts that their comrades from other countries had previously kept hidden. This hunger was only ever sated by the efforts of Quaestors like Iria Savva and Judge Llewlyn Kemble.

Cyprus is home to some of the earliest recorded human activity and is rich in archaeological remains and antiquities. Over the centuries it has also passed through the hands of many conquering empires. Quaestors from Cyprus have historically taken it upon themselves to seek out relics of the past, preserve and protect them from occupying forces. Such is the heritage of Iria Savva, the LYS's foremost expert in acquiring, transporting, and securing historical artifacts. Born in another time and place, she would have made an excellent spy; she could go from charming and sociable to focused and hypercompetent—from buddy buddy to badass boss—at the drop of a hat.

Savva's work made these antiquities available, to the touring lecturers who were the primary way that cutting edge research and secret ancient wisdom were disseminated to LYS chapters. These experts in various fields became de facto celebrities in Society circles, and none more so than Llewlyn Kemble. As a barrister, Kemble had accrued years of experience in rhetoric, and Society audiences loved his poise and passion at the lectern. His celebrated presentation, "10 Artifacts of the Unknown 9" toured on and off for five years, interrupted only by the Great Divide.

In addition to being a gifted storyteller, Kemble's enormous appetite for learning and his extraordinary memory make him an authority on multiple subjects. Long before the LYS forms, Kemble is well-versed in theories about the 9; he is a member of a secret society who trace their lineage to pre-Roman era Druids and claim to have had contact with the 9 themselves, albeit centuries ago. He's authored several books, some for public consumption, including *Magick in the Isles*, from *Merlin to Math ap Mathonwy*, and others strictly for the Society, including *Paradise Reforgotten: Tragedy, Atrocity and Hope in the Great Divide*.

NEW YORK GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

“We in the GS have uncovered others like ourselves in locations far and near: seekers and searchers, actively pursuing neither fame nor fortune, but answers to the questions that have plagued humankind since time immemorial. ”

- Millicent Harper



NEW YORK GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY (cont)

Most of the exploration that one can read about in history books is a tool of imperialism; a kingdom funds an expedition, territories are “discovered” and claimed in the name of the king, often with disastrous consequences for the newly “found” people of those lands.

But there is another kind of exploration, one that seeks not to exert dominion, but to learn and enrich the spirit. Headquartered in some swanky now-forgotten explorers' lodge digs in Manhattan, the fellows of the 19th century New York Geographical Society are these kinds of explorers. They are scholars and sportsmen who see that a host of developments have made the world smaller, more interconnected than ever and recognize it as an opportunity to perform the kind of soul-enriching travel and cross-cultural exchange that was simply never possible before. They even call themselves Quaestors.

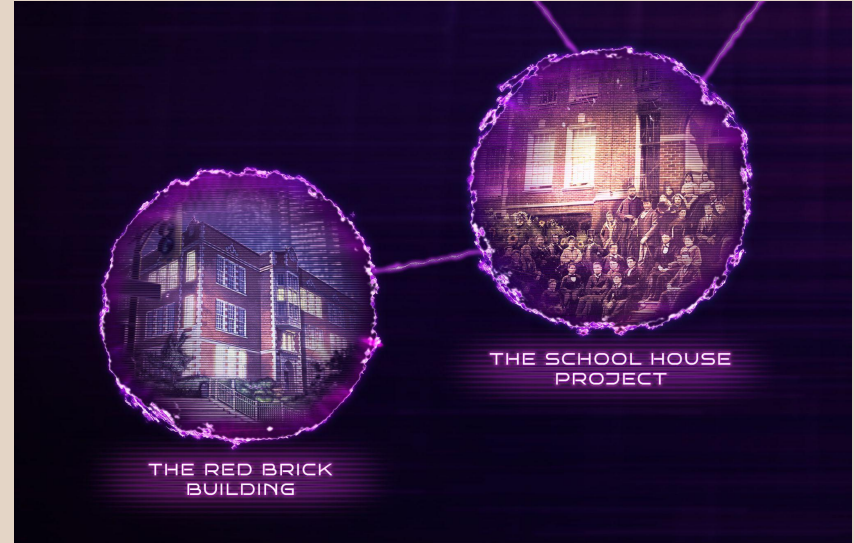
The NYGS disbanded in the same year that the Leap Year Society was formed. This is no coincidence; the founders of the LYS were NYGS members, and it is there that they first had an inkling of the sort of fellowship that could be fostered within the right setting. The Golden Age hatched in 1888, but it incubated for roughly a decade before that within the NYGS. It was there that Luther Goodwin first met Millicent Harper and others who would become cornerstones of the early LYS.

If Millicent Harper was unofficially known as the boss in the back office of the LYS, Luther was the manager on the floor, making sure that everyone felt seen, that he was aware of big problems, and present for the most important moments. Without leadership so preternaturally suited to the task, the Golden Age never would have materialized for the LYS.

THE SCHOOL HOUSE PROJECT

“...a fellow [Quaestor] named of Silas emigrated from Washington state and joined us ... He was rather what you might call today “shell shocked.” ... He opened up to us. I’m bound to keep confidence, but suffice to say we quietly forbid all our local associates from visiting the Seattle Schoolhouse. “

– Jake M., co-founder of the Vancouver, British Columbia Leap Year Society Chapter.



THE SCHOOL HOUSE PROJECT (cont)

Neighbors loved the friendly, smiling folks who lived in the old, converted red brick schoolhouse, even if they did gossip and whisper about the perceived impropriety of it all; the exact nature of the residents' relationships seemed opaque and... fluid. They always grew lovely sunflowers though! The old timers of the neighborhood swore that things had only gotten better since they set up shop there too.

The good vibes they felt were by design. The Schoolhouse Project was an experiment to see how focused intentionality, amplified by liminal contact with the Fold (which itself was facilitated by herbal preparations) could indirectly influence the thoughts and actions of nearby people.

One Dr. Henry Seabrooks was the designer of the experiment and the leader of the group. It was to be his magnum opus, the culmination of all his research into intentionality and plant medicines, supercharged by some LYS learnings about the Fold. For a while it was just that, and they seemed poised to make important discoveries. But somehow, Seabrooks developed the air of a cult leader, and the group's activities became increasingly problematic, until... they all vanished.

The exact methodologies of these experiments have long been forgotten, but a recent discovery could change that. After another group of residents disappeared from the red brick building, the LYS investigated and recovered Dr. Seabrooks's personal journal! If there was more than quackery being practiced, the LYS will soon know.

HENRY HOLLOWAY

Vincent Lichter was a mere child when the LYS formed, but there from the start. First chance he got, he showed that he had preternatural Diving skill. People looked to him as a leader, even though it was a nonhierarchical organization. The Golden Boy of the Golden Age was what brought it all tumbling down. No revolutionary works alone, however, and Ascendant numbers eventually grew exponentially. Two Golden Age Quaestors in particular were closer than others to the man and had an outsized effect on him: Henry Holloway and Amina Li.



HENRY HOLLOWAY (cont)

The son of a banker in an east coast American family, Holloway is first introduced to the LYS by his mentor while studying physics. Before long he meets rising LYS star Vincent Lichter. Though from two very different backgrounds—poor Swedish villager vs rich big city boy—the two nevertheless found that they were kindred spirits.

They connected over a passion for discovery, and a keen interest in the Fold. Some might say that it was Holloway's charming, refined ways that smoothed over Vincent's rougher edges, and gave him his taste for fine clothes and such.

For a time in the early days of the Ascendant project, Holloway is Lichter's right hand man and spends much time learning from Dr. Matos.

Instead of developing his Diving abilities or following in Matos's footsteps, Holloway eventually decides he can be of more use on an operational level; his background opens doors to the corridors of power, allowing him to secure donations and make investments for the benefit of the Ascendants, while conveniently keeping him out of harm's way... and enabling him to amass a fortune of his own. After Vincent Lichter's defeat, Henry stops actively participating in Ascendant activities, though he never loses his faith in the cause, or his fascination with the Fold.

Amina Li first comes to the LYS Diving project in Alaska to help document the proceedings and provide research support. Like many, she is drawn to the fearless Diver Vincent Lichter. She becomes such a supporter of his that, when he is depleted by his relentless Diving schedule, she uses an Umbric artifact to transfer her Am directly to him, like an Umbric blood transfusion. This has the side effect of bringing the two close on a very deep level, closer than most people will ever experience in their lives. Over and over again she performs the ritual, until what began as a precious exchange between dear friends became a greedy, entitled transaction, and Amina would have no more. Vincent discarded her; by that time, he had changed, seemingly corrupted by his own ambition, locked into a path that would culminate in the Great Divide.

SITKA, ALASKA

One of the first major resolutions the LYS came to was that they would allocate resources to establish a site dedicated to the study of Terminals and Diving. The society eventually settles on Sitka, Alaska for several reasons: a small delegation of Tlingit (indigenous people of the pacific Northwest coast) Quaestors share accounts of a powerful Terminal there; it was relatively remote; and the Klondike gold rush could help provide a good cover story for their activities.



SITKA, ALASKA (cont)

At Sitka, Dr. Emilio Matos collaborates with Divers, most notably Vincent Lichter, to develop technology that could help them probe the Deep Fold. Motivated to formalize and improve Diving techniques, Vincent establishes a training program for Divers, dubbing it “the Ascendants project.” The initiatives at Sitka were a huge success—if one overlooks the utter catastrophe that the Ascendants would eventually become.

Even outside of Sitka, a culture of curiosity, mutual support and experimentation characterizes the Golden Age explorations of the Fold in LYS circles. Even those who are more focused on other pursuits like studying the Sahin language or the pushing frontiers of physics know at least the basic theory behind Peeking, if not Diving.

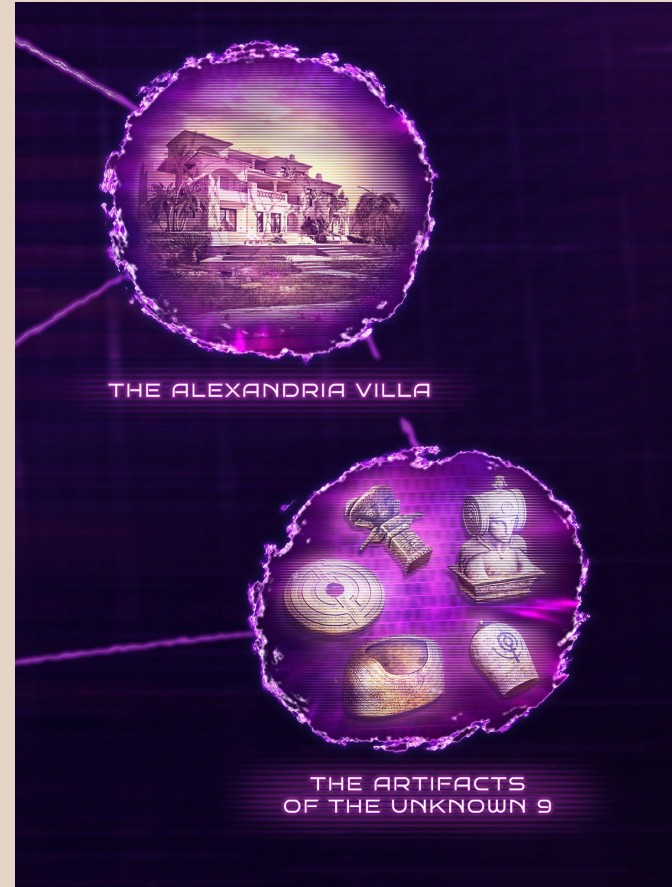
Despite this ubiquity, there was nevertheless a considerable degree of secrecy around the techniques used and discoveries made. The Great Divide pushed everything in the already hush-hush world of the LYS even further into the shadows.

As for the Sitka Diving research site, after the Ascendants remove everything of value, they hardly set foot in Alaska again. The local Tlingit Quaestors are left to clean up the mess and dismantle the buildings so that no trace of LYS activity remains. They then perform ceremonies and rituals to cleanse and consecrate the ground, and let nature reclaim the site. It’s not clear whether the Tlingit ever communicate with the LYS again.

ALEXANDRIA VILLA

“There is a historical narrative that civilizations form seemingly from nothing, miraculously. Progress is slow, and incremental, save for rare innovations that spur leaps forward, coming from we-know-not-where. Miracles!... There is another narrative which builds upon and subverts this last one with the insight that learned outside actors, sometimes called ‘Watchers’ are often the source of these supposed miracles. We know these Watchers to be the Unknown 9... These artifacts are testaments to their interventions. ”

- Judge Llewlyn Kemble



ALEXANDRIA VILLA (cont)

Scattered along the timeline of human history (and prehistory) are relics that bear the glyphs of the Unknown 9 themselves like signatures. The LYS, and other Quaestor groups before them, have always felt that these artifacts should be protected for multiple reasons, and that's what they've done. It's why you won't find any in a museum, even if similar items not bearing these marks are commonplace.

A selection of these artifacts were known to most in the LYS thanks largely to Llewlyn Kemble's travelling Golden Age lectures that displayed them. After the outbreak of violence in the Great Divide these items became high profile treasures, and both sides put resources into securing them. The Ascendants eventually claimed them all. When the LYS recovered them again, a secure hiding spot was imperative.

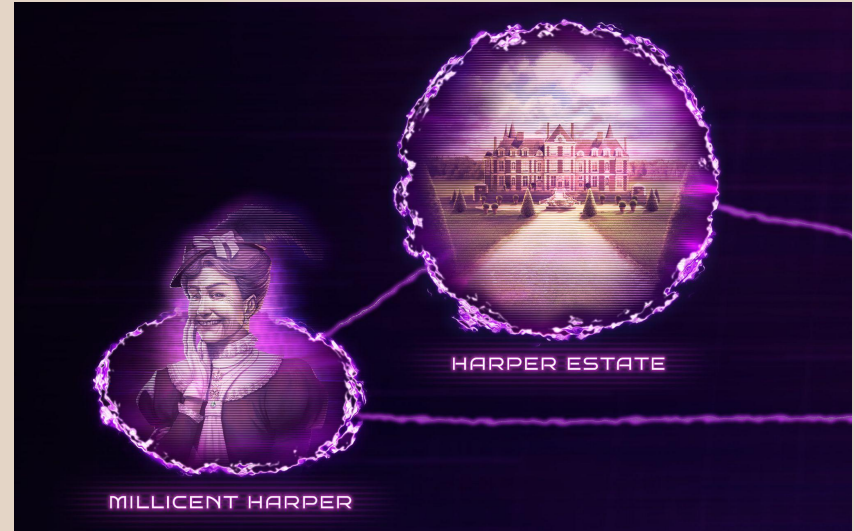
On a seemingly abandoned street in central Alexandria, Egypt a nineteenth century mansion waits behind a crumbling stone wall. Within is a scene of decayed elegance and faded glamor: moldy frescoes, rotting period furniture, and velvet curtains that still reek of cigars long extinguished. The owners of the Villa were well known in Alexandrian high society as lovers of illusions and curiosities, and as hosts of oft-debaucherous parties. Their collection of curiosities were sprinkled about the house, and many still are to this day.

What was not known to high society though was the owners' affiliation with the Leap Year Society. Fewer still knew of the secure storage area they added to their basement during the Great Divide. When Iria Savva learned of it, she arranged for all the recovered artifacts to be sent there, hidden inside novelties and magicians' props. The Villa would go on to house other important items over the decades, such as an extremely advanced and helpful AI voice assistant.

HARPER ESTATE

“ She was an amazing woman. She traveled the world and advocated for the equality of all people long before it was politically correct to do so. She wore men’s pants and traipsed through jungles and drank hard liquor in whatever tavern she wished. “

– Annie Harper



HARPER ESTATE

Known to the world as the heiress and widow of the late American industrialist Jericho Harper, Millicent's private life is far more than footnote in her iconic husband's biography. She is a consummate adventurer, an explorer of both the inner and outer world, at a time when those pursuits were far more dangerous—and off-limits for women—than today.

In the 1880s, she expeditions with some fellow NYGS Quaestors to the Himalayas where they have a lifechanging experience of the Unknown. Deeply moved by this revelation, they soon put in motion the formation of the Leap Year Society.

Set amongst the rolling hills and dales of eastern Pennsylvania, the sprawling chateau of the Harper Estate becomes one of the LYS's de facto headquarters. Millicent oversaw renovations and expansions that turned the house from a tycoon's mansion in a multipurpose facility that could house visiting Quaestors, and host lectures and workshops... and of course, top-secret areas accessible strictly on a need-to-know basis.

Behind-the-scenes work of this sort took up most of Millicent's time. Ironically, establishing a society devoted to her passions doomed her to a life where she could hardly engage in those passions directly. Nevertheless, she would say it was worth it.

DR. HENRY SEABROOKS

“Nothing is really black or white in this world.
Sometimes our own limits distract us from the
truth.”

- Dr. Henry Seabrooks



DR. HENRY SEABROOKS

In the 1890s, a medicine show doctor calling himself Dr. Seabrooks catches the eye of some San Francisco LYS members. His salesmanship and theatricality belie what the Quaestors consider intriguing original theories about the connection between mind, body, and spirit that overlap with some discourse within the LYS. Eventually he is inducted into the Society, where he incorporates ideas from visiting LYS lecturers into his own theories.

He convinces several of his fellow Quaestors to conduct an experiment involving meditation, herbal preparations, and intentionality.

The results were promising, but after his colleagues take exception to some of his methods and learn more about his goals, the San Francisco LYS cut him out of their activities, and he takes his act back up the coast. After some time off the radar, he pops up in Washington state, where his LYS coin gains him access to the Seattle chapter; soon, they are supporting a large lifestyle experiment of his, based out of an old schoolhouse.

One common critique from LYS historians about the Golden Age is that it reflects the characteristics of a young organization still refining its practices, such as recruiting. Today, it is unlikely that someone with a background in a dubious industry like medicine shows would be considered for membership.

LEON KRAUS

Berlin was a hub for various esoteric and mystical groups in the late nineteenth century. When Luther Goodwin came to town in 1887 looking for influential Quaestors to invite to New York, everyone he asked pointed him to the man at the center of the hub who was the leader of various groups: Leon Kraus.



COIN 20

— — —

LEON KRAUS

LEON KRAUS (cont)

— — —

Goodwin found him imposing, knowledgeable, and cold but inquisitive. Kraus was of two minds about the pitch. On one hand he was skeptical that such a diverse group could find common ground, learn to trust each other, and cooperate. On the other, he saw a consolidation of knowledge (read: power) which he could use to benefit his interests.

Special coins were sometimes minted to honor the achievements of one or more members. One such coin was given to Leon Kraus for extraordinary bravery.

During one Society expedition to a suspected Terminal, a Rifter took control of one of the initiates. Then another, and another. The three were crazed and violent, and injured a few of those who could not get away.

But Kraus used his physicality to subdue the Rifters and his commanding presence to eventually compel them to retreat from their commandeered bodies.

Though his individualism sometimes puts him at odds with the general ethos of the LYS, he nevertheless stays loyal to them in the Great Divide. In fact, his influence in Berlin is such that no one in the community dares cross him, making the city a sort of LYS stronghold.

The Ascendants probably would have been a better ideological fit for Kraus, but he detested the idea of being subordinate to Vincent—or anyone.

As the child of a domineering and authoritative father (Leon), Stefan Kraus was primed to rebel against his parents in some way. Coming of age as he did during the Great Divide, it's perhaps not surprising that he chose to start down a path that would be squarely, dangerously at odds with a cause his father had invested so much into: the Leap Year Society. A couple of decades later, Stefan would engineer the revival of the Ascendants.

FINAL ENTRY

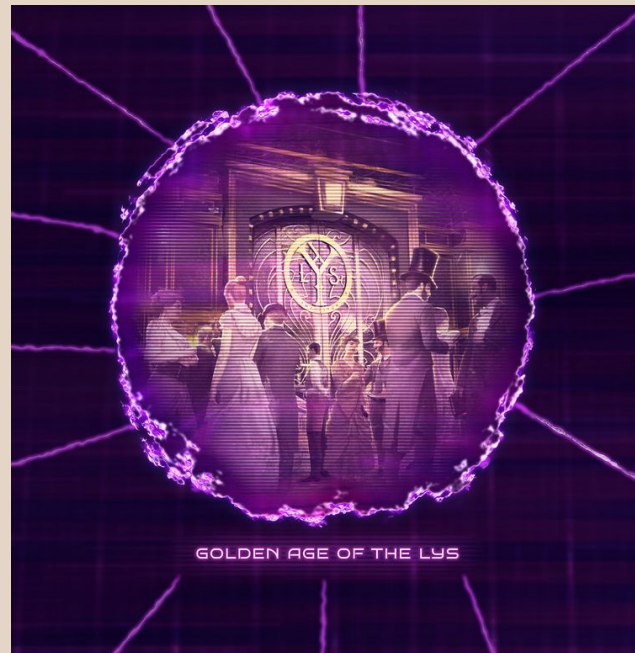
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The years between 1888 and 1908 were an incredible time for the Leap Year Society.

Quaestors of all stripes—mystics, scientists, secret societies and more—formerly accustomed to toiling in isolated groups now found themselves united to a secret global network of likeminded people through the Leap Year Society.

Regular events, both local and international, facilitated a free sharing of ideas and research that advanced their collective understanding of the Fold, Umbric abilities, the Unknown 9, and the nature of reality.

The Great Divide put a tragic, painful end to this golden age, and nothing was ever the same after.



CONCLUSION

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You have learned various stories about important actors that were active during the Golden Age era of the Leap Year Society.

- A **doctor** who could expand on his theories with strange experimentations.

- A **socialite** who provides resources for the Ascendants.

- A **smuggler** who will go to the end of the world to find artifacts.

- A **hero** who would go against his family to stay loyal to his values.

- An **explorer** who seeks to enrich the mind of the world.

- A **luminary** who fosters like-minded people to encourage more adventures.

- A **Diver** who developed techniques to ease the exploration of the Fold.

- A **lecturer** who secures artifacts, no matter the risks.

- A **sunflower** who found a tight-knit community that want to connect with the Fold.

You will become one of the last humans that remembers the Golden Age Leap Year Society.

“[The golden age LYS] activities—like clandestine archaeological digs, or readings of ancient mystery school texts in palace catacombs—sound like a party I wish I could have been at.”

-Edric Ertekin III