

Introduction:

[Character Name], you are a new member of the household of Miss Hawthorne, a rich and eccentric woman known for taking in young girls as her wards. What isn't so obvious is that her wards are young witches in training, her apprentices in the study of magic. You've only been here for about a week, but you've already learned the basic rules of magic, and of the house.

Tonight, Miss Hawthorne is out at a social event, so the housekeeper, Mrs. Bellflower, puts you and the other girls to bed. It's a beautiful, quiet night, and you sleep soundly...for a while, until a cold breeze rouses you once more. You can just make out the time, 11:24, by the moonlight coming in through the closed window.

Quietly, you wrap yourself in your blanket, creep past your sleeping cohort, and tiptoe down the grand front stairs.

The house is almost silent, save the snoring of an exhausted Mrs. Bellflower...and...a giggle? You move closer to investigate, past the lesson room with "Knowledge is Power" inscribed over the door, and to the back door of the house which leads into the garden.

Finally, you can make out the people on the back stoop. Some random boy from the neighborhood, and Vivian? Alone with a strange boy, outside the house, at night?! Definitely not acceptable behavior by Miss Hawthorne's standards. Any other girl you might have left alone, but not Vivian. Not Vivian, who has already made your life here a living hell. This is an opportunity, so, with bated breath, you wait.

Finally, the boy leaves, dashing out of the side gate after receiving a scandalous cheek peck from Vivian.

How do you confront her?

... "Just another one of Miss Hawthorne's talentless charity-cases." Infuriated by this insult, you lunge at Vivian, but she nimbly steps aside, letting you fall hard onto the hard stone of the stoop. You close your eyes, trying to hold back the tears, and hear the sound of the door closing and the *click* of its lock.

"You little sneak!" Vivian hisses at you through the door, "just wait until Miss Hawthorne gets back! You'll be in more trouble than old cheating Mary Fernweather! That'll teach you to spy on me!"

Miss Hawthorne could come back anytime, and you don't even want to think about what might happen if you're not back in bed before she does.

The Items:

The door: A large, ornate double-door with a pair of heavy door-knockers, sure to wake up anyone inside. The left one also squeaks terribly. Heavily bolted. Hopeless.

The stairs: They are wide and made of stones, held together with a combination of mortar and gravity. At the top of the stairs is a small metal bowl with the letter J on it. Listening, there is a hollow noise coming from one of them, and when you pry up the stone, there is a little hollow inside containing a huge collection of hag stones!

The path: Largely gravel, but lined with bigger rocks, the path leads straight down from the stairs into a loop around the fountain. On further investigation, you notice that the stones framing the gravel path are rounded and smooth, and of a light grey color. Dipping the border stones in the fountain: see handout #413

The fountain: It's small, but stately; consisting of several tiers, each spilling water onto the level below it. On further investigation, you see a plaque on the fountain. "Even the sharpest knife sometimes needs a whetstone." Looking into the fountain, there are no coins in the base of the fountain, but there does seem to be a small, rounded and smooth, dark grey rock. Removing the rock, you see a portion of it that is a familiar light grey color, that forms the letters "T-H-E".

The statues: Around the garden are seven statues that seem to be various roman deities. Examining their hands, they are in various poses, with some holding objects or embracing each other. Looking at the palms, none of the palms are fully visible. They are all hidden from you. Casting the spell for them to open their palms: JANUS HAS THE KEY

The bench: It's a combination of wood and iron, with stained-glass designs of the lunar phases set into the back of it. Looking for a blue moon, the full moon in the center is a brilliant blue color. Looking closer, it easily pops out of its place to rest in your hand.

The sundial: A very unusual sundial, this one. It has no numbers. Only the letters of the alphabet written on its two concentric rings. On further inspection, you notice the rings can rotate independently.

The large tree: This tree provides shade to all that rest beneath its bows. It also has a heart carved into its trunk with "L + Q" scratched in the middle of it.

The cluster of small trees: At first they appear to be entirely mundane, but looking closer, you realize their commonplace appearance was only to hide the cellar window behind them. Looking at the window, it is unfortunately locked, but there is a key-hole.

The flower beds: They hold a varied collection of plants, some of which are beautiful, all of which are useful ingredients in spells, potions, and concoctions of any sort. A pile of uprooted markers lies near them.

The markers: white ivy, white begonias, white sticky catchfly, purple heather, purple rosemary, purple thorn-apple, yellow witch-hazel, yellow snap-dragon, yellow pansies.

Sensory interactions: sight- colors, climbing plant (ivy), spiky fruits (thorn-apple); smell- sweet smell (rosemary), piney smell (heather); touch- sticky coating (sticky catchfly), one of them bites (snap-dragon); hearing- a faint cackle (witch-hazel)

The hedge: Functionally useful for keeping prying eyes out of magical business; the hedge is also a favorite residence for birds, particularly due to how much hair, string, and ribbon is caught in it from the house's occupants.

The wall of the house: The wall is red brick, marching in perfectly uniform lines... Except for *that one*. Looking closer, the mortar around it has been scraped away. Pulling it out, there is a space inside the wall, hidden by this missing brick. Inside is a book.

The book: It looks like an old textbook from the classroom. On the cover is written a strange collection of letters [see handout R]. The inside seems to be entirely blank, except for the initials M.F. inside the front cover. There is a single dog-eared page. Using the blue moon glass, you can now see that this is a textbook of spells! The dog-eared page marks the spell "awaken stone". Making a bracelet of various components and tying it to a statue or other stone figure, the stone will then grant you one request. To make the bracelet: string, adder stones*, snap-dragon, heather, begonia, witch hazel.

**a note in the margins reads: Have you lost your hag stones? Don't pull out your hair! Just listen close for the hollow [smudged out].*

Calling Janus: can be accomplished in whatever way feels appropriate, ideally with the squeaky door knocker, but anything else players come up with is likely good as well. When he arrives, there is a glint of metal at his neck. A key attached to his collar. Easily retrieved. Fits in the cellar window. The room is solved!