

Welcome to the third episode of the seventh game of Follow the Leader! In this episode we continue and conclude our game of The Quiet Year, by Avery Alder. If you're here and you haven't listened to the first two episodes, you might want to go back, or skim the episode summaries. The players in this episode are Sam, Alix, Kales, and Dora. (Direct quotes from the players are highlighted in their colors.)

Warning for multiple descriptions of plants growing out of people in this episode. They have been tagged.

## AUTUMN (1:50)

### FIRST WEEK

The card offers a choice between someone sabotaging a project or someone being caught trying to sabotage a project. Sam tells us that a rowdy youngster takes a torch to the dick obelisk and all the plants we were investigating are gone. They thought that they might have been connected to the wights. "Did it? Who knows."

For his action, Sam decides to start a project to put out some more crab pots.

"Everything on this map looks like a dick." "I don't know what you're talking about."

### SECOND WEEK (4:05)

The card tells us that a natural disaster strikes the area, and we either focus on getting everyone to safety or we focus on protecting our supplies. Alix tells us that we focus on getting everyone to safety, and the project that Sam just started fails, as a huge summer storm comes in off the ocean and destroys all his crabpots. We also lose our abundance of light, as the storm makes everything really dark and regular lights don't really work anymore.

The forest exploration project we started in summer finishes. We found some berries and some fruit trees. "We think we can eat it? We should figure out if we can eat it. But it's not my turn."

Alix thinks that we prayed too hard for rain and we engaged with some kind of storm magic or storm god. "We prayed too hard and Grandpa is too strong."

For their action, Alix starts a project to take our electricity and try to make electric lights, which will be a six week project

### THIRD WEEK (8:00)

The card tells us that either the strongest among us dies or the weakest among us dies. "Oh, this card." Kales tells us that the strongest among us goes to the temple to investigate the plants

and one of the plants attacks him. "RIP Strong Greg." We don't know what's happened to them until we find their body.

For their action, Kales starts a project to find out if the plants in the forest are edible "instead of having a perfectly reasonable discussion about what the fuck just happened." That's gonna be a two week project. "Someone just eats something and then waits two weeks to see what happens."

#### FOURTH WEEK (11:23)

The card offers us between a choice between a project finishing early or a group going out and discovering something previously overlooked. Dora tells us that there are some raptor buddies living in the forest now. "As if we don't have enough fucking predators." "Listen, living in a post-apocalypse with megafauna is really difficult."

For their action Dora decides to try and do some diplomacy with the mermaids to get them to help with our shellfish problem. "Three week project to seduce the mermaids." "Three week project to get them some therapy so they can bone."

#### FIFTH WEEK (15:40)

The card tells us that the community becomes obsessed with a single project, either spending more time on it or dropping everything to make it succeed. Sam tells us that mermaid diplomacy takes three weeks longer.

Kales tells us the fruit and berries are edible. "The person who ate them is like, 'I'm okay!'" We have fruit now. Just a middling amount of fruit.

For his action Sam starts a project to drive the dinosaurs out of the carnivorous forest, which will be a four week project.

#### SIXTH WEEK (19:42)

The card tells us that someone returns to the community or we find a body. Alix tells us that Daddy Crab comes back. He heard about the negotiations with the mermaids and wants in on them. "I don't think anyone knew that Daddy Crab could talk." He doesn't like to very much.

Alix tells us that we're going to build a city hall where we can have community discussions. Because it's raining so much, it's going to take five weeks.

#### SEVENTH WEEK (22:32)

The card offers us a choice between introducing a dark mystery among the members of the community or conflict flaring and causing a project to fail. Kales tells us that people are starting to question why people are doing the things that they are, such as keeping the mysterious

glowing water and the crystals around. “Hey wait a second. I think there’s some kind of conspiracy.” It’s not such a conflict that it causes a project to fail, but people are still thinking about it.

Kales discovers something new. There’s a night where it’s very, very dark-- no moon, no stars, it’s not storming so there’s no lightning. Someone goes through a space that was once open and they trip over a flight of stairs, and there is now a temple that is only “quote en quote visible” in the dark.

## EIGHTH WEEK (26:40)

The card tells us that disease spreads through the community, and we either spend the week quarantining the disease or we don’t know what to do about it. Dora tells us that we quarantine and treat the disease, so no one reduces the project dice this week.

For their action Dora holds a discussion: “What should we do about those ruins?”

- Sam: “I think we should find some way to explore them. Not sure how if we can’t see them, but we should try. Send a blind person in there!” (Kales: “Hm. That’s actually pretty smart!”)
- Alix: “I think we should shut the crab down there. That’ll serve the crab right!”
- Kales: “I think we should investigate them but not get too close. Who knows what could happen?”
- Dora: “I can’t see ‘em so I don’t care about ‘em.”

## NINTH WEEK (29:35)

The card offers a choice between harvest being plentiful or cold autumn winds driving out a threatening force on the map. Sam tells us that we have a new abundance, since Daddy Crab has brought us the gift of clams.

Alix’s electric light project is done. We have them now-- we haven’t jumped super far ahead technologically, we have to turn a crank to make them illuminate and they burn out really fast, but we have them. “The opposite of helpful with the ruins.”

Alix tells us that the storm god appears to the same kid who burned the plants off the temple and says that if we sacrifice something they might stop the constant storms. “Discover something new: the gods are here, I guess.” No one really believes them because they burned the plants earlier in autumn.

And then everyone remembers that it wasn’t Alix’s turn, actually, and Sam didn’t take an action. WHOOPS. Everyone was distracted.

For his actual action, Sam also discovers something new-- a weird old building north of the spires that looks like a skyscraper but half of it is on the ground.

## TENTH WEEK (34:50)

The card tells us that either the Parish or a small gang of marauders arrives. Alix tells us that the worshippers of the storm god arrive, having heard that the storm god has taken notice of the city, and they decide to settle here when they see all our temples. This is when the storm god appears, as Alix said earlier, but now the parish takes the arsonist teen seriously.

Sam's dinosaur project finishes. Someone got eaten by the trees, but other than that the dinosaurs are driven to the south of the mountains. "I see a dinosaur-cat conflict in our future."

## ELEVENTH WEEK (37:15)

The card tells us that a project finishes early. Kales tells us that the mermaid diplomacy has taken long enough. Once the mermaids figure out we're not trying to seduce them (Kales: "Mermaid seduction was a joke.") they're pretty chill about it. They start helping us make our crab pots better.

"Guys. Guys. There's been a dead body sitting by the temple for a month and a half." The body is starting to grow flowers, which is pretty weird. We're gonna investigate it. It'll take us three weeks.

## TWELFTH WEEK (40:08)

The card tells us that someone issues a dire warning, and we either leap into action or the person leaves. Dora tells us a woman named Sybil Halley, and she tells us that if we weren't careful and didn't watch our backs something would come home to roost. But we all laughed at her, so she leaves.

Alix tells us that city hall is built. Everyone softly cheers, just in time for us to have arguments. Also the storm god's name is Mulga.

Dora starts a project to explore the dark ruins. It takes four weeks, so the moon isn't out.

## THIRTEENTH WEEK (44:25)

The card offers a choice between a project not working out as expected or something going foul and supplies are ruined. Sam changes the investigation of the dead body project. [WARNING for depictions of plants growing out of people: highlight the colored text if you're okay with seeing that.]

[END WARNING]

For his action, Sam starts a project to explore the fallen skyscraper ruins. This will be a three week project.

Kales tells us that the detective investigating the plant zombie is named Sandra Jamoor.

## WINTER (46:20)

### FIRST WEEK

The card tells us that winter gives rise to fearmongering, and we either spend the week calming violent sentiments or we declare war on something. Alix tells us we have a war against the raptors and the cats, who teamed up and returned to take back what's theirs. This counts as starting a project. This is a four-week war, and happened down by the forest.

The investigating project finishes. [WARNING for depictions of plants growing out of people: highlight the colored text if you're okay with seeing that.]

[END WARNING]

For their action, Alix tells us that Daddy Crab has declared war on the mermaids because they fixed the crab pots. "This poor community."

### SECOND WEEK (51:30)

The card tells us that either all the animals and young children are crying or a great atrocity is revealed. Kales tells us that it makes sense that the animals and young children are crying because we're basically caught in the middle of multiple conflicts. We're to hold a discussion about this and the question is "What do we do about the fact that we're going to be caught in three separate wars in the middle of winter?"<sup>1</sup>

- Dora: "None of it's good for our community, and none of it's good for my home, so we need to put a stop to it."
- Sam: "I dunno what that guy's saying, but this seems pretty bad. No wonder all the children are crying-- there's a plant zombie, and the giant crab, and who knows when the birds are coming back! We're fucked!"
- Alix: "Stop complaining and start coming up with actual solutions." (Sam: "Contempt.") "Do you think we can make it so the raptors and cats are fighting the mermaids and the storm god so we don't have to fight anyone?"
- Kales: "We should figure out a way to distract the children from what's happening around us, first and foremost, they should come first."

For their action, Kales discovers something new. The tall boy goes out to the spires where the gulls nest and he finds gull's eggs, and maybe we can eat them.

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<sup>1</sup> The three wars are: us versus the raptors and cats; the mermaids versus Daddy Crab, and potentially Plant Greg versus the Parish of Mulga, the storm god.

### THIRD WEEK (56:25)

The card offers us a choice between a headstrong community member trying to take charge of the community's efforts or a headstrong community member succeeding at taking charge of the community's efforts. Dora tells us that the person, whose name is Efrim Vern, leaves the war against the raptors and the cats and hides in the dark ruins and tries to make some light. We don't hear from them or the people who had originally gone down there ever again, because if you turn on the light there you get disappeared to no one knows where. So that project fails, and we also lost the war against the raptors and the cats.

Sam's skyscraper project finishes. We find some very large seagulls at the top of the skyscraper and they're not happy to see us. "They've come home to roost, haven't they. We were told, and we didn't listen!"

For their action, Dora decides to try and put up a wall around our encampment to try and fend off the cats and the raptors.

### FOURTH WEEK (1:00:30)

Sam draws the King of Spades, which marks the end of the game. The biggest bird comes back to the City (everyone was on the same page regarding this, which everyone's excited about.) The Tall Boy is struck down by the biggest bird, since they're about the same size (Sam: "Tall Boy is the size of a building!") but also the biggest bird falls.

To conclude the game, Kales tells us that they were thinking about omens, and their stranger who came to the community back in summer who no one could remember what they looked like. Their name is From Eternity to Now Ev'ry Person Knows Not Who They Are But Who They Might Be, the shortened version being Ev'ry. When the battle concludes, everyone can remember Ev'ry's face.

### END EPISODE SUMMARY