

## The Magician's Council

Once a year, all magic users that could attend a council were supposed to go to the city of Aldgren, a city famous for magic. Duncan was going with his master, Meerfus the wand-making magician, for the first time, and he was understandably excited.

"Who will be there? Will there be witches and wizards?" Duncan asked as they rode on the back of a wagon. Normally, they walked nearly everywhere, but Meerfus had a large chest and a few bags stuffed with the best of their wands to sell and show off.

Meerfus smiled and dangled his legs off the back of the wagon. "Yes, yes, all the best potion-mixers, spell-wielders, and magic-makers will be there. Witches, warlocks, mage-smiths, magicians, druids, and all the like will attend."

Duncan shook his head, trying to imagine it. "So we will meet other magicians like us?"

"Milton the Green is certain to be there." Meerfus sniffed in dislike, as if mentioning his rival – at least in terms of sales region if not talent – bothered him.

Duncan wrinkled his nose. Milton the Green was a cranky old man with poor hygiene. He had a team of goblins that rowed him around in a sailboat on wheels. It was a very strange sight. He made cheap wands that hardly worked, but people liked the price.

"Why do people go to this council though?"

Meerfus nodded in approval at the question. It was a good one. "Even magicians like myself can learn things from seeing other masters of our trade. There are several excellent wand-makers that I like to compete with and get ideas from: Elton the Brown, Mimi the Chartreuse, Kalon the Black..." He smiled fondly at the idea of meeting with his peers and sharing ideas.

"Why do wand-makers all take color names?"

"Well, we just take to a color, and it becomes our trademark. Witches all wear black, so they get known for the type of potion they are best making: love potions, healing potions, or whatnot. Wizards usually take names from natural things that sound imposing, such as Lightning Bolt Lewis, Granite Gerard, Stormcloud Sara, and Hurricane Hurbold. They are more



of a quarrelsome bunch though, and they tend to fight in a lot of duels with magic. It is best to steer clear of them.”

Duncan grinned. He couldn't believe it. Finally, they were getting to go off and do something exciting. Instead of just learning about making wands and making a few here and there, they would rub elbows with the most powerful wizards in the lands. They would come from all over, and take notice of each other's greatest accomplishments.

“There will be other apprentices there to meet, too. I know a mage-smith's apprentice named David, that you might like to spend time with. His master is a great maker of magic rings and blades. You will probably make good friends. Of course there will be dozens of other apprentices and assistants to meet and have fun with, too. Just don't drink anything a witch's apprentice makes you. You can never tell what those girls mix in a drink! You might even turn into a toad... for a day or two.”

Duncan shivered, and it wasn't just the bumpy wagon. He didn't like the idea of turning into an amphibian one bit, even if it was only temporary.

“Oh, Duncan, there will be much to see and learn for both of us. I will have to sit in many boring discussions of new rules and regulations on magic, new limitations on the sales and manufacturing of items of power, but you will be free to run the streets and meet young magicians of all sorts! I wish I could be young again, if only for a week.” Meerfus sighed.

“You are still young enough to play some, master. Besides, it sounds like you have many friends there. Surely you will have a great time, as well.”

Meerfus nodded. “Let us both have a great time in Aldgren, okay?”

“Deal!” Duncan shook hands with Meerfus.

After that, since they had a long ride ahead of them, Meerfus quizzed Duncan on some of the finer points of their craft. It would not be good to have his apprentice show up and look unknowledgeable about wand-making. No, he wanted to make sure Duncan was one of the top apprentices in the city!



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. Where are Meerfus and Duncan going?
  - A. a festival
  - B. a magician's council meeting
  - C. a carnival
  - D. home
  
2. How often is there a Magician's Council?
  - A. once a week
  - B. once a month
  - C. once a year
  - D. once a decade
  
3. Which of these is NOT an example of another wand-making magician?
  - A. Mimi the Chartreuse
  - B. Kalon the Black
  - C. Elton the Brown
  - D. Thomas the Tan
  
4. What does Milton warn Duncan not to do?
  - A. Drink something a witch's apprentice gives him.
  - B. Run around like crazy at the council meeting.
  - C. Forget to sleep while he's in the city.
  - D. Spend all his money right away.
  
5. Why is Milton a bit envious of Duncan?
  - A. Duncan is smarter than him.
  - B. Duncan has the freedom to enjoy himself, instead of sitting in meetings.
  - C. Duncan is a fast walker.
  - D. Duncan is a promising young student, and Meerfus is worried to lose him.

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