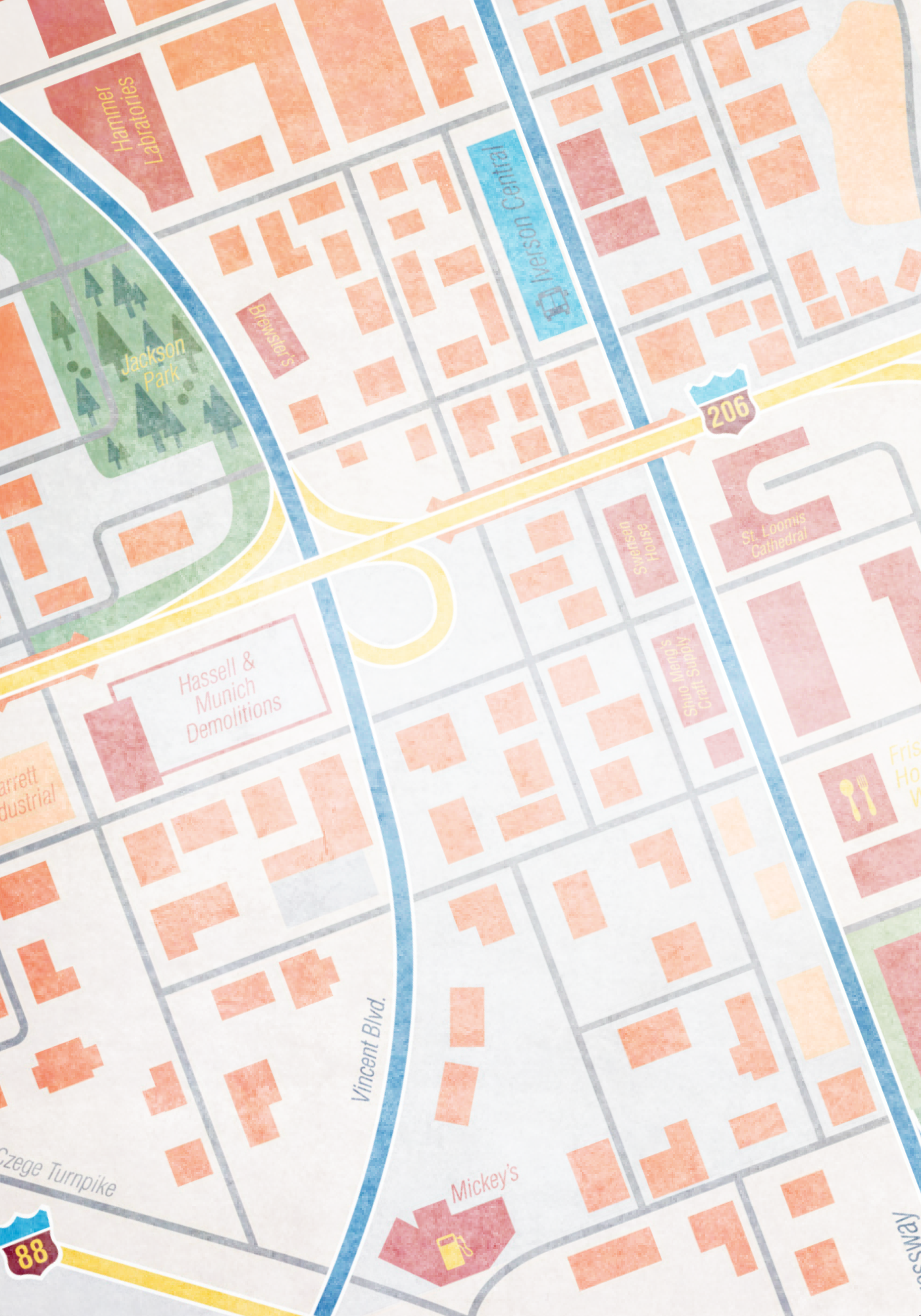
Recallers

An imagination game about maps and memories

By Grapypawn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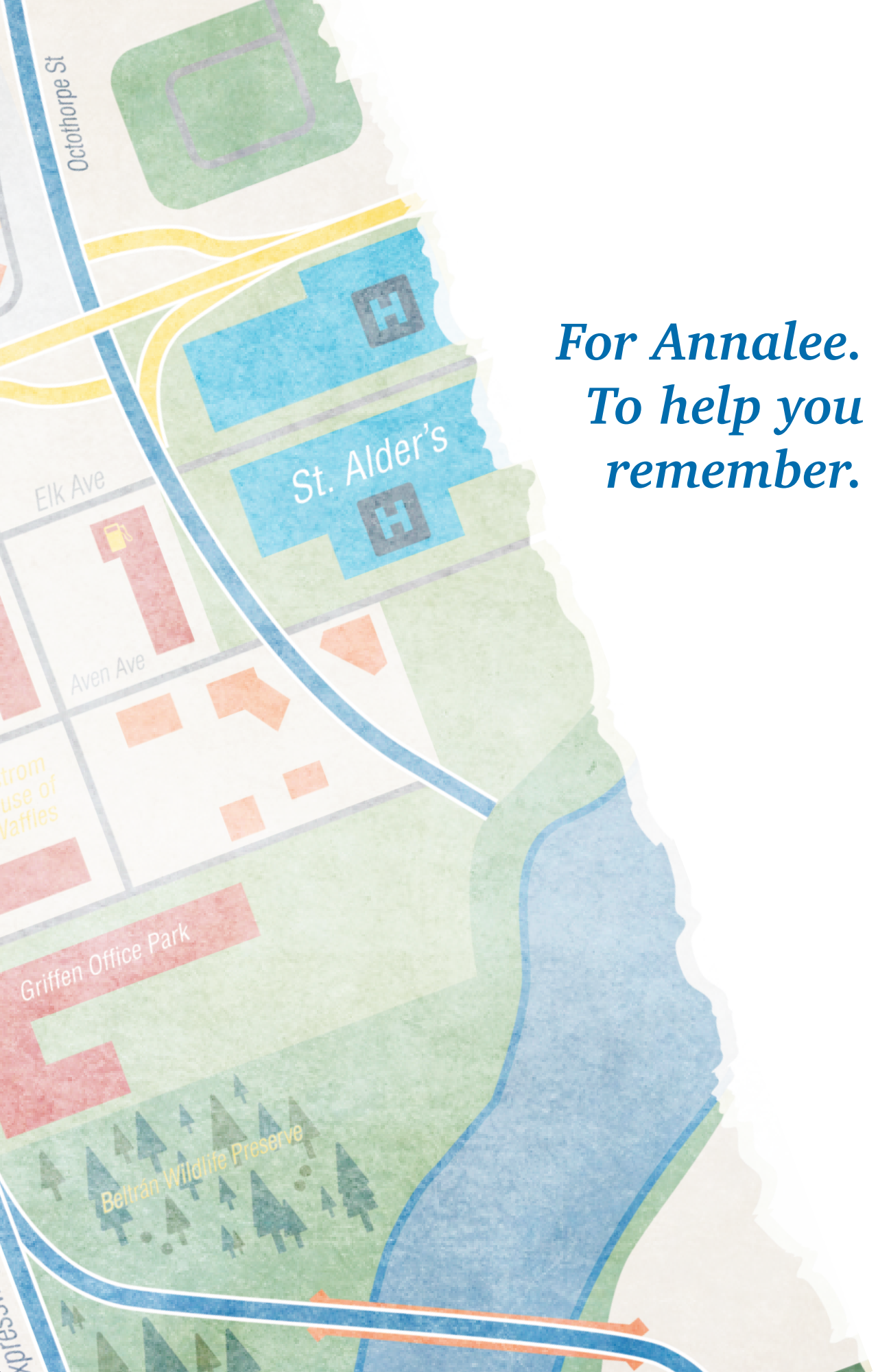


For Annalee.
To help you
remember.

Chapter 0

What is this game?
&
How to play it.

~ Read this part of the Guidebook before you sit down to play.

~ To immediately start playing skip to Chapter 1

Recallers is a game about a group of adults reminiscing and telling stories about their pretend childhood kingdom. This imaginary place is called a Paracosm, but will often just be referred to as “the kingdom” or “your kingdom.”

To play the game you’ll look over the map that comes with this game and select prompts from a deck of cards that represent distant memories of the paracosm. The cards are written to inspire details and discussion about the kingdom. As your characters recall things together, you’ll each add elements to a sketch of the kingdom.

The map provided will be referred to as “the map” or “the city.” This is a local commerce map, in the style of a tourist information pamphlet. It shows the city as it is, with streets, shops, parks and landmarks. As the adults discuss their memories, however, they’ll be drawing a second map. This is their memory of the kingdom, a reference for the shape of their paracosm as they recall it. It will be referred to throughout this game as “the sketch.”

To play this game, you’ll take turns reading all of chapter 1 aloud. This sets the tone and explains the details of play.

If you’ve played before, each chapter ends with a “Facilitator’s Notes” section to give you a checklist of topics to cover in your own words. You can use this to skip reading some or all of the instructions, if you prefer to explain the game in your own words.

Facilitator's Notes:

- This game is about adults gathering to discuss, remember, and sketch a map of their childhood paracosm.
- To play the game you'll reference the map provided, the deck of cards that represent memories you'll be discussing, and whatever you draw your sketch of the paracosm on.
- The instructions refer to the map provided as "the map" or "the city."
- The map you draw is called "the sketch."
- You can take turns reading some or all of these instructions aloud to learn how to play, or facilitate the game in your own words using these Facilitator's Notes.

Chapter 1

Recallers

Once upon a Neighborhood...

~ All players take turns reading this chapter aloud to begin play

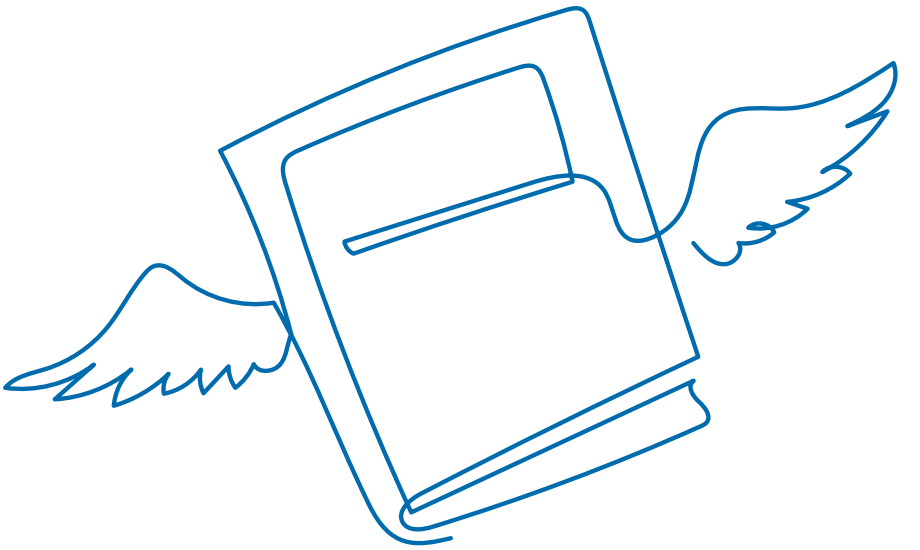
~ Read one page per player, then pass the book to another player

Once upon a neighborhood, a long time ago, a group of children played together in an imaginary kingdom of their own design. This paracosm had characters and places, moments and memories; a mix of pop culture that the children loved, and their own unpredictable ways of dreaming.

Those children left, one by one, and grew up, and became new to themselves in different lives far away from their neighborhood. They stayed in touch, some more than others, and tonight those adults that were once the champions of a dreamed kingdom, are coming back to their home town.

They will meet up at a favorite restaurant from their childhood and spend one night recalling the world they used to share, learning what it was like for each of them, and reconnecting with the seed of who they are.

To learn this game we'll take turns reading aloud from this guidebook. If you don't want to read you can pass. You'll hand the book off at the end of each page.



Chapter 2

Home again

Read this chapter aloud to learn how to play

To start the game we're each going to imagine our character for the story. Every player will pick two cards from the Character Deck - one Adult Card and one Child Card.

Each card asks us questions about our character, on the theme of who they were, and who they grew up to be.

Any child card can be paired with any adult card, in order to inspire an interesting character for this story. It's okay to mismatch these cards, too. A lot can change from youth to adulthood.

The rules for inventing our characters:

We were not extraordinary - while we might have been rich, smart or athletic, we didn't grow up to be super spies or Olympic medalists.

We were also **decidedly safe from harm or poverty,** our story shouldn't take on themes that this game is unprepared to support.

The focus of this game is to explore the magic of childhood imagination, and how we are forever connected to it.

We'll share the cards while looking through the options together, searching for a cool pairing that lights up the imagination.

Once everyone has selected a Child and Adult card, take a moment to imagine your character. Think about their transformation from child to adult, and answer one or more of the questions on each of your cards.

The player reading this page will put the book face down while everyone reads through the cards and finds their combination

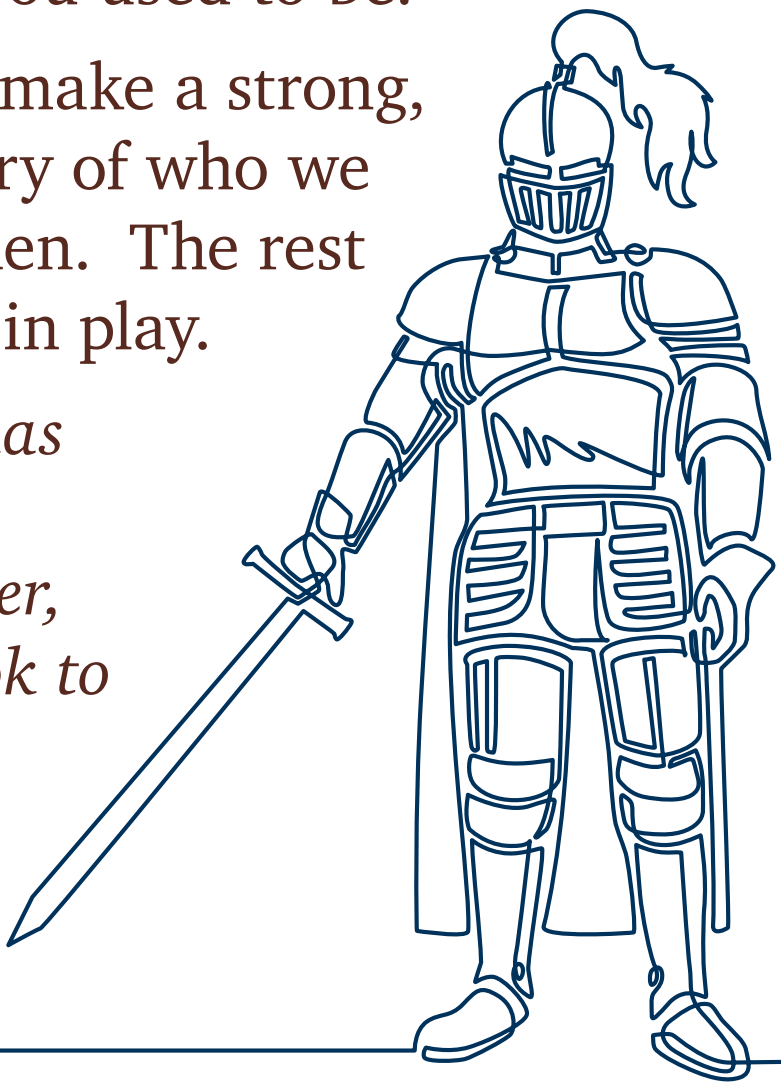
Once everyone has picked their 2 cards, pass the Guidebook to the next reader.

Starting with whoever is reading this page, we'll take turns telling the group our childhood nicknames, and what we might remember about each other.

Players can be eccentric or cryptic; you can read the prompts on your childhood card out loud and then answer them, or you could speak in character as an example of who you used to be.

We're trying to make a strong, but simple memory of who we were way back then. The rest will be imagined in play.

Once everyone has introduced their childhood character, pass the Guidebook to the next reader.



Now we'll prepare to play the game:

Shuffle the Memory Deck and place it where everyone can reach it.

Place the map where every player can see it.

Place a clean sheet of paper or something to draw on, with some markers, crayons, pens or pencils - anything to draw with.

To play this game we'll draw a hand of 3 cards from the deck. On our turn we will choose 1 card to play, read the instructions on it, reference the map, and then draw on the clean sheet of paper.

Each card prompts a discussion, each discussion helps inspire the imagined childhood kingdom of our characters, and guides what we should draw on the sketch.

The city map represents the neighborhood we grew up in, and its surrounding areas. The landmarks are all familiar suburban locations.

Somewhere on this map is the house where your character grew up.

Take a moment to locate where you lived. This will serve as a lodestar to imagining the neighborhood together. Once you know where your character's home was, share it with everyone else by drawing on the Sketch where it was.

Once everyone has picked a childhood home for their character, pass the Guidebook to the next reader.

As a group, we'll pick a place on the map where our characters had a clubhouse. This place should be big enough to have a physical space where we could build a structure of our own.

It should be within reasonable distance of our homes, and it should be wonderful but very real. It can be a treehouse or an old bunker, it can be an abandoned train car or camping trailer; anywhere we could gather, keep some toys and treasures, and spend time with each other.

Once our clubhouse is on the Sketch, pass the Guidebook to the next reader.

Now we'll reintroduce our characters.

One at a time, we'll arrive at a restaurant where we all agreed to meet, one of our favorites from childhood.

We have all come home for the same reason: one of our beloved childhood teachers, Mrs. Collins, has passed away. Tomorrow afternoon is the funeral.

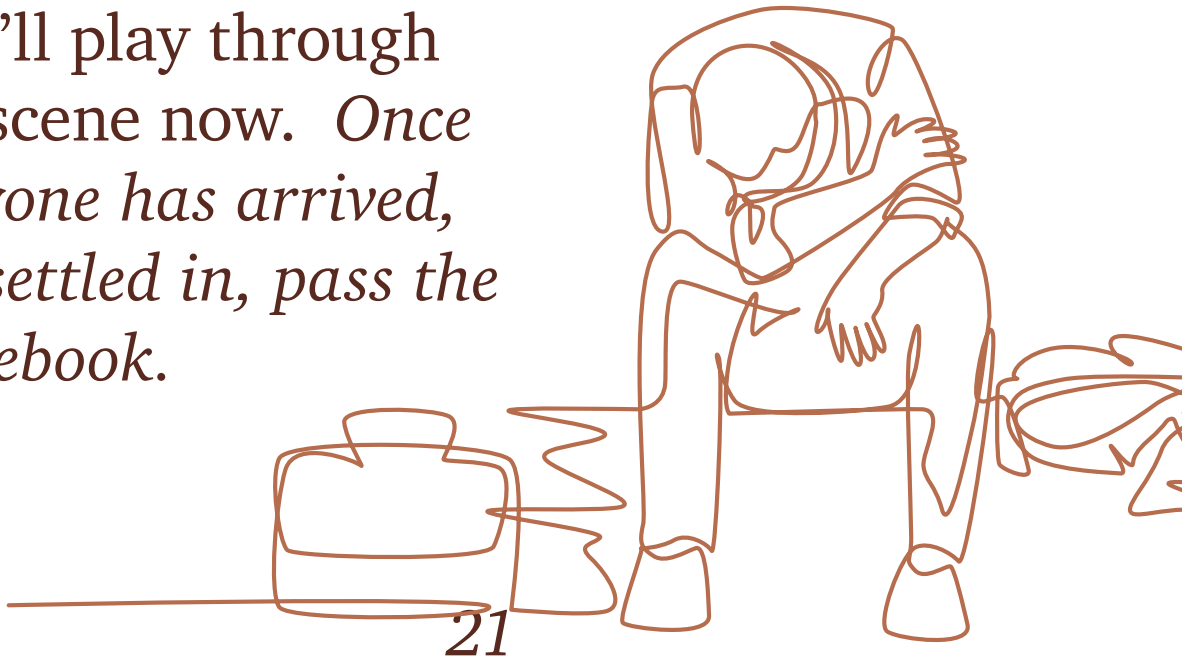
For tonight, we are all together again, we have all the long years apart to talk about, and all the changes in our lives to share. And we have the stories of our old Kingdom to try and recall together.

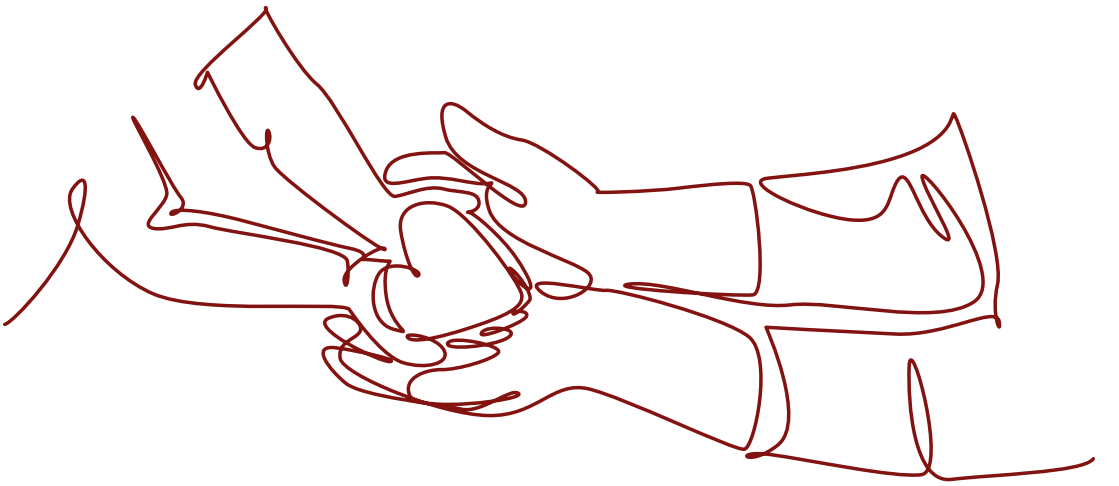
Our memories about the kingdom are not going to be perfect, and they might not even match. But they are going to be treasured, and wonderful to talk about.

For the next few minutes, we'll describe our adult characters as they come into the restaurant, whoever is reading this page arrives first and picks who arrives next.

As you arrive tell everyone your name, and remind them if you went by a different name before. Give everyone a general sense of who you are, describing your clothes, mannerisms, and look. Take in these sobering impressions of a group of adults. When one of us arrives and exchanges names, they get to pick who arrives next, until everyone is there.

We'll play through this scene now. *Once everyone has arrived, and settled in, pass the Guidebook.*





The restaurant is different, though familiar enough to stir your distant memories. It doesn't take long to get comfortable. We chat through the pleasantries of reconnection. We talk about life between then and now, where we went to school, or where we didn't. You talk about who we've dated, who we've hated, and who we work for. We'll eat some food and drink some drinks. But before long, we'll be the last of the dinner crowd.

And then one of us asks, "Do you remember our old kingdom?"

And with that, our conversation begins…

Starting with whoever is reading this page, we'll each take turns drawing memories about our clubhouse as it appeared in your imagination.

Was it a castle, or a tower, a treehouse or a fortress? Was it a protected structure or an open glade? Was it magical or technological?

As we answer these questions, reference your child card to imagine things about your character's young life.

Everyone draws for the sketch - we do not have to draw well, this is just a sketch in a restaurant as some friends scribble their memories on menus or napkins.

We should make notes naturally, as our character would, let it be stained, crossed-out, and passed around.

Once we've each contributed an element to the clubhouse, pass the Guidebook.

Now our memories can begin...

We'll each draw three cards from the deck. These represent memories and questions about the kingdom that are tickling the back of your mind.

As we each remember aloud about the kingdom, our own imagination will be inspired. Use this creative insight to author new "recollections" for your character.

What you, the player, suddenly dream up, your character will suddenly remember. What you suddenly want to know, your character will want to ask about.

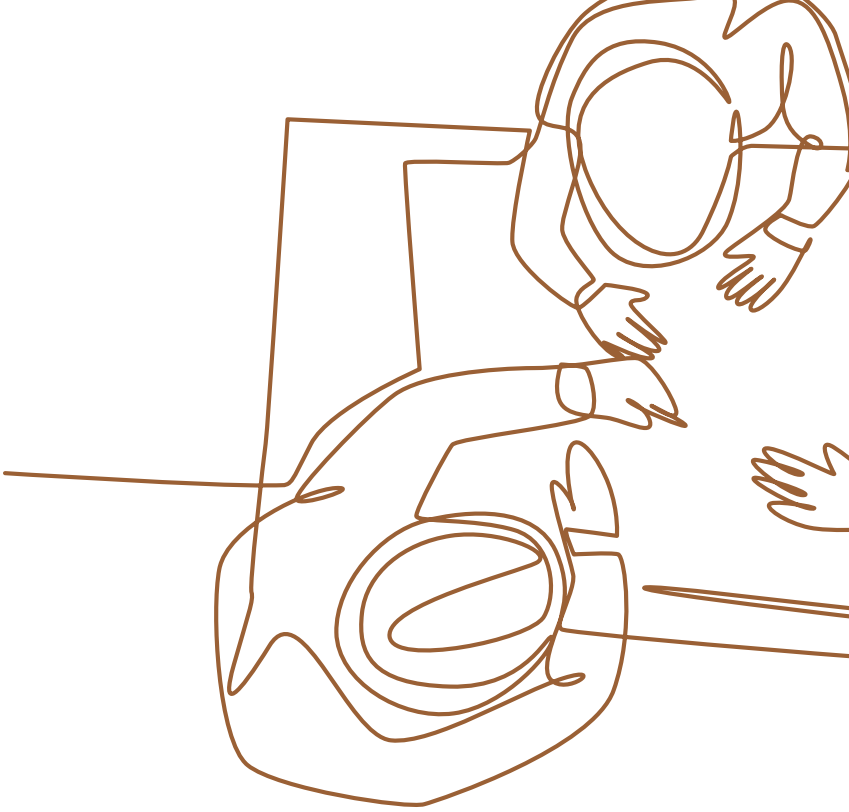
Whenever we play a card, draw another, so that we always have three. Place the cards we've played in a discard pile.

Each card starts with the topic of your memory, instructions on how to play in green italics. And red questions to inspire recollections.

Green Italics tell you how to ‘play’ the card, some are things you just reveal as a memory, some are open questions for all to participate, some are passed back and forth between two players, and some are passed around to every player once.

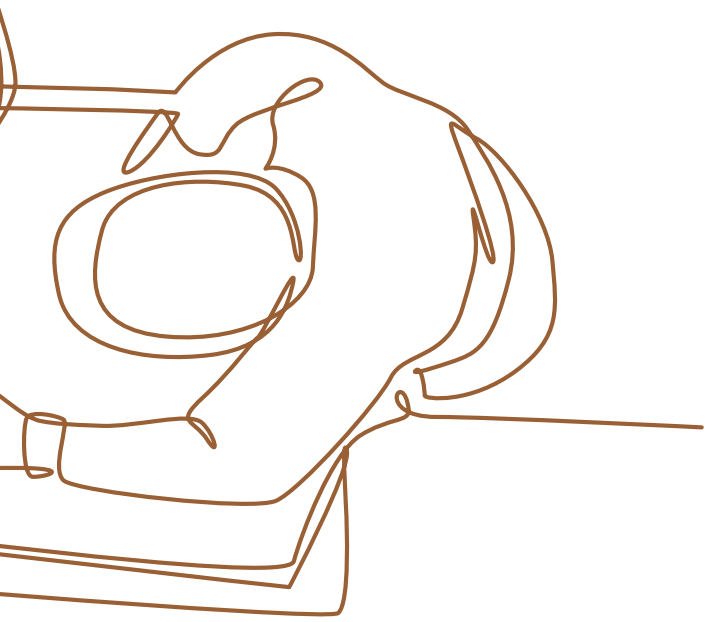
Try not to read the questions directly, outloud. Try and say them again in your character’s voice. If you already know the answer to a question, don’t ask it, just say it for the rest to hear.

Every answer gets drawn on the map.



We'll use the cards to prompt our imagination, and the conversation, not to limit them. If a Question doesn't have a clear answer, ignore it.

It's okay to be looking at your cards and thinking ahead about what your answers might be. If your ideas contradict someone else's thoughts, that just means you're both remembering the kingdom differently. Say so! Talk about why our characters might remember things differently, and what the possibilities could be.



We will never know how real or accurate our memories are. The goal is not to find the truth, it's to reconnect to that time, and that version of who we were.

We'll take turns playing through the deck until we're out of cards or until something else means we need to stop, whichever comes first.

To begin, we'll need a name for our kingdom, then we'll put this guidebook aside until we're ready to end when we'll pick it back up, and read the final chapter.

Facilitator's Notes

- Choose a combination of child & adult cards to spark an interesting character
- No exceptional characters
- No harm or trauma in their past
- Shuffle the cards, place them near the map and the sketch, where anyone can access them easily

- Pick where your house was
- Pick where the clubhouse was
- Scene: everyone arrives at the restaurant, introduces themselves and gives an impression of their adult self
- Draw the clubhouse on the sketch
- Draw 3 cards
- Ask, “do you remember our kingdom?...”
- To end the game, read chapter 3

Chapter 3

The Epilogue & Ending the Game

Suddenly everyone realizes that the hour is late, the map is full, and it's time to get some sleep before the funeral tomorrow.

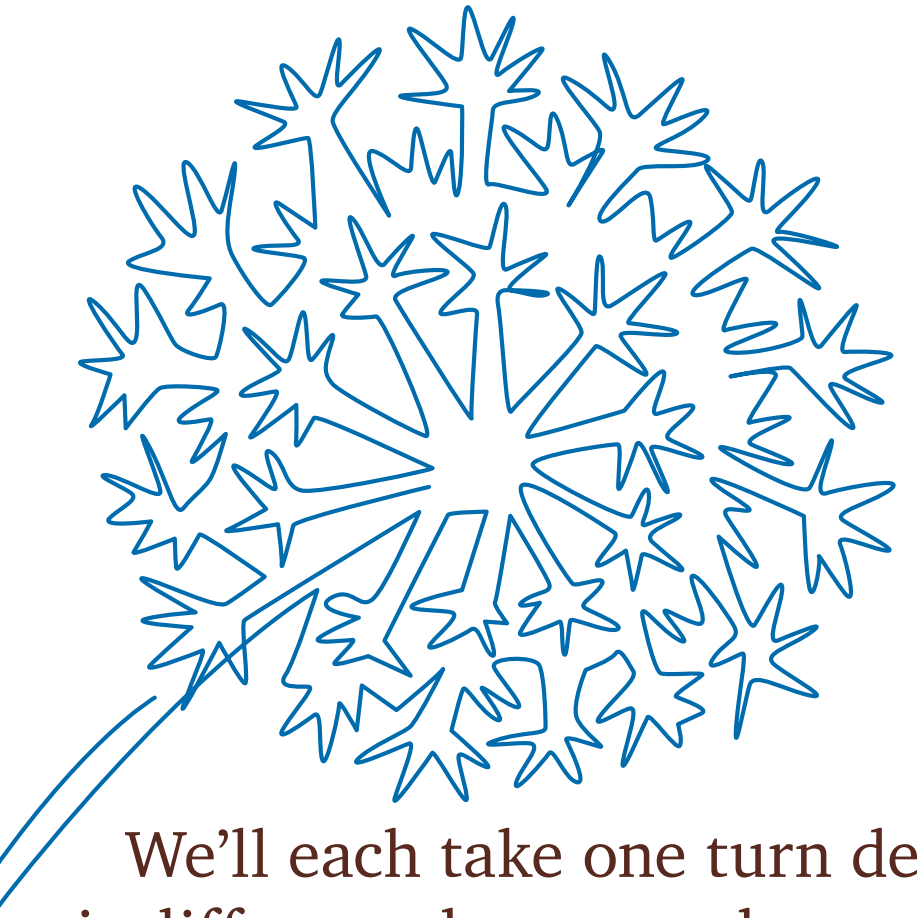
One at a time, we stand up, and say good night, one to another.

If there is anything left to be spoken between us, now is the time to say it.

We will all see each other again tomorrow, and there will be some time after the wake to talk more, but everything will be busy, and cluttered with other people from home that want our time and conversation.

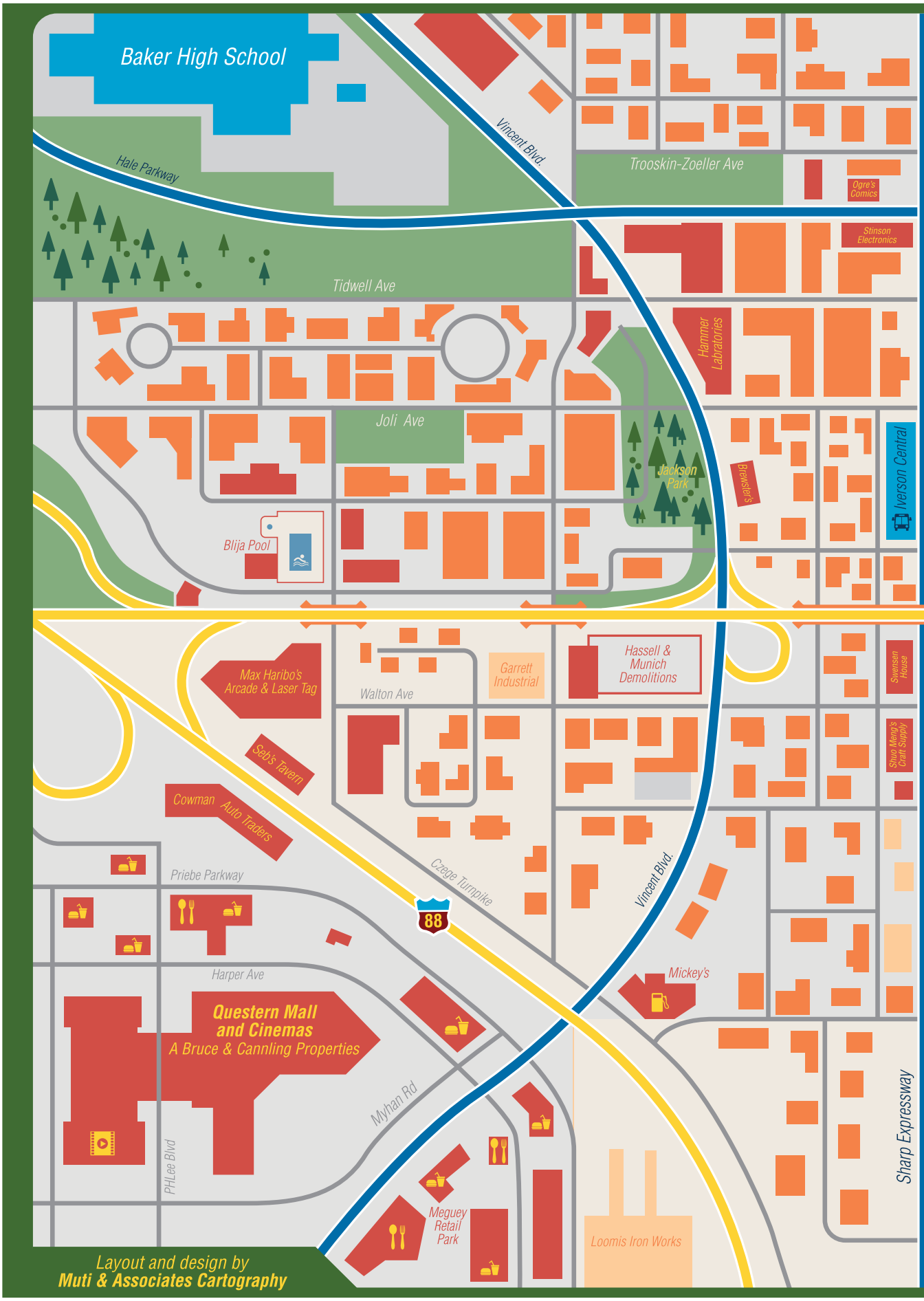
Decide now if you think the connections between us have been strengthened. If sharing our stories rebuilt the bond we once had. Consider how we've each grown from just one night of talking.

If there is anything left to be spoken between us, now is the time to say it.



We'll each take one turn describing what is different about our character going forward. Describe one facet of their life that is better for having recalled their childhood self. This can be a concrete change, or a description of an event that we imagine together, or just a change in their voice.

To end, decide together how soon it will be before we all get together again.


Baker High School
Hale Parkway
Vincent Blvd
Trooskin-Zoeller Ave
Ogre's Comics
Stinson Electronics
Tidwell Ave
Hammer Labratories
Joli Ave
Jackson Park
Brewster's
Iverson Central
Blija Pool
Max Haribo's Arcade & Laser Tag
Walton Ave
Garrett Industrial
Hassell & Munich Demolitions
Swenson House
Shuo Meng's Craft Supply
Seb's Tavern
Cowman Auto Traders
Priebe Parkway
Czege Turnpike
88
Vincent Blvd.
Harper Ave
Questern Mall and Cinemas
A Bruce & Cannling Properties
Mickey's
Myhan Rd
PHLee Blvd
Meguey Retail Park
Loomis Iron Works
Sharp Expressway
Layout and design by
Muti & Associates Cartography

Recallers

Key:

- *Parks & Recreation*
- *Residential Housing*
- *Commercial Properties*
- *Municipal Buildings*

- *Highway*
- *Major Routes*
- *City Streets*

On Your Turn:

Play a card from your hand as a topic you want to bring up.

When you play a card, draw a new one - you should always have 3 cards in your hand.

On each Card:

Questions in bold italics are for you to answer.

Instructions for how the card gets played are in italics.

"Questions for you to ask in character are in quotes."

When you ask a question in quotes you can phrase it as your character would

When you ask a question in quotes you pass it to the person you're asking, or you hold it up for anyone to answer.

Whenver you detail something from the kingdom, draw on the sketch a symbol or picture that represents it.

Feel free to wonder about your cards as you play, thinking ahead only builds anticipation. It's okay if what you ask about doesn't get the answers you expected, this just means you and the other characters are remembering the paracosm differently.