



THE OVER-THE-TOP CHRISTMAS

CROWD PUZZLE



A COLD WIND COILS ALONG THE ABANDONED PATH TO THE EMERALD CITY —
THE KIND THAT BENDS TREES TOWARD SECRETS AND CARRIES THE ECHO OF OLD SPELLS.
YOU FIND A PAGE TORN FROM A GRIMOIRE. AT THE TOP, WRITTEN IN A CALM, PRECISE HAND:
“MAGIC IS MEASURED. EVEN IN OZ, POWER OBEYS PATTERN.”

BELOW IT, THE NOTE CONTINUES — PART MEMORY, PART INSTRUCTION

1. THE FORMATION THAT FRACTURED

“ONCE, NINE CREATURES DREW A SLEIGH ACROSS THE WINTER SKY. WHEN ONE SLIPPED OUT OF FORMATION — NOT VANISHED, MERELY WANDERING — THE SPELL MEASURED ONLY THOSE WHO STAYED IN LINE.” RECORD THAT NUMBER.

2. THE TRAVELERS BENEATH A STAR

“ALONG THE DESERT’S EDGE, THREE FIGURES FOLLOWED A SINGLE POINT OF LIGHT. A CONVERGENCE OF PATHS, A MULTIPLICATION OF CONSEQUENCE.” MULTIPLY YOUR FIRST NUMBER BY THEIR COUNT.

3. THE RINGS THAT OUTLASTED THEIR SONG

“LONG BEFORE OZ, A HUMAN CAROL PRAISED FIVE CIRCLES OF GOLD. THEIR SYMBOLISM HAS ENDURED LONGER THAN THE SINGERS.” ADD THOSE FIVE.

4. THE BIRDS WHO CALL NO ONE

“FOUR BIRDS WERE ONCE NAMED FOR CALLING — YET NOT ONE UTTERED A SUMMONS, NOR ANSWERED TO ANY.” SUBTRACT THE IMPOSTORS.

5. THE GHOST IN THE CHAIN

“OF ALL THE SPIRITS WHO CONFRONTED THE MISER AT THE CUSP OF DAWN, ONE APPROACHED BOUND IN IRON. YET HE WAS NO LESS A SPIRIT FOR IT.” ADD THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SPIRITS WHO APPEARED THAT NIGHT, INCLUDING THE ONE IN CHAINS.

6. THE NAMES THAT END THE SAME

“AMONG THE NINE WHO PULL THE WINTER CARRIAGE, A PATTERN EMERGES ONLY WHEN SPOKEN ALOUD. SOME OF THEIR NAMES FALL TO THE SAME FINAL SOUND — AS THOUGH ANSWERING AN ECHO IN THE FROZEN AIR. ISOLATE THOSE WHOSE ENDINGS RHYME, AND ADD THEIR COUNT TO YOUR SUM.”

7. WHO ARRIVED

“ON THE LONGEST NIGHT, EMISSARIES WERE SUMMONED TO WITNESS THE SOLSTICE SPELL. EIGHT WERE CALLED. FOUR SET OUT IMMEDIATELY. TWO DEPARTED TOO LATE. ONE NEVER LEFT THE TOWER. AND ONE SENT A REPLY INSTEAD OF A PRESENCE. ONLY THE EMISSARIES WHO NEVER ARRIVED FACTOR INTO THIS MEASURE. COUNT THEM.”

WHEN THE FINAL NUMBER SETTLES INTO YOUR MIND, TURN OVER THE CARD WITH THAT VALUE.
NO ENCHANTMENT UNLOCKS WITHOUT PRECISION.