

# E4 - Forests and Clay Tablets

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**[00:00] Main**

**[00:01] Ferdinand**

*Main began crafting paper as the first step in her book-making process,*

**[00:05] Ferdinand**

*but her attempt to make pseudo-papyrus ended in failure.*

**[00:10] Ferdinand**

*"I'll go to the forest and make clay tablets in the spring."*

**[00:13] Ferdinand**

*Main now had her sights set on a new goal.*

**SIGN** Ascendance of a Bookworm

**SIGN** Ascendance of a Bookworm

**SIGN** Chapter Four Forests and Clay Tablets

**[01:57] Tuuli**

Wow, what a feast!

**[02:00] Gunther**

Did you cook all of this, Main?

**[02:02] Main**

Yeah, since it was my turn to cook today.

**[02:06] Main**

Well, eat up before the food goes cold.

**[02:10] Eva**

I don't know... I'd never seen anyone cook like that.

**(Flashback) [02:13] Eva**

What are you doing with the water we used to boil the veggies?

**(Flashback) [02:17] Main**

Don't worry about it.

**[02:18] Tuuli**

Let's eat.

**[02:25] Gunther**

Delicious!

**[02:27] Tuuli**

This pome soup is really great!

**[02:30] Main**

*"Pome" being the unholy lovechild  
of paprika and tomato.*

**[02:34] Eva**

You're right. This *is* delicious.

**[02:36] Main**

*In this world, it's standard practice to  
dump the water used to boil veggies.*

**[02:41] Main**

Isn't it? The veggie flavors  
really pack a punch, right?

**[02:47] Gunther**

This wine-steamed chicken is great, too.

**[02:49] Tuuli**

You must have a talent for cooking.  
The paruecake was just as good, too.

**[02:54] Gunther**

Maybe you could become a  
chef when you grow up.

**[02:57] Eva**

We'll have to find a place  
that'll take her as apprentice.

**SIGN** Apprentice

Chef

**SIGN** Making Books

**[03:01] Main**

Crap! I won't get to make my books!

**[03:05] Main**

I need to go to the forest and  
make clay tablets already!

**SIGN** Apprentice

Chef

**[03:08] Main**

B-But I already have a goal in mind!

**[03:13] Gunther**

And what is it, Main?

**[03:15] Main**

I want to go to the forest.

**[03:22] Tuuli**

"Go to the forest," she says!

**[03:24] Eva**

Main, we're talking about work right now.

**[03:28] Main**

I'm serious!

**[03:30] Main**

I wanna make clay tablets! That's why I need to go to the forest!

**[03:34] Gunther**

Clay tablets?

**[03:35] Main**

Yep! I'll write on them and make a book!

**[03:39] Gunther**

Write...

**[03:40] Tuuli**

You, going to the forest? No way.

**[03:43] Main**

Yes way! I haven't fallen sick lately!

**[03:46] Tuuli**

But you can't walk as far or as fast as the rest of us.

**[03:50] Main**

I'll be fine! I can go all the way to the well without being out of breath now!

**[03:54] Tuuli**

And what if you're only able to walk part of the way?

**[03:57] Tuuli**

You'll be a burden to everyone.

**[03:59] Main**

Well...

**[04:03] Eva**

Tuuli goes to the forest all the time. She knows best.

**[04:06] Eva**

You should listen to her.

**[04:11] Main**

What can I do to get your permission?

**[04:17] Main**

Build up your stamina and

strength. No forest until then.

**[04:25] Main**

Got it.

**[04:29] Main**

*With no means of going to the forest,*

**[04:32] Main**

*my desire for books could  
only simmer inside.*

**[04:35] Main**

*But then, one day...*

**[04:38] Main**

Mister Otto's assistant? Who, me?!

**[04:41] Gunther**

He wants your help with files  
that need lots of calculations.

**[04:45] Tuuli**

Can she even handle that job?

**[04:48] Gunther**

Yeah. She has worked with him  
once before, apparently.

**[04:53] Gunther**

He said she was a huge help.

**[04:55] Tuuli**

She did?

**[04:57] Gunther**

But it's against the law to  
employ an unbaptized child,

**[05:01] Gunther**

so officially, you'll be going there  
to learn how to read and write.

**[05:05] Main**

What? Really?

**[05:07] Gunther**

Yeah.

**[05:08] Gunther**

He has to teach the apprentice soldiers,  
and he'll teach you with them.

**[05:13] Gunther**

You should learn everything  
you can from him.

**[05:19] Gunther**

You're a frail girl, Main.

**[05:21] Gunther**

But Otto said you were really smart,

**[05:24] Gunther**

and that you could make a good scrivener.

**[05:26] Main**

Scrivener?

**[05:28] Gunther**

Someone who helps people with paperwork to send to nobility or public officials.

**[05:32] Gunther**

The work pays well and isn't too demanding physically.

**[05:36] Main**

Dad!

**[05:37] Gunther**

Otto was in the traveling trade before he became a soldier,

**[05:41] Gunther**

and he still has connections with merchants.

**[05:43] Gunther**

The jobs your mother and I can refer you to wouldn't suit you.

**[05:49] Gunther**

So try to maintain a good relationship with Otto.

**[05:53] Main**

Thank you, Dad.

**[05:56] Gunther**

Oh, before I forget, these are the terms of employment.

**[06:00] Gunther**

You'll be paid in slate pencils and be allowed to take time off when sick.

**[06:04] Gunther**

Otto was stressing how favorable these terms were for him, budget-wise.

**[06:09] Gunther**

How can he be so petty with a kid?

**[06:13] Main**

He'll reap all the benefits of an assistant without burning a hole in the pocket.

**[06:17] Main**

Once a businessman, always a businessman.

**[06:19] Gunther**

Anyway, walk to the gate for a while,

**[06:21] Gunther**

and once you're able to keep up with the other kids, you may go to the forest.

**[06:25] Gunther**

Does that sound good to you?

**[06:27] Main**

Yep! I'll do my best!

**[06:37] Gunther**

Don't force yourself, okay? Take your time.

**[06:39] Main**

Yeah, I know.

**[06:46] Main**

*Ultimately, Dad had to carry  
me to the gate from midway.*

**[06:51] Otto**

Let me introduce your new classmate.

**[06:54] Otto**

This is Main, the chief's daughter.

**[06:56] Otto**

Don't you boys dare mess with her.

**[06:59] All**

Yes, sir!

**[07:00] Otto**

Okay, let's begin.

**[07:03] Otto**

The basic alphabet consists of 35 letters.

**[07:06] Otto**

Let's start with practicing  
how to write them.

**[07:21] Otto**

You really do learn these letters quick.

**[07:24] Main**

I much prefer this to physical activities.

**[07:28] Main**

That aside, Mister Otto,

**[07:30] Main**

I think it's time to move  
on from the alphabet.

**[07:34] Otto**

What? Already?

**[07:35] Main**

Look, they're starting to fidget.

**[07:38] Main**

It shows that they've lost focus.

**[07:41] Main**

You should switch to a different subject.

**[07:44] Otto**

Oh, but...

**[07:47] Main**

That does it for the alphabet.

**[07:49] Main**

Next up is numbers.

**[07:55] Main**

That's all for today.

**[07:57] Main**

Be sure to memorize all the letters and numbers you've learned today by next time.

**[08:02] Main**

If you come unprepared, you won't be going home until you get everything down pat.

**[08:05] All**

Okay!

**[08:10] Main**

They got out of here fast.  
Boys will be boys, I guess.

**[08:14] Otto**

Main, they won't learn anything if I make it easy for them.

**[08:19] Main**

Oh, it's not that easy.

**[08:21] Main**

If they don't do their homework, they won't get to go home at all.

**[08:25] Otto**

Yeah, but...

**[08:26] Main**

Mister Otto, you shouldn't compare them to me.

**[08:32] Otto**

That's right.

**[08:33] Otto**

Guess I'll do things your way for a while and see how it goes.

**[08:38] Main**

Thank you.

**[08:41] Otto**

Now, it's your turn.

**[08:46] Otto**

You should learn how the alphabet works in practice.

**[08:51] Main**

Yahoo! Letra!

**[08:54] Main**

So many new things to learn!

**[08:57] Main**

New words!

**[09:01] Main**

*I meet up with Tuuli and gang on the way back from the forest and head home with them.*

**[09:06] Lutz**

What are you even doing at the gate?

**[09:08] Main**

Paperwo... I mean, learning  
how to read and write.

**[09:12] Lutz**

What? You can write?!

**[09:15] Main**

Only my own name so far, but yeah.

**[09:19] Lutz**

You're awesome! You can write your own name!

**[09:22] Main**

You think?

**[09:24] Lutz**

There are so many letters, right?

**[09:25] Main**

*In this world, just knowing  
how to write is a big deal.*

**[09:26] Lutz**

Must've been hard to figure  
out how "Main" is spelled!

**[09:29] Main**

*Of course Otto would want  
me for an assistant.*

**[09:30] Lutz**

Do you know how to write "Lutz," too?

**[09:41] Main**

You guys... walk too fast.

**[09:43] Lutz**

You can take your time.

**[09:46] Main**

But...

**[09:47] Lutz**

Your father and Tuuli asked  
me to take care of you.

**[09:51] Lutz**

I'll walk you all the way  
home, so don't worry.

**[09:53] Main**

Thanks.

**[10:00] Main**

Why am I so tired when  
I've only come this far?

**[10:06] Lutz**

I'm here with you.

**[10:09] Main**

Lutz...

**[10:10] Lutz**

Hang in there.

**[10:13] Main**

'Kay.

**[10:18] Main**

*And so, my days of commuting  
to the gate began.*

**[10:25] Main**

*At first, I would go one day and  
spend the next three in bed,*

**[10:31] Main**

*but later, I could go three days  
and only take one day off.*

**[10:38] Main**

*And finally...*

**[10:40] Main**

I went to the gate on five  
straight days this week!

**[10:43] Main**

Dad, may I go to the forest now?

**[10:46] Gunther**

Yeah.

**[10:49] Main**

Yay!

**[10:51] Eva**

She's on cloud nine.

**[10:53] Tuuli**

Well, she deserves it for her efforts.

**[11:01] Fey**

Found some over here!

**[11:03] Kid**

Same here!

**[11:03] Kid**

What? Where?

**[11:04] Kid**

You're right!

**[11:05] Kid**

We found a lot!

**[11:10] Main**

I wanna go... to the forest...

**[11:13] Eva**

You won't get any better if you don't sleep.

**[11:16] Eva**

Let me tell you a bedtime story.

**[11:20] Eva**

A long, long time ago, there lived  
some little stars in the sky.

**[11:26] Eva**

Those little stars...

**[11:28] Main**

*I remember this.*

**[11:30] Main**

*Mom told me this story soon  
after I became Main.*

**[11:35] Eva**

They liked coming down to the earth.

**[11:39] Eva**

On land, they met all kinds of people.

**[11:44] Main**

*When I finally got to go the forest,  
it was the end of the spring:*

**[11:48] Main**

*three months after I started  
commuting to the gate.*

**SIGN** Ascendance of a

Bookworm

**SIGN** Ascendance of a

Bookworm

**[12:05] Main**

It's the forest!

**[12:06] Lutz**

We're gonna gather firewood.

You rest up here.

**[12:10] Main**

Got it.

**[12:14] Main**

I finally made it.

**SIGN** Clay Tablets

**[12:17] Main**

I can finally make clay tablets now!

**[12:19] Main**

Yahoo!

**[12:23] Main**

As if I'd come all this way  
to go home empty-handed.

**[12:26] Main**

Show yourself, clay soil!

**[12:30] Main**

Rock hard!

**[12:34] Main**

I'm not giving up!

**[12:43] Main**

I'm not finding anything.

**[12:45] Lutz**

What do you think you're doing, Main?!

**[12:51] Lutz**

Did you forget the promise  
you made your father?

**(Flashback) [12:54] Gunther**

The only goal today is to make  
it to the forest and back.

**(Flashback) [12:57] Gunther**

When you get there, rest up and  
aim to come back with the others.

**(Flashback) [13:01] Gunther**

Got that?

**(Flashback) [13:02] Main**

Yeah!

**(Flashback) [13:03] Main**

My goal for today will be to go to  
the forest, rest up, and come home.

**[13:09] Main**

I-I know, but uh...

**[13:12] Lutz**

Bringing that thing means you never had any  
intention of keeping your word, did you?

**[13:17] Main**

You see, I finally got to the  
come to the forest, so I just...

**[13:22] Lutz**

You just?

**[13:24] Main**

...planned this.

**[13:26] Lutz**

So you lied, then?

**[13:29] Lutz**

Mister Gunther said that out  
of concern for your health!

**[13:33] Lutz**

But look at you.

**[13:35] Lutz**

I never knew you could be so untrustworthy.

**[13:39] Main**

Sorry...

**[13:43] Lutz**

So what were you trying to do, anyway?

**[13:48] Main**

*When I told Lutz I wanted clay soil,*

**[13:51] Main**

*he took me to a spot with very  
little vegetation or drainage.*

**[13:59] Main**

Why are you helping me out?

**[14:03] Lutz**

You made me those paruecakes  
when I was starving, remember?

**[14:08] Lutz**

I made up my mind to help you then.

**[14:12] Main**

That's it?

**[14:13] Lutz**

Yeah. I said I'd be there for you, didn't I?

**[14:17] Lutz**

But you need to tell me  
what you're trying to do.

**[14:20] Lutz**

Just trust me.

**[14:22] Main**

Okay. Thanks.

**[14:26] Lutz**

Here. Is this what you wanted?

**[14:30] Main**

Yeah, this is it!

**[14:32] Main**

Amazing, Lutz. This would've taken me days.

**[14:37] Lutz**

No boy could ever be weaker than you.

**[14:40] Lutz**

So, what will you do with all this?

**[14:43] Main**

Make a book.

**[14:45] Lutz**

A book?

**[14:50] Main**

Watch this.

**[14:57] Lutz**

Are these letters?

**[14:59] Main**

That's right.

**[15:00] Main**

When you write things down,

**[15:02] Main**

you can turn moments—words, thoughts,

**[15:05] Main**

and events that you'd forget—  
into permanent ones,

**[15:09] Main**

and read them over all you want.

**[15:12] Lutz**

Huh...

**[15:13] Lutz**

A book is something that's  
full of writing like that.

**[15:17] Lutz**

Books, huh...

**[15:18] Main**

Yeah.

**[15:20] Main**

With books, you can learn what  
people in the past were thinking,

**[15:26] Main**

and experience so much more than you  
normally could in an average lifespan.

**[15:33] Main**

Aren't books amazing?

**[15:41] Lutz**

Well, I gotta get back to firewood.

**[15:43] Main**

Okay. Thank you so much, Lutz.

**[15:47] Lutz**

Sure!

**[15:54] Main**

I did it.

**[15:56] Main**

Long live Mesopotamia!

**[16:00] Main**

I made more than I thought.  
Wonder if they've dried yet.

**[16:03] Kid**

Hurry up!

**[16:05] Fey**

Hold up!

**[16:08] Fey**

Whoa, what are these?

**[16:09] Main**

Oh, they're...

**[16:11] Fey**

Hup!

**[16:12] Kid**

Me, too!

**[16:16] Main**

No...

**[16:17] Main**

Stop!

**[16:21] Fey**

What's wrong, Main?

**[16:29] Main**

My clay tablets...

**[16:32] Main**

Fey and him ruined them.

**[16:33] Fey**

What? Those were important?

**[16:46] Kid**

Hey, something's up with her.

**[16:49] Main**

Do you have any idea what  
it took me to get here?

**[16:53] Main**

I went to the gate so many times,  
had Lutz and Tuuli help me...

**[16:58] Main**

And yet... How could you do this, Fey?!

**[17:01] Fey**

I'm sorry. I didn't know.

**[17:05] Main**

I'll never forgive you!

**[17:10] Lutz**

Calm down, Main.

**[17:12] Tuuli**

You know they didn't do it on purpose.

**[17:23] Lutz**

I can see why you're upset.

**[17:25] Lutz**

You worked so hard to get here.

**[17:32] Lutz**

Main...

**[17:40] Lutz**

Let's dig up the soil and make these again.

**[17:43] All**

O-Okay...

**[17:49] All**

Do the rest tomorrow and finish it off.

**[17:54] Main**

Yeah...

**[17:56] Main**

*However, I was bedridden with another fever,*

**[18:00] Main**

*and it continued to rain  
for a few days straight.*

**[18:06] Fey**

Th-The rain did this, all right?

**[18:09] Main**

I know that.

**[18:14] Fey**

If you have the time to cry, you have the time to give it another try.

**[18:18] Main**

Yeah.

**[18:25] Main**

*The rest of them went to gather firewood,*

**[18:28] Main**

*but Lutz stayed behind  
to help the whole way.*

**[18:32] Lutz**

Say, Main, is this what you wanna do in life?

**[18:37] Main**

Well, what I *really* want is to live a life surrounded by books.

**[18:41] Lutz**

Surrounded by this stuff?

**[18:44] Main**

Wrong.

**[18:45] Main**

Real books are too expensive to buy, so I'm using these as a substitute.

**[18:50] Main**

What do you want to do in life, Lutz?

**[18:52] Lutz**

Me?

**[18:53] Main**

Yeah. I'm sure you have a goal in mind, too.

**[18:58] Lutz**

I...

**[19:02] Lutz**

I...

**[19:05] Lutz**

I want to travel to other cities.

**[19:08] Main**

Other cities?

**[19:10] Lutz**

I wanna become a traveling trader and see the world for myself.

**[19:14] Main**

A journey sounds good.

**[19:16] Lutz**

What? Do you really think so?

**[19:19] Lutz**

It'd mean leaving the city, y'know?

**[19:21] Main**

Yeah. It sounds fun.

**[19:24] Main**

You see, my dream at one point was  
to visit libraries across the world.

**[19:28] Lutz**

Libraries?

**[19:29] Main**

Yeah. Places with lots of books.

**[19:33] Main**

That dream can never come true now, though.

**[19:37] Lutz**

Whatever it is, I'm sure you'll  
do what you want to.

**[19:42] Main**

You should just do that, too.

**[19:52] Main**

All done.

**[19:56] Main**

It's a book.

**[19:58] Main**

*At first, I thought I wasn't meant  
to live in a world without books.*

**[20:05] Main**

*But... I've found things  
I hold dear here, too.*

**[20:10] Main**

*Now if I have my books, I'll be fine.*

**[20:13] Main**

*I feel like I've finally found a path  
of life for myself in this world.*

**[20:19] Tuuli**

Main, what did you write?

**[20:22] Tuuli**

It's the story about the little stars.

**[20:25] Tuuli**

The story Mom told me on the first night.

**[20:28] Tuuli**

The first night?

**[20:31] Main**

Yeah. The earliest story I can remember.

**[20:35] Main**

*Unable to accept that I was now Main,*

**[20:39] Main**

*I found Mom's affection all too oppressive.*

**[20:42] Main**

*Even then, when I decided to make a book,*

**[20:45] Main**

*this story was the first  
thing to come to mind.*

**[20:49] Main**

I wanna turn all of Mom's stories  
into books so I never forget.

**[20:56] Main**

That way, I'll be able to  
read them whenever I want.

**[21:02] Main**

*I feel like this is the first time I've  
been able to smile genuinely as Main.*

**[21:10] Main**

*Now if I bake and harden  
them, they'll be done!*

**SIGN** Clay Tablets Explosion

**[21:24] Eva**

Main?!

**[21:27] Main**

No!

**SIGN** Next Chapter

Baptisms and Strange Fevers

**[23:07] Main**

Clay tablets were a dead end, too, but  
that's not enough to make me give up!

**[23:11] Tuuli**

What will you do next?

**[23:13] Main**

Next? Next...

**[23:17] Main**

O-Oh, right. Next up is your baptism.

**[23:21] Ferdinand**

If we're speaking of baptism,  
it's my time to shine.

**[23:27] Main**

Sorry, Head Priest. No screen time for you.

**[23:31] Tuuli**

Main! You shouldn't talk to weird strangers!

**SIGN** Illustration by Iida Seriko

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