

# E6 - Meeting

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**[00:00] Benno**

**[00:00] Ferdinand**

*One failure after another throws  
Main into despair and illness.*

**[00:06] Main**

The fever in my body is smaller now?

**[00:10] Ferdinand**

*While bewildered by her strange fevers,*

**[00:12] Ferdinand**

*she looks to walk down a  
new path all the same.*

**SIGN** Ascendance of a Bookworm

**SIGN** Ascendance of a Bookworm

**SIGN** Chapter Six Meeting

**[02:04] Main**

Lutz, you will do as I say.  
I won't hear any objections.

**[02:08] Lutz**

Wh-What's gotten into you?

**[02:11] Lutz**

Stop! Don't do this!

**[02:15] Lutz**

You could've just said you  
were gonna wash my hair.

**[02:17] Main**

If I had, you would've ran away.

**[02:20] Lutz**

Urk.

**[02:22] Lutz**

What brought this on, anyway?

**[02:24] Main**

First impressions are important.

**[02:27] Main**

So you'd better dress

your best tomorrow, too.

**[02:31] Lutz**

I don't think it'd change much, honestly.

**[02:34] Main**

You should still do everything you can.

**[02:37] Lutz**

Ah, that felt good.

**[02:44] Main**

Say...

**[02:45] Main**

What do you wanna achieve by becoming a traveling trader?

**[02:50] Lutz**

Where did that come from?

**[02:52] Main**

Your parents can't get you a referral here, so you should really think about it.

**[02:58] Main**

Unless you have a goal in mind, you won't land an apprentice gig.

**[03:06] Lutz**

Do *you* have a goal in mind?

**[03:09] Lutz**

You wanna be a merchant yourself, don't you?

**[03:12] Main**

As my second option, but yes.

**[03:14] Main**

And I do know what I wanna do as an apprentice merchant.

**[03:19] Lutz**

What's that?

**[03:20] Main**

I wanna sell paper.

**[03:22] Lutz**

Paper? Not books?

**[03:24] Main**

I don't think there's much demand for books here.

**[03:28] Main**

But paper is a different story.

**[03:37] Lutz**

Hey...

**[03:38] Lutz**

He said the third bell, right? Aren't we here too early?

**[03:41] Main**

Better too early than late.

**[03:50] Main**

Oh, there he is.

**[03:53] Main**

Remember your greetings.

**[03:55] Lutz**

Y-Yeah.

**[04:07] Main**

*He brought someone with him?*

**[04:12] Otto**

Heya, Main.

**[04:14] Main**

Good day, Mister Otto.

**[04:21] Main**

Thank you very much for taking  
the time to meet with us today.

**[04:26] Main**

This is Lutz, my friend.

**[04:36] Lutz**

Hello, I'm Lutz!

**[04:38] Lutz**

It's a pleasure to meet you!

**[04:40] Otto**

This is Main. The captain's  
daughter, and my assistant.

**[04:46] Benno**

An unbaptized child is your assistant?

**[04:49] Otto**

I'm grooming her for the role by  
teaching her how to read and write.

**[04:53] Benno**

Huh...

**[04:58] Otto**

This is Benno, an old buddy of mine  
from my days as a traveling trader.

**[05:02] Otto**

He may have a foul mouth, but  
he's a nice guy deep down.

**[05:05] Main**

Hello. I'm Main.

**[05:08] Main**

It's a pleasure to make your acquaintance.

**[05:10] Benno**

Oh, how very polite of you.

**[05:13] Benno**

My name is Benno.

**[05:15] Benno**

The pleasure is all mine.

**[05:19] Benno**

If you don't mind me asking,  
what is that on your head?

**[05:30] Main**

A hair stick. I use it to tie up my hair.

**[05:38] Benno**

Just a piece of wood, I see.

**[05:42] Main**

Indeed.

**[05:43] Main**

It is just a piece of shaved wood.

**[05:47] Benno**

Wow.

**[05:49] Benno**

Tell me, lass.

**[05:51] Benno**

What did you do to make your hair so shiny?

**[05:54] Main**

I made a mix of surprisingly common items.

**[05:57] Main**

The details are confidential.

**[06:01] Benno**

Your hair looks just as splendid, lad.

**[06:04] Lutz**

Main washed it for me.

**[06:06] Benno**

Tch. I see.

**[06:08] Main**

*Too bad!*

**[06:09] Main**

*I have no intention of putting my  
golden goose into play just yet.*

**[06:15] Otto**

So...

**[06:17] Otto**

Lutz, you want to join the  
traveling trade, I hear?

**[06:20] Lutz**

Oh, yes.

**[06:23] Lutz**

I...

**[06:24] Otto**

Forget about it.

**[06:26] Otto**

Only a fool would relinquish  
his citizenship.

**[06:30] Main**

"Citizenship"?

**[06:32] Otto**

The right to reside in any given city.

**[06:35] Main**

Then if you don't have one...

**[06:37] Benno**

Without it, you'll have no proof of identity.

**[06:41] Benno**

You won't be able to get a job,  
rent a home, get married,

**[06:45] Benno**

or anything else.

**[06:47] Otto**

You know how children get  
baptized at age seven?

**[06:50] Both**

Yeah...

**[06:51] Otto**

That's when you get your citizenship.

**[06:54] Otto**

If an outsider wants to obtain one,

**[06:56] Otto**

he has to cough up an absurd sum of money.

**[06:58] Lutz**

But...

**[07:00] Otto**

Besides,

**[07:00] Otto**

the life of a nomad is  
nothing like city life.

**[07:03] Otto**

For example, what do you  
do when you need water?

**[07:07] Lutz**

Draw it from a well?

**[07:09] Otto**

Right. But you won't necessarily have  
access to a well on your travels.

**[07:13] Otto**

You'll have to find a  
watering hole yourself.

**[07:16] Lutz**

Couldn't I just go to the river?

**[07:18] Main**

And how would you know where it is?

**[07:21] Main**

You won't be traveling

along one the entire way.

**[07:24] Lutz**

Oh...

**[07:25] Otto**

Main's right.

**[07:27] Otto**

That's why a family's routes are passed down through generations in this trade.

**[07:33] Otto**

Those routes are too valuable to share with outsiders.

**[07:37] Otto**

And the most important issue here is the finish line.

**[07:42] Otto**

Do you know what a traveling trader's ultimate goal is?

**[07:49] Otto**

Citizenship.

**[07:51] Otto**

They save up money so they can leave their rough travels behind

**[07:55] Otto**

and live in peace in the city one day.

**[07:57] Otto**

That's every traveling trader's dream.

**[08:02] Lutz**

But that's...

**[08:03] Otto**

Do you really think they'd accept you after you cast your citizenship away?

**[08:11] Otto**

That is the reality. Give up on joining the traveling trade.

**[08:21] Otto**

That said, Main did a propose an idea.

**[08:25] Otto**

Is becoming an apprentice merchant not good enough?

**[08:29] Lutz**

Main?

**[08:30] Main**

I figured you should hear from someone who has lived that life.

**[08:35] Main**

But now that I've heard all that, even I think the traveling trade's a bad idea.

**[08:47] Lutz**

So you've been looking out for me, huh?

**[08:53] Main**

But hey, apparently apprentice merchants get to go out of town to stock up.

**[08:58] Lutz**

Apprentice merchant, huh?

**[09:02] Benno**

Do you want to be a merchant?

**[09:11] Lutz**

Yes, sir!

**[09:12] Benno**

I see.

**[09:14] Benno**

And what can you sell?

**[09:16] Benno**

What do you *want* to sell when you're a merchant?

**[09:25] Lutz**

Well...

**[09:31] Benno**

If you can't answer that, we're done here.

**[09:43] Main**

Do you want to make my paper for me?

**[09:56] Lutz**

I do have a goal, sir!

**[10:00] Lutz**

I'll bring all of Main's ideas to reality!

**[10:10] Benno**

So the lass will think of creations, and you'll make and sell them?

**[10:14] Benno**

Do you want to be a merchant too, lass?

**[10:17] Main**

As my second option, but yes.

**[10:19] Otto**

Is handling paperwork at the gate your first?

**[10:22] Main**

My first option is to be a book seller, or a librarian, even.

**[10:26] Benno**

Say what? "Librarian"?

**[10:29] Main**

Uh... A caretaker of sorts for books.

**[10:33] Benno**

That's a job for nobility.

**[10:35] Main**

*Tch! Darn those lucky nobles!*

**[10:38] Benno**

So, do you have any ideas right now?

**[10:41] Main**

Yes.

**[10:43] Main**

I want to produce and sell paper  
that's not made from animal skin.

**[10:47] Benno**

Paper that isn't made from animal skin?

**[10:50] Main**

That's right.

**[10:51] Main**

I'll produce paper using plants.

**[10:54] Benno**

Did you just say "plants"?

**[10:56] Main**

I did. It'll be cheaper to  
produce than parchment,

**[11:00] Main**

so I'm sure it'll make for some  
very profitable merchandise.

**[11:02] Benno**

I see.

**[11:04] Benno**

So, how exactly will you produce it?

**[11:06] Main**

The details are confidential!

**[11:10] Benno**

I'd like to see this paper. Do you have it?

**[11:13] Main**

Not yet.

**[11:15] Main**

We'll have a prototype by the  
time of our baptism next summer.

**[11:20] Main**

You can decide whether  
it's usable or not then.

**[11:30] Benno**

Very interesting. That's fine by me.

**[11:33] Lutz**

Yes!

**[11:34] Main**

We did it, Lutz!

**[11:40] Main**

Let's do our best!

**[11:41] ---**

Yeah!

**[11:44] Main**

Mister Otto, thank you very much for today.

**[11:47] Otto**

It certainly was a fun day off.

**[11:52] Benno**

Be it her conduct or her speech,

**[11:55] Benno**

nothing about her indicates an  
unbaptized child of a soldier.

**[12:00] Otto**

Her family is perfectly ordinary.

**[12:02] Otto**

She's the odd one out.

**[12:04] Benno**

Plant-based paper, eh?

**[12:07] Benno**

If they succeed, it will turn  
the market on its head.

**[12:10] Otto**

Wait just one moment! Are you thinking  
of making her your apprentice?

**[12:13] Benno**

Of course I am.

**[12:14] Benno**

She's already thought of hair  
sticks, a way to make hair shine,

**[12:17] Benno**

and plant-based paper.

**[12:19] Benno**

She's sure to have all kinds  
of other ideas up her sleeve.

**[12:21] Benno**

I'm going to have both of them join me.

**[12:25] Otto**

Absolutely not! She's my assistant!

**[12:30] Lutz**

I know you're pleased,

**[12:32] Lutz**

but don't get too worked up or  
you'll develop another fever.

**[12:35] Main**

But we're gonna make paper!  
That's one step away from books!

**[12:39] Main**

Yahoo!

**[12:42] Lutz**

Okay, sure, but how are we gonna make it?

**[12:47] Main**

Uh-oh...

**[12:50] Main**

We don't have the tools.

**SIGN** Ascendance of a  
Bookworm

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**[13:02] Tuuli**

How'd Main's meeting go?

**[13:04] Eva**

Looks like she and Lutz have been  
accepted as apprentice merchants.

**[13:08] Tuuli**

What? Really?

**[13:11] Tuuli**

I was sure she had no chance.

**[13:14] Eva**

It's conditional, though.

**[13:17] Main**

We need a steamer, a deckle, and...

**[13:23] Main**

Paper making happens in two steps:  
extracting the fiber, and molding it.

**[13:28] Main**

First, you chop wood,

**[13:29] Main**

steam it,

**[13:31] Main**

and then skin it.

**[13:32] Main**

When that's done,

**SIGN** When

**SIGN** When that's

**SIGN** When that's done

**SIGN** When that's done!

**[13:34] Main**

once you've separated the useful  
fiber from everything else,

**[13:37] Main**

you beat it down and unravel it.

**[13:39] Main**

And after that,

**SIGN** And

**SIGN** And after

**SIGN** And after that

**SIGN** And after that!

**[13:41] Main**

you screen a mix of the fiber,  
water, and starch with the deckle.

**[13:45] Main**

You then couch the paper  
and press the water out.

**[13:48] Main**

And once you dry it, you're done!

**[13:51] Main**

If we don't have the tools, we  
just have to make those, too!

**[13:55] Main**

I'll ask Lutz tomorrow if we  
can make all this equipment.

**[14:00] Gunther**

I'm home.

**[14:01] Tuuli**

Welcome back, Dad!

**[14:04] Gunther**

I'm home.

**[14:06] Main**

Oh, welcome back, Dad.

**[14:09] Gunther**

Don't feel too bad, Main.

**[14:12] Gunther**

You can find someone else to apprentice with.

**[14:17] Main**

Why did all three of you  
just assume I had no chance?

**[14:23] Main**

I'll have you know I was accepted.

**[14:25] Tuuli**

It's conditional, though.

**[14:33] Lutz**

A tree that'll provide the raw material?

**[14:36] Main**

Yeah. I want you to find a soft, young-ish  
tree with long and sturdy fibers.

**[14:41] Lutz**

Hmm...

**[14:44] Lutz**

I'll try asking someone who knows  
a lot of about trees and wood.

**[14:46] Main**

Thanks.

**[14:47] Main**

Also...

**[14:49] Main**

Could you make these tools, Lutz?

**[14:54] Lutz**

Do you have nails?

**[14:57] Main**

Nails?

**[14:58] Lutz**

Yeah. I can't make anything without them.

**[15:02] Main**

So yeah, we don't have the equipment to make the equipment we need.

**[15:08] Otto**

I guess you'll have to make the nails first.

**[15:10] Main**

It's no laughing matter!

**[15:13] Main**

By the way, what made you want to become a soldier?

**[15:18] Main**

Didn't you say citizenship was expensive?

**[15:24] Otto**

I did it so I could marry Corinna.

**[15:27] Otto**

It was not long after I turned fifteen and became an adult.

**[15:31] Otto**

I came to this town and met The One.

**[15:35] Otto**

I was shot through the heart the moment I laid eyes on her.

**[15:38] Main**

*Long story short,*

**[15:39] Main**

*he fell for Corinna at first sight, bought his citizenship,*

**[15:43] Main**

*and became a soldier.*

**[15:45] Otto**

Oh! Do you want to make a deal, Main?

**[15:49] Main**

A deal?

**[15:50] Otto**

Yeah. If you tell me how to make hair shiny,

**[15:55] Otto**

I'll pay for your nails.

**[15:57] Main**

Really?!

**[15:59] Main**

*But why would he care about the  
Simple All-In-One Shampoo?*

**[16:04] Main**

*Who actually wants it?*

**[16:06] Main**

*The wife?*

**[16:08] Main**

*It's the wife, isn't it?*

**[16:11] Main**

I can't teach you how to make it, but  
I don't mind trading some for nails.

**[16:16] Otto**

Bartering, eh?

**[16:19] Otto**

Very well.

**[16:20] Otto**

We have a deal!

**[16:24] Main**

*And so, I was invited to visit  
Otto's home on the next day off.*

**[16:34] Main**

Wow.

**[16:35] Main**

This place hardly feels  
like the same town anymore.

**[16:39] Otto**

Is this your first time  
coming to the north side?

**[16:42] Main**

Yeah.

**[16:43] Main**

Soldiers aren't very rich, so most  
of them live in the south, right?

**[16:48] Main**

How come you get to live here?

**[16:52] Otto**

My brother-in-law didn't want to  
be separated from his dear sister,

**[16:55] Otto**

so he told us to live  
upstairs in the family home.

**[16:57] Main**

Huh...

**[16:59] Otto**

Here we are.

**[17:01] Main**

What? *This* is your home?!

**[17:06] Otto**

We live on the third floor here.

**[17:08] Main**

*I'm amazed he got the green light to marry such a rich girl.*

**[17:13] Corinna**

Welcome! I'm so happy you came!

**[17:16] Corinna**

I'm Corinna, Otto's wife.

**[17:20] Main**

Hello, Missus Corinna. I'm Main.

**[17:23] Main**

I've been looking forward to seeing you!

**[17:28] Corinna**

You really are a polite young lady.

**[17:33] Corinna**

Also...

**[17:35] Corinna**

Your hair is so pretty!

**[17:38] Corinna**

Forgive me.

**[17:40] Corinna**

Let me show you inside.

**[17:43] Main**

*Corinna may be young, but she's already part of the top brass at the Seamstress Guild.*

**[17:48] Main**

*Tuuli was greener than her hair with envy that I was getting to meet her idol.*

**[17:53] Corinna**

I'm ready, Main.

**[17:56] Main**

Okay.

**[18:03] Corinna**

My hair is so smooth now...

**[18:06] Main**

I hope you like it.

**[18:09] Corinna**

I very much do!

**[18:12] Corinna**

Thank you, Main.

**[18:18] Corinna**

Say, may I ask you something?

**[18:22] Main**

Yes?

**[18:24] Corinna**

How is Otto at work?

**[18:28] Corinna**

I'm worried because he had to give up his merchant's life for me.

**[18:34] Main**

I don't think you have anything to worry about.

**[18:37] Main**

He's still very much a merchant at work.

**[18:40] Main**

He always haggles with people that come on deliveries,

**[18:43] Main**

with his merchant's spirit burning bright.

**[18:46] Corinna**

I see. His merchant's spirit...

**[18:53] Corinna**

I feel like a great weight has been lifted off my shoulders.

**[19:01] Corinna**

How do I look, Otto?

**[19:06] Otto**

M-M-Main! Don't you have something to do?!

**[19:11] Main**

I might remember something once I have my nails.

**[19:18] Main**

Score!

**[19:23] Main**

*We decided to use the nails to make a deckle right away.*

**[19:37] Main**

Can you make them to exact measure to avoid any gaps when they're stacked?

**[19:42] Lutz**

Exact measure?

**[19:43] Lutz**

I don't have the tools for that unless I ask my dad or brothers.

**[19:47] Main**

Do you think they'll let you borrow them?

**[19:50] Lutz**

Hmm...

**[19:52] Lutz**

I dunno.

**(Flashback) [19:54] Deid**

Merchants are cold, heartless monsters  
that only have money on their minds!

**(Flashback) [19:58] Karla**

Forget becoming an apprentice merchant

**(Flashback) [20:00] Karla**

and become a craftsman like  
your father and brothers, Lutz.

**[20:08] Main**

Lutz, will you be all right?

**[20:11] Lutz**

Don't worry! I'll work things out!

**[20:13] Lutz**

Oh, I went around asking  
lumberers about the tree.

**[20:17] Main**

Really?

**[20:18] Lutz**

Really. They told me about soft trees like...

**[20:22] Otto**

Main, Lutz.

**[20:24] Otto**

For you.

**[20:27] Otto**

An invitation for you two.

**[20:29] Lutz**

What's it say?

**[20:31] Main**

Mister Benno wants to see you and me.

**(Flashback) [20:37] Benno**

I'm going to have both of them join me.

**(Flashback) [20:40] Otto**

Absolutely not! She's my assistant!

**(Flashback) [20:43] Main**

Mister Otto.

**(Flashback) [20:45] Otto**

What's the matter, Main?

**(Flashback) [20:48] Main**

I wanted to ask you something.

**(Flashback) [20:51] Main**

Do you know of any illnesses where your  
fever suddenly grows or shrinks?

**(Flashback) [20:58] Main**

It always feels like the  
fever's eating into me.

**(Flashback) [21:01] Otto**

Never heard of anything like it, sorry.

**(Flashback) [21:05] Benno**

No idea.

**(Flashback) [21:06] Main**

I see.

**(Flashback) [21:08] Main**

Thank you.

**(Flashback) [21:13] Otto**

She's unbelievably frail.

**(Flashback) [21:17] Otto**

There's no way she can work for you.

**(Flashback) [21:20] Benno**

It may be the Devouring.

**(Flashback) [21:24] Benno**

If it is the Devouring,

**(Flashback) [21:26] Benno**

she'll die very soon.

**SIGN** Next Chapter

Seeds of Suspicion

**[23:06] Ferdinand**

It seems you've taken a step closer  
to making plant-based paper.

**[23:10] Ferdinand**

That's exactly right!

**[23:12] Main**

Anyway, Head Priest,

**[23:13] Main**

what did he mean, I'll die very  
soon if it's the Devouring?

**[23:17] Ferdinand**

Exactly that, but what do you want to know?

**[23:21] Ferdinand**

How someone with the Devouring dies?

**[23:23] Ferdinand**

Terrifyingly, a person on the  
brink of death due to it...

**[23:27] Main**

Eek! Not another word!

**[23:29] Main**

I can't stand pain or scary things!

**[23:32] Ferdinand**

As you wish.

**SIGN** Illustration by Kitora Con

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