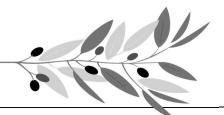
CRESCIT EUNDO

By Ariel Chu and Nico MacDougall

Golden Cobra Challenge 2024 Submission



CRESCIT EUNDO *"It Grows as it Goes"*



This game explores the lives of a group of friends as they reflect on their college experiences and progress through the first five years of their postgraduate lives. Through the twists and turns that life takes, it examines the control (or lack thereof) we have over the future. Much like a gardener with high hopes for their plants, we all have an idea for how things will turn out in our lives—when in reality, there is so much that is out of our hands.

MATERIALS

- ✤ 3-8 players
- Provided materials in the appendices (character cards, yearly questions, plant illustrations), printed out and cut out into individual pieces if applicable
- Scissors 1 pair per player
- Writing utensils 1 per player
- A smartphone or laptop
- A way to keep track of time (a watch or a timer app)
- A play area with enough space for all players to move around in and sit some distance apart from each other

SETTING UP THE GAME

This game will need a facilitator, and that facilitator will likely be you, the person reading this! If you are not the facilitator, please make sure to pass these instructions off to whoever will be, as they will need to reference them and read portions out loud.

Now are we addressing the facilitator? Excellent! Choose a character from the provided characters (**Appendix A**) that you think would be the likeliest in this friend group to take charge of a multi-year project. With your character selected, gather all the players and proceed onward (starting with setting safety tools and expectations). Whenever you are directed to read out loud from an official college communique, feel free to treat it with the reverence and/or derision you feel it is due.

SAFETY TOOLS AND EXPECTATIONS

Before you start your game, have a frank discussion between all the players about the kind of tone you wish to strike in play. A lighter game could reflect on experiences common to depictions of undergraduate and postgraduate life such as:

- Dating
- Getting your first job
- Getting your first apartment
- Road trips

- Getting married
- Making new friends
- Throwing parties
- Competing for (and possibly winning) awards

A more intense game could reflect on other experiences that are common to undergraduate and postgraduate life such as:

- Drinking to excess
- Drug use
- Sex (first times, consensual, non-consensual, etc)
- Romance
- * Abuse

- Racism
- Homophobia
- Transphobia
- Ableism
- Mental health crises

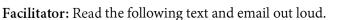
If you are particularly interested in exploring any of these topics, say so before the game begins. Indicating your interest in these topics will help players know to ask you about them during gameplay. Other players may not be comfortable involving their characters in these topics, so please do not do so unless they have voiced a similar interest. However, while the comfort and safety of everyone playing is important, we also recognize that these issues occur at and after college in real life. You do not have the ability (either in real life or this game) to control what happens to someone else, but here are some tools to help calibrate your experience in the game:

- If another player is talking about their character's experiences with you and you become uncomfortable, say "I'm sorry, but I'd rather not talk about that." This indicates that they should change the subject or find someone else to engage in conversation.
- If another player is describing a shared experience between your characters that makes you uncomfortable, say
 "That's not how I remember it," and follow up with your character's recollection. This indicates that the direction the other player was taking is not somewhere you wish to go.

Finally, if your boundaries (as a player or a character) are not being respected in the game, it may be best for you to leave the situation. We include these tools to help calibrate your game experience under the assumption that everyone is engaging in good faith.



THE NIGHT BEFORE GRADUATION



It is the night before graduation at Grentham College, and we have gathered here to await an email that goes out to the seniors every year. None of us know what this announcement entails, only that we all had to submit our names as a group to the administration beforehand. As the person who submitted our names, I was told to gather us all here at 8 pm sharp.

It's 8:03, and I just got an email:

FROM: president@grentham.edu TO: facilitators@grentham.edu SUBJECT: Read aloud immediately

Dear Facilitator,

Thank you for stepping up to take charge of Grentham College's proudest and most ancient tradition! Over the course of your time at Grentham, you've probably found yourself thinking: How is it possible that all of our alumni go on to have such incredible and successful careers? Is it hard work? Is it natural talent? Is it good luck? But it's none of those things: it's magic.

This is not a joke. This is not a prank. Every senior at Grentham College participates in this ritual the night before graduation to help jump-start their futures, and the results speak for themselves. These instructions will walk you through the ritual step-by-step, and by the end you'll be ready for graduation.

Step 1. Think back to when you all first met during freshman orientation. Sit in a circle to put yourselves in that headspace and introduce yourselves all over again.

Facilitator: Present the provided characters (**Appendix A**) to the players and allow each player to look through all of them before choosing one. Introduce yourself (the facilitator) first with the following information:

- Your name and pronounsWhat you want to major in
- Where you're from
 A fun fact about yourself

When you're finished, pick someone else to go next. They'll introduce themselves in the same way, pick the next person, and so on.

Step 2. Select one seed from those that have been provided to you. Over the course of the ritual, you'll imbue your seed with the events that will shape the next five years of your life.

Facilitator: Present the provided plant printouts to the players (**Appendix C**) and allow everyone to look through all of them before selecting one each. Follow the reverse order of introductions for selecting plants, starting with the last person and ending with yourself.

Step 3. In your freshman year, you had big plans. Think about the first day of classes. Then everyone, contribute one sensory detail you remember about that day.

Step 4. Holding that moment in your mind, imbue your seed with what you as a freshman most hoped you would achieve and what you most feared would happen to you in life.

Facilitator: To imbue a seed, instruct players to answer the prompts by writing directly onto their plants and then folding their paper as many times as they'd like until they can no longer see what they wrote. (Let them know that the more times they fold the paper, the more actions a player will need to take after graduation to fully reveal what's been written.)

Examples of hopes:

- I will be a published author
- ✤ I will get married

- I will move to Paris
- My parents will be proud of me

Examples of fears:

- I won't get into grad school
- ✤ I'll never fall in love
- I'll never find my true passion
- I'll never be able to live on my own

Step 5. In your sophomore year, things began to change as some relationships deepened and others faded away. Starting with the facilitator, get up one at a time and sit next to the person you got to know the best during that year. After everyone has moved, give your seed to the person who is physically closest to you. Some may end up with more than one seed, and some may end up with none. If you have multiple, keep track of whose is whose.

Step 6. Imbue each seed with a memory of its owner you'll never forget and one you wish you could leave behind. After you're done, return it.

Examples:

- A conversation we had helped me come out to our friends
- You got the role that I really wanted and were much better than I could have been
- Me got caught in a thunderstorm and had to wait it out underneath a bridge

Step 7. In your junior year, some people went abroad and others stayed on campus. If you went abroad, say where you went and move somewhere in the playing area as far from everyone else as possible. If you stayed on campus, move to the center of the playing area. Then, one at a time, give your seed to someone you found yourself missing that year.

Step 8. Imbue each seed with a secret you've kept for its owner and a secret you've kept from them. After you're done, return it.

Step 9. In your senior year, everything old is new again. Sit in a circle and, one at a time, share your major, where you're going to live after graduation, and a new fun fact. After everyone has shared, give your seed to the person you trust the most.

Step 10. Imbue each seed with a conflict you hope its owner resolves and a conflict you fear they won't resolve. After you're done, return it.

Your seeds are now complete and ready to blossom into their full potential. Over the next five years, you will shape your seed into its final form: a beautiful and perfect plant. Every graduate of Grentham College should be able to do this through the hard work, dedication, and critical thinking skills they've gained while matriculating in these hallowed halls.

At your Five Year Reunion, you will return to campus to perform a ritual where you will place your burgeoning plants in a plot to be admired by your fellow alumni. Each year, you receive an email with further instructions on how to create this ritual together. Use the next five years wisely and live your lives in a manner worthy of the Grentham name!

Sincerely, Dr. Lavinia Greene, Grentham College President Grentham '95



GRADUATION CEREMONY

All Players: Play *Pomp and Circumstance* by Edward Elgar as you line up single file alphabetically by first name. One by one, walk to the front of the playing area, face the other players, say your name clearly, and return to the back of the line to applause. When everyone is finished, throw your seeds in the air. Collect them, say your goodbyes, and go to your various homes (new or old) by arranging yourself around the playing area. If you're living in the same city as someone else, sit next to them. If you're in the same state, sit with some distance between you. If you're across the country, move to one side of the playing area. If you have moved internationally, sit at a distance, perhaps even outside the playing area.





During the next five years, your characters will help the ritual take effect by **blooming**, **pruning**, **and manifesting** the elements imbued in their seeds. As your characters' seeds grow into plants, you will have the chance to participate in regular mini-reunions with other characters.

Each year lasts approximately five minutes, during which players will respond to provided questions (**Appendix B**) and take corresponding actions, usually a directive to either **Bloom or Prune** their seeds.

- To **Bloom** your seed, unfold your sheet of paper once.
 - To **Prune** your seed, make a single cut anywhere on your sheet of paper.

When you reveal something written on your sheet of paper, it becomes true in the world of your character. An event might actually happen to your character, or it might simply resonate thematically through the character's life. If part of what is written down is unintelligible, missing, or cut out, you can decide what that absence or ambiguity represents in your character's life.

Some prompts may include directives to take other actions, like getting up and moving around the playing area or talking to another player. Follow these instructions as you are able.

Should you feel so inspired, you are welcome and encouraged to take additional actions to reflect what's happening in the game. For example, if your character moves to a new city unprompted, feel free to get up and move to a new space in the playing area. Embodying the actions your characters are taking makes it easier for other players to ask about those actions in the game.

At the end of a year, the facilitator will read an email aloud and announce a matter up for discussion during that year's mini-reunion. When this happens, players decide if they want to (and can) attend the mini-reunion in person. If anyone can't attend the reunion in person but wants to participate, they can contribute by "calling in" from their location by phone or Zoom. If anyone doesn't want to or can't participate (for an in-character or real life reason), they don't have to attend. Comment on absences diegetically (e.g. asking whether anyone has heard from anyone who's missing).

Mini-reunions last 10-15 minutes and should proceed as organically as possible, with all attendees catching up with each other about what they've done, how life has been, and how their plants are doing. At some point before each minireunion is over, all attendees must agree on whatever the year's email has prompted them to decide. When a minireunion ends, everyone returns to their homes and begins the next year. At the end of the fifth year, the mini-reunion is replaced by the big school reunion at Grentham College, which has its own specific set of instructions. **Facilitator:** Make sure that all players get a copy of the Year One questions. Allow players 5 minutes to answer the questions and take their corresponding actions.

All players: Answer (in your head or in writing) at least two questions from the list from your character's POV. For every question you answer, take the corresponding action(s) as prompted. You may choose to skip a question if you feel it does not apply to your character.

After 5 minutes have elapsed, the facilitator reads aloud:

It's the end of Year One, and I just got an email.

FROM: alumnirelations@grentham.edu TO: facilitators@grentham.edu SUBJECT: YEAR ONE CHECK-IN — Spread Those Roots!

Hey Fellow Snapdragon!

Wowza! What. A. Year! As your '17 Class President, I know that the magic of Grentham didn't end for ME after graduation! Grentham's network is INCREDIBLE, and I'm always meeting fantastic alums (like you!!) wherever I go! Talk about far-reaching roots, amirite?

By now, your seeds should be happily rooted (I know mine is!). Speaking of roots, **this would be a good time to check in with your groupmates and decide where on campus you're going to plant your gardens.** Give your BFFs a call! Go to their homes! Magic thrives in COMMUNITY, and community means all of you!

Can't wait to see how amazing your plants are at our Five Year Reunion!

GO SNAPDRAGONS!! Olive Glenn, Grentham College Class of '17 Student Body President

Facilitator: Arrange a mini-reunion and let players decide whether or not their characters can attend. Allow characters to spend 10-15 minutes talking about their lives. By the end of the mini-reunion, characters should have decided where on campus to plant their collective garden.

Facilitator: Make sure that all players get a copy of the Year Two questions. Allow players 5 minutes to answer the questions and take their corresponding actions.

All players: Answer (in your head or in writing) at least two questions from the list from your character's POV. For every question you answer, take the corresponding action(s) as prompted. You may choose to skip a question if you feel it does not apply to your character.

After 5 minutes have elapsed, the facilitator reads aloud:

It's the end of Year Two, and I just got an email.

FROM: alumnirelations@grentham.edu TO: facilitators@grentham.edu SUBJECT: YEAR TWO CHECK-IN — Snapdragons in "STEM"

Esteemed Snapdragon:

Salutations from your '17 Class Valedictorian! The Grentham Alumni Department has graciously requested that I remind you of your gardening commitments and share my own progress.

To this end, I happily report that my own plant has seen marvelous strides in growth! After months of hard work, perseverance, and "Grentham Grit," my once diminutive seed has developed a robust stem, capable of weathering even the toughest winds!

At this juncture, you should meet with your groupmates and decide what order in which to place your plants in the ground, come reunion time. Every step of this ritual counts! Remember: growth is a communal responsibility. We must all turn our faces towards the sun and flourish together!

Crescit eundo, A. Phid, Grentham College Class of '17 Valedictorian

Facilitator: Arrange a mini-reunion and let players decide whether or not their characters can attend. Allow characters to spend 10-15 minutes talking about their lives. By the end of the mini-reunion, characters should have decided which order to place their plants in the ground.

Facilitator: Make sure that all players get a copy of the Year Three questions. Allow players 5 minutes to answer the questions and take their corresponding actions.

All players: Answer (in your head or in writing) at least two questions from the list from your character's POV. For every question you answer, take the corresponding action(s) as prompted. You may choose to skip a question if you feel it does not apply to your character.

After 5 minutes have elapsed, the facilitator reads aloud:

It's the end of Year Three, and I just got an email.

FROM: alumnirelations@grentham.edu TO: facilitators@grentham.edu

SUBJECT: YEAR THREE CHECK-IN — Leaf It All On The Field

What Up Snapdragons!!

When I was quarterback for the Grentham Snapdragons, my FAVORITE part of the game (other than winning) was walking out to a pump-up song. (In my opinion, EVERYTHING needs a pump-up song.)

I'm HYPED to get back to Grentham and finish our ritual. Us Snappy Boys already KNOW we're gonna be blasting "Snapdragon Strong (Roots Remix)" when we plant our garden next to the 10-yard line. (Also, I don't know about you all, but the leaves on our plants are looking pretty dang good!!)

Snapdragons: what's the song YOU'LL play for your reunion ritual? Whatever you choose, make it count!

SNAPDRAGON STRONG ALL NIGHT LONG!! Phyll "Oh Snap" Asterius, Grentham College Class of '17

Facilitator: Arrange a mini-reunion and let players decide whether or not their characters can attend. Allow characters to spend 10-15 minutes talking about their lives. By the end of the mini-reunion, characters should have decided which song to play for the duration of their ritual.

Facilitator: Make sure that all players get a copy of the Year Four questions. Allow players 5-10 minutes to answer the questions and take their corresponding actions.

All players: Answer (in your head or in writing) at least two questions from the list from your character's POV. For every question you answer, take the corresponding action(s) as prompted. You may choose to skip a question if you feel it does not apply to your character.

After 5 minutes have elapsed, the facilitator reads aloud:

It's the end of Year Four, and I just got an email.

FROM: alumnirelations@grentham.edu TO: facilitators@grentham.edu SUBJECT: YEAR FOUR CHECK-IN — Plotting your Plots

Hi Valued Snapdragon,

This is Clover Creeley from the Grentham Alumni Relations Department! Did you know that Grentham College relies on the generosity of alumni like YOU? A one-time donation of \$10, \$20, \$50, or even \$100 goes a long way towards helping the College blossom. As they say: money showers lead to flowers!

Speaking of flowers: how are your plants looking? Are you as excited as I am to rehome them on campus next year? In fact, **now is a good time to think about how you want to end your ritual.** It should be personal and meaningful to all of you, but don't go too overboard! You need enough time to attend all the other great reunion events!

Follow this link to donate to the Grentham Alumni Fund! Snap to it!

See you next year,

Clover Creeley Grentham Alumni Relations Department, Grentham Class of '17

Facilitator: Arrange a mini-reunion and let players decide whether or not their characters can attend. Allow characters to spend 10-15 minutes talking about their lives. By the end of the mini-reunion, characters should have decided how to end their ritual.

Facilitator: Make sure that all players get a copy of the Year Five questions. Allow players 5-10 minutes to answer the questions and take their corresponding actions.

All players: Answer (in your head or in writing) at least two questions from the list from your character's POV. For every question you answer, take the corresponding action(s) as prompted. You may choose to skip a question if you feel it does not apply to your character.

After 5 minutes have elapsed, the facilitator reads aloud:

It's the end of Year Five, and I just got an email.

FROM: president@grentham.edu TO: facilitators@grentham.edu

SUBJECT: Invitation to Class of '17 Five-Year Reunion

Dear Valued Snapdragon Alumni,

As president of Grentham College, I offer you my sincerest congratulations on (nearly) completing your five-year ritual! All that's left to do is plant your seeds on the hallowed grounds of our campus.

To this end, I am formally inviting you all to the CLASS OF '17 FIVE-YEAR REUNION. It is my sincerest hope that all of you (and your beautiful, blooming plants!) will be in attendance for this special occasion.

Please remember that the completion of this ritual is a once-in-a-lifetime event. Ensure that you and your groupmates perform it with the reverence it is due. This ceremony is a celebration of you and all you have accomplished at Grentham and beyond. I hope you get as much out of it as I once did.

Sincerely, Dr. Lavinia Greene, Grentham College President Grentham '95

All Players: Follow the instructions in the next section ("The Reunion").

THE REUNION





All characters must silently decide whether to attend the five year reunion, with those attending congregating in the center of the playing area. Once it is clear that all attendees have arrived, perform the ritual as agreed upon in the previous mini-reunions. Use the space however you like as you plant your seeds together.

When the ritual is done, it is time to debrief. All players, whether they attended the reunion or not, are welcome and encouraged to join. Feel free to talk about what happened over the course of the last five years/several hours, but some possible things to think about are:

- Did things go the way that you expected to?
- Are you happy with where things ended up?
- What do you think the next five years will be like?

When the conversation has reached its natural end (or the time you've allotted for this game is up), thank everyone for playing, say your goodbyes, and decide what to do with your plants.







SHAW	FLOR
he/they	she/they
<u>From:</u> Carson City, Nevada	<u>From:</u> Anchorage, Alaska
<u>Major:</u> English	<u>Major:</u> Environmental science
<u>Fun fact:</u> I flew on an airplane for the first time to	<u>Fun fact:</u> I was on Teen Jeopardy and lost in the
come here.	final round.
JAKE	MARLE
he/him	they/them
<u>From:</u> Fort Lauderdale, Florida <u>Major:</u> Business <u>Fun fact:</u> I'm a supertaster.	<u>From:</u> New York City, New York <u>Major:</u> History <u>Fun fact:</u> I can speak four languages: English, Arabic, Mandarin, and German.
SOL	LARA
any pronouns	she/her
From: Mexico City, Mexico <u>Major</u> : Linguistics <u>Fun fact</u> : I have a pet jumping spider but I had to leave him at home.	<u>From:</u> Twentynine Palms, California <u>Major:</u> Computer science <u>Fun fact:</u> I'm dating one of my Internet friends.
GARRETT	ASH
he/they	she/her
<u>From:</u> West Lafayette, Indiana	<u>From:</u> Seoul, South Korea
<u>Major</u> : Mathematics	<u>Major</u> : Biology
<u>Fun fact</u> : I observe "Bubble Wrap Appreciation	<u>Fun fact</u> : I've been to every single continent
Day" every single year.	(including Antarctica).
NAME:	NAME:
Pronouns:	Pronouns:
From:	From:
Major:	Major:
Fun fact:	Fun fact:





Facilitator: Print out one copy of this appendix for each participating player. Cut out and sort the question sets by year. Make sure each player gets a question set at the start of each year.



- You've decided to settle down somewhere you know. What feels familiar about this place? What feels different?
 (Bloom or Prune once.)
- You've decided to settle down somewhere you've never been before. What feels familiar about this place? What feels different? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- What kinds of people surround you? What is your relationship to them? (Bloom once.)
- How long do you see yourself being here? Is this environment sustainable? (Prune once.)
- You experience a moment of regret at having moved here. Where would you rather be instead? What would it take to get you there? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- You let yourself ease into this place. How long does it take? How does it feel? (Bloom once.)
- You long for connection and stretch out your roots in all directions. Who do you hope you make contact with? (Look up for 10-20 seconds and try to make eye contact with another player. If you succeed, Bloom once. Otherwise, Prune once.)



- One weekend, you decide to go out on a limb. What does that look like? (Take both a Bloom and Prune action, in any order.)
- You push yourself too far. How and why? (Take both a Bloom and Prune action, in any order.)
- Nourishment comes from an unexpected source. What is it? How does it make you feel? (Bloom once.)
- You find a consistent source of sunlight. Where does it come from? (Bloom once.)
- In a moment of need, something or someone lets you down. What happens and how does it make you feel?
 (Prune once.)
- You realize something you took for granted is no longer accessible. What is it? What do you do now? (Prune once.)
- You find yourself suddenly uprooted. Where are you transplanted to? (Move to a new place in the room and answer two of the Year One questions.)

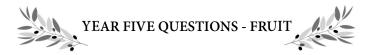
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- You hit a milestone. What is it? How does it make you feel? (Bloom twice.)
- A long-awaited opportunity falls through. Why? How does it affect you? (**Prune twice**.)
- Something is stagnating despite your best efforts. What is it? What do you do about it? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- You're offered an unexpected new path. What is it, and do you take it? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- You have a moment of doubt about the journey you're on. What sparked the doubt? What other possibilities can you imagine for yourself? (Take both a Bloom and Prune action, in any order.)
- You feel unbalanced, pulled between too many responsibilities. What are they? (Stand on one foot for the rest of the year. If you fall over, Prune twice. If you stay standing, Bloom once.)



- Some things in your life are flourishing at the expense of others. What do you prioritize? (Take both a Bloom and Prune action, in any order.)
- You cross paths with someone from your past. Who is it, and what becomes of the interaction? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- You see yourself in the mirror and feel surprised. What's different about you? How do you feel about these changes? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- Someone in your life calls you their role model. Who is this person? How do you feel about this role? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- You realize you've become skilled at something you never could've anticipated. What is it? (Bloom twice.)
- You realize you were never as good at something as you thought you were. What is it? (Prune twice.)



- Something surprises you about the way things have turned out. What is it? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- People see you in a different light. Do you agree with them? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- There is something impermanent and fleeting about where you are now. How do you feel about that? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- Something about this is bittersweet. What is it? What could you have done differently, if anything? (Bloom or Prune once.)
- There is someone you wish could be at your side right now. Who is it, and why? (Bloom or Prune once.)



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