

Jalloween

It's -- well, it's pretty much a typing error. Although 'error' doesn't have the right connotation to it, when you're talking about a spelling mistake made in a location where reality itself is temporarily malleable. 'Near-catastrophe' is a much better fit. The exact details are strictly need-to-know, but the gist of it is that there's a book, and what's written in the book happens, and it's very important that people don't write the *wrong* things in that book.

Regretfully, somebody did. Very willfully, in fact. Equally regretfully, they are no longer. Just... no longer. Hopefully that should give you an idea of how serious the original situation was.

Fortunately, the problem that got spawned isn't *quite* so dire. Our field semanticists were able to construct a memetic patch that wouldn't wreck Halloween as a concept completely, although there were the usual complications. In this case, it turns out that 'Jallow' is a Welsh (among other places) family name, with the connotations of 'jealous-amorous.' This ended up creating the temporary concept of 'Jalloween,' or 'an erotic-horror holiday celebrating enticing stalkers.' I know that doesn't sound like *much* of an improvement, but apparently all the other possibilities were worse.

Fortunately, imposed reality alterations like these are a good deal less robust than 'natural' ones; there may be a new space in reality that the concept can readily fit into, it'll disappear on its own if we keep people from filling it. Regular people are not *trying* to -- yet -- which will help a lot. But note the 'yet.' Anybody who fits the Jalloween archetype (to wit, a sexually alluring individual with tendencies towards jealousy, obsession, and violence) will find that universe will be surprisingly *accommodating* towards them for the next few weeks. They probably won't be able to reinforce the current damage to reality, and make it permanent.

But we don't take chances, in this business. Besides, even if the effects aren't permanent, any victims out there won't suddenly become un-stabbed, or anything like that. Best to keep the outrages and body count down until the universe heals itself.

That'll be your job, if you haven't figured it out yet. We have some good leads on people in your area who are most at risk for being victims of Jalloween (one way, or the other). Keep those people from getting hurt. And yes, that absolutely includes the people who are at risk for becoming stalkers. And *no*, but you simply can't shoot them. Try to think of it as being in an old erotic thriller, with

rules to match. *Killing them doesn't work until they've racked up enough of a body count to make the entire exercise pointless.*

No. No, you'll need to try to turn the whole awful situation into an entirely *different* genre. Perhaps action-adventure, with a side note of screwball comedy? That always seems to be popular with field teams, for some reason.

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