# People of the Kept Fire

*Locals, the hired company and the people under the mountain · Proposal for the full game . Part one is Act 2*



*From the design documents*

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| TYPE | Locals, the hired company and the people under the mountain |
| LOCATION | Valponte, the Bocca, the Klanac, Cinerata, the Forge |
| STORY | The Kept Fire |
| STATUS | **Proposal** for the full game (planned; nothing built). Part one is Act 2; part two is Act 3 and *Unconfirmed — awaiting the director* |

## The story, as you play it

These are the people of The Kept Fire, in the order you meet them.

**Valponte.** Gemma, the smith's daughter, walks with you because the key is hers. Her father Gerardo wipes his hands when you ask about it.

**The spring and the mountain.** Zita keeps what the river brings on a shelf. Anselmo, a hermit, counts the volcano's smoke each dawn and asks you to keep the number quiet. Tilde, ten, sells ash dolls and wants her father back from the diggers.

**The gorge.** Nevia the fuller leaves bread on a ledge. Šime weighs travellers. Dottore Quaglia measures an aqueduct.

**The company.** Captain Olimpia Ferrante is courteous, exact, and digging for something.

### How it ends Spoilers

Gerardo sold a wax print of the key. Anselmo once emptied the valley for nothing, and a child died on the road; she was Nevia's. Tilde's father works nights because he is dead. Ferrante's hirer writes under a plain knot, and the army he promised her was never hers. Under the mountain sits the Wakeful, the old empire's last governor, who cannot die and keeps the volcano's fire down.

**The people of the Kept Fire** are a design proposal for the full game (planned; every name a working name).

**6 · The Counter.** *Anselmo at his chair at dawn, tying the mountain's count into a cord (A3). Picture to come.*



**16 · The Wakeful.** *The last governor at the damper wheels (B5). Picture to come.*

Each with one idea, a look, a voice, a want and a secret.

## Valponte

- **Gemma Fabbri** (24), journeyman smith, daughter of Gerardo, Valponte's smith *(exists). The last smith of a line that has not lit a real fire in fifty generations.* Broad hands, a leather apron, a burn on one forearm she is proud of. Short answers;

she talks to metal more kindly than to people. **Wants:** to forge once at the fire her family's key came from. **Secret:** none of her own. She carries her father's. "It's my key. So it's my walk."

- **Gerardo Fabbri** (58), the smith. *A proud man who sold a thing he thought was worthless and has known since that it wasn't.* Big, slow, wipes his hands when he lies. **Secret:** in spring he let a polite stranger take a wax print of the key for a year's charcoal money. The copy is Ferrante's. It does not work: old bronze "sings", a copy does not. **Family story:** "We were outside when the door closed." The first Fabbri was the Store's tallyman.
- **Guido Castellani** *(exists)*, Vella's father, on the bridge council. He chairs the hearing in B1 and cannot bear to be the man who empties the polje for nothing a second time.

## The spring and the mountain

- **Zita** (68), keeper of the Bocca's grate. *She reads the river like post.* Small, bare-armed, a rake and a basket. Dry and cheerful. **Wants:** somebody to take the shelf seriously. **Secret:** the bronze finger on her shelf came out warm.
- **Anselmo, the Counter** (74), the hermit *(exists on the map). He raised the alarm once, was wrong, and has kept quiet ever since.* Thin, weathered, a blanket coat, fingers that never stop knotting. He speaks in numbers first. **Wants:** to be wrong again. **Secret:** twenty years ago his count jumped; he ran down and told Valponte to flee. The polje emptied for nine days. The mountain did nothing. In the crush on the gorge path a six-year-old, Lucia, went off the Ledge. He has not been down since. The count has now passed any he ever tied, and he has told nobody. "Forty a morning for thirty-one years. Fifty this spring. I stopped at ninety last week. The cord ran out."
- **Tilde** (10), of Le Braci. *A child who knows a dead city better than her own village.* Ash to the knees, a satchel of finds, sells "ash dolls" (small casts) to diggers. Talks fast, bargains hard. **Wants:** her father Berto, who took the diggers' pay in spring and now "works nights". **Secret:** she has seen him at night. He did not know her. She has decided he was tired.
- **Donna Clelia**, **Mastra Orsola** *(both exist, Acquatinta)*: the bath-keeper and the dye-master, in the spring's side quests.

## The gorge

- **Nevia** (52), the fuller. *She has hated one man for twenty years and is tired.* Strong, wet to the elbows, speaks over the hammers. Lucia's mother. Every week she leaves a loaf in the niche on the Ledge, and every week it is gone.
- **Šime** (60), toll-keeper of the Sospiro bridge. *A man who trusts a scale more than a person.* A steelyard, a slate, a goat. He charges by weight because he has worked out what the bridge will bear, and he is right.
- **Dottore Ilario Quaglia** (44), a scholar from Ragosa *(the map's scholar at the arches). He has measured a thing for six weeks and it will not be what he says it is.* Thin, sunburnt, a measuring pole, a boy to hold the other end. Pedantic and honest. He came for an aqueduct.
- **Tonka** (38), net-mender of Pržina, speaks for the fishers. **The Košara three** (Mate, Luce, Dinko), siblings who rob the gorge path with a basket on a rope. **Duje**, the lime burner, and **Jure**, the shepherd *(both exist on the map)*, at Orljak.

## The company

- **Captain Olimpia Ferrante** (45), a soldier of fortune from the mainland wars. *She lost a company over pay and decided the fault was in the soldiers.* Tall, grey at the temples, a mended breastplate, good boots. Courteous, exact, never raises her voice. **Wants:** a company that cannot walk out on her. **Secret:** her last company did not desert. She spent their pay on a siege she was sure of, and they voted. Her hirer writes under a plain knot and pays in old silver. She has never met him. "They don't eat. They don't desert. They don't ask."
- **Sergeant Rampino** (50), her second, a grapnel on a chain. A professional who has stopped asking what the night shift is.

- **The Unpaid:** about twenty hired diggers and old soldiers, and **the night shift**, their own dead.

## Under the mountain

- **The Wakeful** (the last governor; his name is not given: question F6). *He asked a city to stay, and it stayed.* An old man who does not age further, blind since the noon, a smith's apron over what was once a fine tunic, forearms like a stoker's. Slow, plain, unused to being answered. **Wants:** to be told the time of day. **Secret:** he knows what the stones cost because he is what is left over. "They stood where I put them. They smiled when I looked. Nobody ever asked me for anything again."
- **The last smith.** Forty smiths lie laid out at their benches, hands folded, in the order they died. The forty-first lies by the door, any way she fell. Her tally says she lived twenty-three years alone with him and spent them teaching him the dampers.
- **The storekeeper** (dead; Vella sees him). He barred the Store and sat down facing the door. He is furious that somebody has picked his body up.
- **The woman at the fountain** (dead; Vella sees her). The one living person in Cinerata at noon. She would not leave her son, who was standing.

**A hook for another card (one line, nothing depends on it):** in B1 the carts on the polje road are being ordered about by a tall stranger from the south in a borrowed Valponte cloak, who does it as if born to it.

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*Sources: docs/plan/full_game/island1_fire_acts2_3.md (VOLCANO-STORY, 2026-11-18). Pictures: eighteen slots under wiki/_images/isl1_fire/, not painted yet. Last updated: 2026-11-19 (VOLCANO-STORY)*