Suwena

Named local · Proposal for the full game



From the design documents

TYPE	Named local (NPC); a quest giver; never a party member
PEOPLE	All four peoples of the jungle, and none
HOME	Suwena's Fire, on the Oyowa above Wenatu, Island 2
ROLE	Warrior and leader; later the Voice of the One Fire
WEAPON	The war paddle *Second Word*
STORY	One Fire, inside Under the Green Crown (Act 2); Act 3 as a proposal
ALSO SEEN	Kaldvik (the prologue, a short cameo), Ragosa, Meneferu, the north (Act 3)
STATUS	**Proposal** for the full game; every name a working name, *Unconfirmed — awaiting the director*

The story, as you play it

You meet Suwena twice. The first time is in the north, in the prologue, and you only watch: at King Ormar's door in Kaldvik she waits on the step until the square goes quiet, takes a king's carved stick, and sails away. The second is on your second morning in the jungle of Island 2. A long canoe comes down to the village landing with a drum, and a very tall woman stands in its bow. She has come to see the five strangers everyone is talking about, because they are not her, and because one of them, the man the others would not leave behind, is the reason she pulled a tooth. The hero carries it.

Her fire. She feeds you a crocodile egg kept a season in ash and tells you what she wants: the jungle's four peoples at one fire. Nobody has managed it since their forebears walked out of the pyramid city.

Her methods. She paints you grey with old crocodile fat so the watching beasts take you for the walking dead. She stitches wounds with ants. A promise costs a tooth. It is all disgusting, and it all works. Stalvan approves, very correctly. Vella notices.

Her show. She is the best thing at every fire and knows it. She is also brave, fair, and the first to carry the wounded. You like her more each hour. See One Fire.

How it ends Spoilers

Her name is one she gave herself, so by the jungle's law she has no name at all. Her vanity costs her old singer his voice. At the end she wants the Speaker's seat, says so, and steps back from it. The peoples name her Stepped-Back-Once. In spring the Buyer offered to make the peoples follow her, and she refused: people made to come are not looking at her.

Suwena is a warrior and leader of the jungle of Island 2: tall, beautiful, vain, and good, a woman who means to bring the jungle's four peoples to one fire and will use any method that works to do it.

> ***A design proposal for the full game (Acts 2 and 3) and one cameo in the prologue's last chapter (SUWENA-NORTH-1, 2026-11-26). Nothing here is built.*** *Every name is a working name; everything on this page is Unconfirmed — awaiting the director.*

Who she is

- **Name:** Suwena *(working)*: in the Halun tongue, "look here". She made it herself at fourteen.
- **Age:** about thirty.
- **People:** her father was a Halun river pilot, her mother was Kiri, she was born on a Mowe raft and fostered by the Umeha. Each people said she belonged to another.
- **Wants:** one fire for all four peoples. Under that, a name somebody else gives her.
- **Fears:** a fire where nobody turns round when she walks in.
- **Kawe**, the war-leader of Wenatu's young, is her rival. She beat him in the knee duel six years ago. She says three touches; he says two and a slip.

Look

- Very tall: a head over Vella, a hand under Stalvan. Long-limbed and straight-backed, with a paddler's shoulders and arms.
- Warm golden-tan skin, oiled; high cheekbones, strong dark brows, large dark-brown eyes, a mouth that rests in half a smile; an old cat scar through the left eyebrow.
- Long, thick, wavy black hair. The front and top go up into the crest; the rest falls loose down her back to the waist.
- **Three things mark her in every dress,** so she is known at once from the high camera:

  - **the red crest:** the front and top of her hair bound up into a tall fan with red clay and a bloodwood comb (no feathers);
  - **the green mantle:** a shoulder mantle of iridescent beetle wing-cases, on the left;
  - **Second Word:** a bloodwood war paddle as long as she is tall, its blade edged with cat teeth. "I always have the first word. This is the second."
- And the **promise string**: a cord of teeth across her chest, one for each promise made at her fire.
- She wears no gold. To her peoples gold is *king's skin*.

Voice

Low, warm and carrying, pitched for the back row. She gives stage directions ("Stand there. Left. The light's better."). She never lies: a lie at the fire costs a day's silence, and she pays it when she slips. Her stories put her where the story is, and every word of them is true.

- "So you're what everyone's looking at. I've seen worse. Not often from underground."
- "The smell is so you don't forget you have it on."
- "If they catch one lie they'll doubt the true parts. The true parts are very good."
- "Why do you think I picked an island?"
- At the king's door in Kaldvik (the prologue, to Ormar, low): "That's why I'm taking the square."
- To the party (the prologue): "I need people who don't leave a man behind. Find him, then ask for me." / "A promise costs a tooth. Show it in the jungle."

Outfits

She appears in four regions, and in each she wears the local dress her own way. One model per region; equipping never changes it.



Outfit



Outfit



Outfit



Outfit

In the prologue: Kaldvik (a proposal; SUWENA-NORTH-1)

She is in the north before the party's story has met her, for a king's word. A good king, Ormar of Kaldvik, wears an iron circlet and no gold, which in her country is the first sign of a king she can ask. She has come to ask him for a carved stick, his word on every pier that owes him bread, and for his promise that if a long box lands on his own pier he will open it himself and send for her. Long boxes have been going north since spring, and she does not know what is in them. Nobody in the scene says.

You see her twice, in cutscenes, and never talk to her:

- **At the king's door (before Bread and Salt).** The hall door opens and she steps to the top step and *waits* until the square is quiet. Four of her guards fan out and face the crowd, not her. Ormar has come to his own door. He offers a back lane ("Suwena. There's a back lane. Nobody would see you go."); she takes the square. She drops her voice for him, steps one pace back while he speaks, takes the stick in both hands. A young guard's hands are white; she decides he winters in Kaldvik. Then she asks the party what they want of the king. **The hero:** "Stalvan, a friend. Jarnborg has him. We won't leave without him." **Suwena:** "I need people who don't leave a man behind. Find him, then ask for me." And she means it: she turns her back, pulls one of her own teeth in front of the whole square, threads it on a cord from her wrist and puts it in the hero's hand. "A promise costs a tooth. Show it in the jungle."
- **At the harbour (blue hour, after the king's fire).** The king's longship pushes off through the ice with a drum for the stroke and three of her guards at oar, steer and pole. She stands in the bow and does not row. Over the water: "Find him! Then find me! The fire stays lit!" **The hero:** "We will."

The party. The hero says two short lines. Vella's remark, "She waited for the square to go quiet. It did.", is her first small edge, and she looks at the tooth in the hero's hand. Manfred notices the guards' coats are Kaldvik wool cut that week. Zanze counts the oars. **Stalvan is in the prison and sees none of it**: he is only the name the hero says. He meets her in Act 2, and the crush is still on sight.

Her four guards are Halun, dressed by Ormar in Kaldvik brown and olive wool, grey fur, wrapped legs and fur boots, with cat-hide cuffs and a string of teeth. No gold, no feathers, no masks. **Ahua** (lead; the only one who speaks: "They're white."), **Oto** (the drum), **Iwe** (the ice pole) and **Pano** (the youngest, frostbitten, who stays the winter at the king's hearth).

Her methods

Each works, and each opens something to play.

Method	What it is	What it opens
Dead man's butter	Old crocodile fat, river clay, pig's gall. Painted grey, walking stiff in single file, you look like the walking dead to the beasts that watch.	A disguise: walk, keep in file, stay out of water. Traders will not serve you until you wash.
The One Bowl	Root chewed by the host, spat into a bowl and soured three days. A guest drinks before speaking. A peace is sealed in it.	A roll for who drinks; a peace you have to watch.
A tooth for a promise	She pulls it herself. It goes on her string until the promise is kept.	The pledge that opens her chain.
Ant stitches	Soldier ants bite a wound shut; the jaws stay. Maggots clean what has rotted.	A cure potions cannot give; a party item.
The leech	Set on every envoy's arm.	It will not bite the dead.
The ash eggs	Crocodile eggs, a season in ash. The guest eats first.	Her first roll talk.
Dung smoke	A ring of smouldering crocodile dung.	A safe camp from wild beasts in the east jungle.



Dead man's butter (concept, proposal). *Suwena paints Stalvan grey. The others wait their turn.*

The triangle

- **Stalvan** has a crush on her from the first moment. It shows as more of what he is: more correct, quicker to volunteer, fewer words. He gives her a tooth before he has heard the promise. He approves of every method on professional grounds. Nobody laughs at him.
- **Suwena** sees it at once ("Bring the big one."), likes it, and likes him: he is the one person not performing back at her.
- **Vella** is a little jealous. She and the hero are each other's crush and neither has said so; what stings is the attention, and that her friend of four years has eyes elsewhere. It comes out sideways. The two women end in respect.
- **The hero** has reply choices in every such scene, and none of them states a feeling for him.

- Nothing is settled.

A few lines:

- **Vella:** "You're standing up straight." **Stalvan:** "I always stand straight." **Vella:** "You lean. Four years, you've leaned." **Stalvan:** "There was nothing to lean on."
- **Vella:** "It wasn't loose." **Stalvan:** "It is now."
- **Vella:** "Four years. You never once offered to carry anything of mine." **Stalvan:** "You never asked." **Vella:** "She didn't ask!" **Stalvan:** "She was about to."
- **Suwena** (to Vella, at the end): "He looks at you when you read. You look at him when he's deciding. I notice, because it's the only time neither of you is looking at me."



The back poles (concept, proposal). *Suwena: "I hadn't said how far." Stalvan: "It's the same poles."*



Room (concept, proposal). *Suwena talks to the hero. Vella is not reading.*

Act 2: the jungle

The meeting is a meeting again, and the tooth is paid off. At Wenatu's fire the hero shows the tooth; Tawi: "A promise tooth. Hers. Then you are not nameless. You are owed. A gift has a moon to be answered." Next morning at the landing she says to the hero, eyes on the cord, "You kept it," and to Stalvan, "And this is the man. Stalvan." **Stalvan:** "They tell me you pulled a tooth for a man you hadn't met." **Suwena:** "I wanted to meet him. Teeth are cheaper than ships." **Zanze** (low, to Vella): "The woman from Ormar's door." **Vella:** "I remember." At her fire Stalvan answers the tooth with one of his own, before he has heard the promise. For him it is a first sight, and still on sight.

Her chain, One Fire, runs beside the main story Under the Green Crown from its second step. With her you visit the three other peoples, call a gathering that goes wrong, find a dead man among the envoys, and sit at the fire where a Speaker is drawn by lot. A united jungle gives each ending of the well's gold a second side.



The canoe (concept, proposal). *Her entrance at Wenatu's landing.*



Stepped back (concept, proposal). *One pace behind the Speaker, saying her words.*

Act 3 (a proposal; Unconfirmed)

Act 3 is not designed. This is a role any Act 3 can use.

- **What she is:** the Voice of the One Fire, the jungle's envoy among the islands.
- **What she is doing:** following one long box. A dead queen of the jungle was shipped north, and four peoples who agree on little agree that she comes home to the river.

- **A quest with her, *The One That Answered*:** find where the box was landed. Her methods open it: the leech at a harbour gate, the paste through a watched yard, the bowl for a frightened skipper.
- **What she brings against the Puppeteer:** tests that tell the living from his puppets; a way past his watching beasts; four peoples' canoes and eyes; and the one verse of the jungle's old song he never heard.
- **The triangle by then:** Stalvan and she owe each other a gift in turn, by the jungle's law, and neither has let it end. Nothing has been said.

The other islands

- **Ragosa (Act 2).** The gold company's charter for her river was written there. She has come to have it torn up: "I brought the river's opinion." Stalvan owes her a gift, so he holds the council's door open for an afternoon. A councillor's wife: "Does she know what that gown is?" **Stalvan:** "She knows what it was." Hook: *The River's Opinion*.
- **Meneferu (once the pass is open).** She wants a market at the pass foot. She meets Ipu, the baker who raised Stalvan: "Sit down. Tell me everything about him. Start early." Hook: *The Pass Market*.
- **The north (Act 3, proposal).** Back on a quay in Kaldvik, in the same wolf, with Ormar's stick in her belt, asking after the box: "It's cold enough here to keep a king without a well. I don't like what that suggests." (She first came north in the prologue; see above.)



The council's door (concept, proposal). *Ragosa: Stalvan answers a gift with a day's work.*

Open decisions

Her name; whether she ends as the Voice and not the leader; what becomes of Stalvan and her (recommended: left open through Act 2); where she appears outside the jungle. The full list is in the design file.

Sources: docs/plan/full_game/island2_jungle_warrior_act2.md (WARRIOR-STORY, narrative-writer, 2026-11-18); docs/plan/full_game/island2_jungle_act2.md; main's reading D-WARRIOR-1; docs/plan/papyria/suwena_north.md (SUWENA-NORTH-1, 2026-11-26).

Last updated: 2026-11-26 (SUWENA-NORTH-1; the Kaldvik cameo, the Act 2 callback)