

THE SUNDERED WEAVE

A high-fantasy treatment for a proposed film or limited series.

LOGLINE

When the last cartographer of a dying world discovers her maps are no longer describing the land but rewriting it, she must lead the seven feuding kingdoms into the one unmapped place they all swore to forget — before her own hand redraws them out of existence.

TAGLINE

Every line she draws is a line that vanishes.

PARAGRAPH PITCH

Kestrel Vane inherited three things from her mother: a copper compass, a promise never to open it, and the last remaining chair at the Cartographers' Table of Aeloria. On her thirty-first birthday she opens the compass and it points not north, but home — to a village that has not existed in nine generations. When she draws it on the map that night, it appears. And when a rider arrives the next morning to say the village is burning, she understands what the cartographers before her hid: the maps are not records. They are permissions. Whatever ink touches parchment, the world must obey. Now seven kingdoms are asking Kestrel to redraw their borders. An eighth kingdom — the one no map has ever named — is asking her to draw them in.

TREATMENT

Act One — The Compass Opens. Kestrel Vane, thirty-one and stubbornly unmarried, is the junior of a dying craft. Aeloria's Cartographers' Table has not accepted a new hand in a century, and the seven who remain have all forgotten what the founding vow meant. Kestrel keeps the map-room, sharpens the reeds, files the letters that come in from generals asking for a favor she can't grant. She has never drawn a map that lasted. On her mother's death-day, she opens the copper compass — the family heirloom she was told never to open — and its needle swings toward a village called Threefold, in a country the maps do not remember. Threefold burns to the ground the morning after she inks it back in. The rider who brings the news carries her mother's compass in his pack, and does not know how.

Act Two — The Kingdoms Come Asking. Word travels the way word does in a country that has forgotten what real news feels like. Within the season, seven envoys arrive at the Cartographers' Table, each with a request. Erid the Iron wants his border pushed south. The Ash Queen wants a river she has never owned. The Merchant Cities want a road that will not cost a coin. Each envoy carries a threat wearing the shape of a gift. Kestrel refuses them all and then, in a night she will not describe again, redraws Erid's border in her sleep. The next morning, three villages Kestrel has never seen file into the Table's atrium asking why they are suddenly of Ash and not of Iron. Kestrel is not the only one drawing.

Somewhere, an eighth hand is answering the seven. She recognises the ink. It is her mother's.

Act Three — The Unmapped Place. Kestrel finds the eighth kingdom the way a cartographer finds anything: by walking the edge of what she is allowed to know. She travels first to the seven envoys' capitals and refuses their commissions to their faces, and each capital, one by one, dispatches assassins. She survives four. She recruits the fifth. Together they cross into the country that no map contains and find it inhabited by every person who has ever been drawn out of existence by a stroke of a cartographer's reed — an entire nation of the erased, kept alive by nothing but the memory of their own names. Their queen is Kestrel's mother. She has been drawing the world back from behind the fold, patient as a woman with nothing left to lose. She has kept her daughter for this: the seven kingdoms must be redrawn as one, and only the junior cartographer at the Table has a signature the seven will accept. Kestrel draws. The border falls. The unmapped nation walks back into the world. And the last thing Kestrel puts on parchment — the smallest, quietest line — is her own name, in the margin, being crossed out.

DETAILED OUTLINE (BEAT SHEET)

Beat 1 • Opening Image. A reed pen, snapping. Kestrel's ink well is empty. She has been waiting for a commission for eleven years.

Beat 2 • Inciting Incident. The copper compass opens. The needle points to Threefold.

Beat 3 • The Vow Breaks. Kestrel draws Threefold onto the map. Threefold burns.

Beat 4 • The Envoys Arrive. Seven kingdoms come asking. Kestrel refuses.

Beat 5 • Mid-Point Reversal. Kestrel wakes to find she has redrawn a border in her sleep. The map is not asking her permission any more.

Beat 6 • The Eighth Hand. A stroke that is not Kestrel's appears on the parchment. It is her mother's.

Beat 7 • The Crossing. Kestrel walks into the unmapped country. It is populated.

Beat 8 • Reunion. Kestrel's mother is queen of the erased. The mother was not dead — she was folded.

Beat 9 • The Crown Choice. Kestrel is asked to redraw the seven kingdoms as one, or watch the eighth kingdom vanish for good.

Beat 10 • Climax. Kestrel draws. The seven kingdoms fall. The eighth walks out. Kestrel writes her own name in the margin and, of her own hand, crosses it out.

Beat 11 • Closing Image. A new junior cartographer arrives at the Table. The seven chairs are empty. There are only eight. She sits.