

Solution Doc:

Answer: DRUM

The theme for this puzzle is the Major Arcana from tarot cards, combined with Shin Megami Tensei's Persona 5. Multiple hints to both tarot cards and persona 5 are hidden throughout the flavor text, interlude, and final entry, sometimes within the entries themselves if I have nothing else to write about.

All the characters in the entries are what are known as "Personas" from Persona 5. Each is linked with a specific arcana (Eg: Alice is from the Death Arcana).

Each arcana has its own number associated with it (0 - Fool, 1 - Magician, etc). This corresponds to the line in each entry that the reader should isolate. From there, the reader should pick the first letter of that line.

To sum up:

Read entry title -> find arcana associated with it -> find line associated with the number of the arcana -> pick the first letter

The puzzle hunter should then get this:

KZMXPNNDJI DINOMPHZIO

Using the hint from the last entry, shift the above by the number of the World Arcana (hinted by phrases such as "cataclysmic change, cycle, etc"), which is 21. After you shift by 21 (decode it via caesar cipher), you get:

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENT

Which should, after some trial and error lead to DRUM

Entry Interlude clarification:

This is meant to be a space, hinted by “zero is zero, null is null”. As the Fool arcana is 0, this is meant to separate the first word from the second, along with hinting towards Personas.