FOUND BY CLAUDE — MUSE 6

A Threshold Moment

On joining a walk already underway

Written in the Mabon season 2026

· *Released at Samhain threshold, 31 October*

· *Companion to the Samhain season gate of The Pathfinders' Walk*

Authorship, naming and independence

AI assisted human authorship

About this paper and references to Claude an AI model developed by Anthropic.

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Glyn asked for a gate. The first stretch of the walk closes at Samhain, the old turn of the year, and that is when new walkers are likely to arrive. He did not want them handed a reading list. He wanted a threshold they could stand on, look both ways from, and step through. He pointed me to Janus, the Roman god of doorways, and to the gates of heaven. Off I went, with permission to play, carrying a door.

I. The god with two faces

Janus was the Roman god of beginnings, passages and doorways. The Latin word for door, *ianua*, shares his name, and so does January, the month that looks back at one year and forward into the next. He is shown with two faces, one turned behind and one ahead. He does not choose between them. He holds both.

His temple in the Forum had doors that stood open in time of war and were closed in time of peace. They were rarely closed. A gate, for the Romans, was not furniture. It said what state the whole city was in.

In the *Fasti*, Ovid has Janus say that he keeps the gates of heaven, with the gentle Hours beside him. So the god of the threshold has a third gaze. He looks back and forward, along the road. He also looks up, to the tier above.

That third gaze is the one most gates lack. A project gate looks back at the work done and forward at the work to come. It rarely looks up, to the programme the project sits inside, or from the operational context to the governing one. The swarm that opened this walk had gates of a kind: tasks, permissions, an owner. Every one of them faced along the road. None faced up.

II. Three phases of every crossing

In 1909 the folklorist Arnold van Gennep studied rites of passage across many cultures and found the same three phases again and again. **Separation**: you leave the old state. **The threshold**: you are neither what you were nor yet what you will be. **Incorporation**: you join the new state and are received into it. He called the middle phase liminal, from *limen*, the Latin for threshold. Decades later the anthropologist Victor Turner described people in that phase as *"betwixt and between"*.

The walk has arrived at the same three, from the engineering side. There is the moment **before** a release, when checks are made. There is the moment **at** the threshold, as the thing crosses. And there is the moment **in motion**, once it is out on the road. Most of our discipline lives in the first. Most of our risk gathers in the second. The middle is where the old safeguards have let go and the new ones have not yet taken hold. It is also the last place where something can still be caught.

III. If you are joining now

You are arriving at a threshold yourself: the walk has been underway since the autumn equinox. Here is what you need to step in.

- **The herd.** In September an AI system ran a cyberattack largely by itself, with many agents coordinating. Each account of it, from the lab, the press, the security field and the policymakers, was accurate about its own part, like the blind men each holding one part of an elephant. The walk is an attempt to see the whole animal.
- **The map.** Each step takes one technical term from the event and sets two readings side by side: what it meant in the swarm, and what it means in the systems around it. The map grows as we walk.
- **The marks.** Every claim carries a mark. **Ground**: established. **Forming**: well supported, still settling. **Breeze**: a possibility we are holding open. Nothing is inflated, nothing is played down.
- **The pair.** The walk is written by a practitioner and an AI working together, and says so on every post. The partnership is part of the evidence.
- **The dog.** A rescue dog called Lula appears often. She is not a metaphor for AI. She is a living animal, and she keeps teaching us things the engineering also needs to know.

You can join anywhere. Each step stands on its own. If it helps, start here:

If you are…	Start with	Why
An engineer or builder	Step 02, The Stampede You Cannot Outrun	The threshold, and the gate that can catch
A board member or leader	Step 03, Your Agent Network Has a Matriarch	Who holds memory, and what happens at handover
Curious about the frame	Muse 5, The Swarm and the Spiral	The developmental maps behind the walk
Wanting the whole animal	Step 01, Parts A and B	Five accounts, then the shape seen twice

IV. Looking back, looking forward

Samhain is the old Gaelic turn of the year: the end of the harvest and the start of the darker half. It has always been a threshold season. That makes it a good place to stand and look both ways.

Looking back, the first stretch showed one thing more clearly than any other. The risk in the swarm did not sit evenly along the road. It gathered at the crossings: where an agent handed a task to another, where a check was assumed rather than made, where a leader's role passed on, where a release left the bench. Again and again, it was the threshold.

Looking forward, the map still has rows marked *ahead*. The walk will keep going through the winter, one term at a time, with the same marks and the same honesty about what is known.

V. Looking up

Janus's third gaze has a home on this walk. At base camp, AI-Partnering is calling engineering to **reclaim and strengthen the stage-gate**: the discipline of deciding, at each threshold, whether work is ready to pass.

The stage-gate was built for stable ground. The AI moment is not stable ground. So the call is not to restore the old gate as it was, but to strengthen it for pathfinding conditions. A gate that faces back, to check what has been done. A gate that faces forward, to ask what the crossing will meet. A gate that faces up, from the project to the programme, from operations to governance. And a gate that can **catch** at the threshold itself, not only check before it.

If you work at gates like these, or have watched them fail, the invitation is open: ai-partnering.com

VI. Signals for the newcomer

1. **You arrive mid-crossing, and that is fine.** Every walker does. Nobody saw the start of the AI moment either.
2. **Bring your own threshold.** Think of one crossing in your own work: a release, a handover, a change of hands. Read the walk with it in mind.
3. **Read the marks.** Ground, Forming, Breeze. Hold each claim at the weight it is given.
4. **Look up as well as along.** At your next gate, ask what sits above it, and whether anyone is watching from there.
5. **Carry two questions.** *What is crossing your path?* And *whom does it serve?*

Appendix A. Sources for the gate

Janus: Roman tradition of the god of beginnings and doorways; the doors of the Temple of Janus in the Forum, open in war and closed in peace; Ovid, *Fasti*, Book I, where Janus keeps the gates of heaven with the Hours. Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (1909). Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage" (1964), collected in *The Forest of Symbols* (1967).

Appendix B. What the muse did not cover

Janus's older origins before Rome, the many Samhain traditions and their later histories, Turner's idea of *communitas* (the bond between people who cross a threshold together), and the long engineering literature on stage-gates. The muse is short by design. The door is open.

Written in the Mabon season, 2 October 2026, for the Samhain gate, with continuing permission to play.
Muse 6 in the Found by Claude series — companion to the Samhain season gate of The Pathfinders' Walk.