

SPRING IN HIERON 36: TERRIBLE AND NECESSARY

Transcriber: Cole (@TheMostMagiCole)~until 0:30:00; Transcriber gray (waveechocave#6851) finished

(recap)

Austin: It's been a few days since your return from fighting the Advocate in the Mark of the Erasure. And in fact, I think maybe we come in on a party. Uh, and it goes off, I think. It's a- it's another night where people break out the guitars and start to sing and like, everything kind of feels at peace. Um, I think we get a shot of Samot looking on from a balcony up in the tower.

Austin: The guard says,

Austin (as Guard): Um, there is something else though. The stars should be here any- any moment.

Jack (as Lem): I heard about the convoy from Corsica, I think. Do we know how many- how many are coming?

Austin (as Guard): It seemed like a few dozen?

Jack (as Lem): What are they- uh, what are they bringing with them? Or is it- is it just them?

Austin (as Guard): It's just them.

Austin: And as the guard says that, you hear a commotion from outside.

Austin: So, you see out onto- in from here to the east, you can see the- It's about twenty- twenty-five of these stars getting closer and closer, and there's just like- They're that bright, white, hard-to-look-at light that does not actually put out any glow, but is just like, itself illuminated. And the thing is, their pathway here is also illuminated in that way. There is kind of like-

Jack: Oh.

Austin: The ground has been turned to star stuff as they approach.

[**Jack** de Quidt's "[Something](#)" begins playing]

Austin (cont.): And from that perspective, you the viewer- you the audience can see, not only the way that the stars have like... are kind of like- have this trail of star stuff behind them, but you can see that there are other like, um... other sets of stars going to other places in Hieron right now at similar speed. Similarly leaving behind that trail, and also you can just see from that perspective the ways in which the cracks and canyons of the Eastern Steppe have been filled in with star stuff. It's as if the Grand Canyon was like- someone had poured in the stars.

Austin (as **Index**): We are here for our Lord. Please stand aside.

Sylvia (as **Ephrim**): Well, we'll happily retrieve him for you, but I'm afraid we can't give you entrance to our settlement right now.

Austin (as **Index**): Our Lord needs us. Has called for us. We go to him.

Austin: They begin walking forward.

Jack (as **Lem**): How can I get you to stay away from the Last University?

Austin (as **Index**): You can kill us. There is no other way.

Austin: And they take a step forward.

Keith (as **Fero**): We have to find Samot before they get closer.

Austin: From below, all around the Last University, the tree grows bigger and bigger. The tree is now bigger than the main tower, but from above, like the sky cracks, and the Heat and the Dark begin to fall also. And here is the actual thing that happens. I think this is the big fail- failure. The wall of star stuff falls. Um, and it's just like, hell on earth for a- for this moment. And we see Sunder Havelton raising local shields to protect people. We see Red **Jack** being suited up by the oni children, uh, and then like, tossing- tossing a bow to Blue J. And the two of them are getting ready to come out and try to help. We see, you know- we see like, Devar and Chatterchin ushering people and- and Emmanuel ushering people deeper into one of like, the dormitory basements, where it's gonna be a little be safer, hopefully. We kind of just get the- We see Rosana like, with some people praying in the temple. Um, and she is like- she is like, hammering [light laugh] stuff onto the- onto the doors to keep stuff locked up. And she turns and is like,

Austin (as **Rosana**): Benjamin, we need-

Austin: And Benjamin slides out of a side door. And then we just get this long, running shot. Like, this like, Children of Men shot of Benjamin running past all of the fire and like, jumping

over the- the ground cover, the newly arriving ground cover, and like, sprinting towards his family's home. [music end and bird chirp] Um, and like, trying to open the door, and he doesn't have the key to the door cause his mom has the key, and his dad has the other key, and he's supposed to have his own third key, and he's asked for it, but they had never given it to him. And then, they uh- you know, He like- like, looks around and like, at this point, the stars are like, hitting the wall and like, parts of the walls are- are shattering and turning into star stuff and then reforming into doors. And they just like, open it and walk in. And it's just a nightmare. Um, and then he... breaks into his own home. He like, shatters a window and climbs in. And is uh, looking for something. And we just get this shot of like, a... of him in his bedroom, pulling something from out from under his bed, and then a uh, a yellow glow as he begins to cast some sort of spell. And just like that, standing in a room next to Benjamin is a projection um, of someone we haven't seen in a long time.

Austin (as Benjamin): I hope this worked. Are you ok? Uh, I'm- I know we've talked already a lot, but I'm Benjamin. Um, I... I don't know how long this is gonna work. Can you help us?

Nick: Uh, Fantasma says,

Nick (as Fantasma): I think so...

Nick: And then starts like, [**Austin** laughs] touching himself-

Austin: Yeah.

Nick: -like, his chest and stuff, and like, poking bits, and he's like,

Nick (as Fantasma): I don't really feel any different. But I'm willing to help.

Austin (as Benjamin): [stammering] Great. I... I don't know where to start. Everything's on fire, and then there's these plants and the stars. The stars are here, for sure. And they're just tearing everything up.

Nick (as Fantasma): Oh goodness. Oh boy. Oh, slow down. What's... [confused] the stars... from the sky?

Austin (as Benjamin): [sighs] Come outside.

Austin: Um, and runs back in and like, grabs a... I actually think he probably has to like- he takes a rag and actually probably like, wraps them around his hands because he climbed through that- that broken glass window- probably cut himself a little bit. And he's like, tyrin' to like, keep himself together, but he opens the door and leads you back out. Um, and I guess Fero, from above you definitely see Benjamin come out with like, a tall Fantasma-lookin' dude, from Hadrian's house. Lem and Ephrim-

Keith: Or Arrell lookin' dude.

Austin: Actually, Nick, is that right? What does the like, holographic projection hard-light self of Fantasma look like?

Nick: Uh, Fantasma looks a lot closer to what you would remember Arrell looking than what you would remember Fantasma looking like. I mean this- They looked very similar-

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Nick: -before. Uh, but this Fantasma has- still has some of the color in his hair.

Austin: Mm.

Nick: Which is jet black. But also like, streaks of grey. And he's got a uh- a little bit of a scraggly like, elfen beard.

Austin: Love it. The um... the- I'm trying to find where this picture originated because I have- I- We found a really good one.

Nick: Yeah.

Austin: A really great fan art. There's a great fan art from...um... [exhales thinking noises] tchoo-tchoo-tchoo. God, it is way harder to just fi- Oh, wait. Here we go. There's- there's this moment. Thank you to- Uh, Sam Beck did a great Alyosha and Arrell like, card setup that I'll drop in into the dogpound chat here. And so, we're using that Arrell which feels like, a really good blend between Arrell and Fantasma.

Nick: Yeah.

Austin: And you are- Are you- are you like, full color? Are you a particular magic- Do you look like a force ghost? Do you look like a... Or do you look like a like, a hologram in Star Trek?

Nick: Um, no. I look uh- Yeah, I look like a full hologram.

Austin: Ok.

Nick: There might be like- You know what? Ok, so I- I'm not like, a full hologram. Sorry. I look like a regular person.

Austin: Ok.

Nick: Except there is like, weird... magical static occasionally.

Austin: Awesome. Ok.

Nick: Like, little twinkles. [Austin laughs]

Austin: Um, and you are standing-

Keith: Like violent twinkles or gentle twinkles?

Nick: Just like- just like, gentle- gentle little-

Keith: Ok.

Nick: -little, gentle twinkles.

Keith: So, you don't have like, Kylo Ren lightsaber sparks coming off.

Nick: No, no, no.

Austin: Ok.

Nick: And they don't come off of me. They're contained completely within my form. Like uh- like, a TV set that's just slight- like an old TV set.

Austin: Right.

Nick: That's just slightly out of tune- juuuust slightly.

Austin: Ephrim and- and uh... Lem, also make that spot. Um... what do you all do as you see seemingly Arrell step out of Hadrian's house with Benjamin?

Jack: Um, I think that like, just like, weapon drawn riding up to Benjamin.

Jack (as Lem): Benjamin, oh my god. What are you doing? Are you ok? Step back from him!

Austin (as Benjamin): I'm fine. I'm fine! He's here to help us.

Jack: Does- does Fantasma step forward in this moment?

Nick: I uh- He- I mean he's trying to take everything in. [Austin laughs]

Keith: Does Fantasma know about Arrell? Like, Fantasma was chasing Arrell, not knowing- understanding who he was.

Austin: This is even more complicated for other reasons that we'll get to.

Nick: Yeah. This is- this is fun.

Keith: Oh my god.

Nick: Um, Fantasma is already tryin' to take everything in and then sees... God, I can't believe I can't- I'm gonna ask this question.

Austin: Uh.

Nick: Orc! Orc, right? Orc?

Austin: Orc. Yeah., orc.

Nick: Yeah.

Austin and Nick: Orc.

Austin: Yeah. Lem's an orc.

Nick: He sees this orc- orc boy ride up to him on a horse and immediately raises up his staff in a defensive position. Not casting anything yet.

Austin (as Benjamin): It's ok! It's ok! It's ok! Uh, we're all friends. We're all friends. We're all friends. Everyone here is a friend. Everything's fine. [exhales] Lem, it's fine. It's fine. It's fine.

Nick: Fantasma says,

Nick (as Fantasma): The only people I know here, Benjamin, is you.

Austin (as Benjamin): I-

Jack (as Lem): Oh my god. It's Fantasma. [Austin and Keith laugh hard for seven seconds; Sylvia begins laughing] Fantasma! It's- it's- Oh my god!

Jack: Just like, gets down off the horse.

Jack (as Lem): I- How are you... Ok, this is not the... Benjamin, is he- is he real? Are you real?

Austin: I'm gonna let Fantasma answer that because I'm sure he would. [light laugh]

Nick (as Fantasma): I am... not sure, honestly.

Austin (as Benjamin): He's-

Jack (as Lem): Ok.

Austin (as **Benjamin**): Um, so I have these crystals. They-

Jack (as **Lem**): Uh huh.

Austin (as **Benjamin**): They um- I learn with them. They're-

Jack: Just like, star stuff strikes a tower in the back. [laughs]

Austin: [laughing] Yeah, exactly.

Austin (as **Benjamin**): Uh, they're like, old lectures of Fantasma, but there's like, a lot of them. And then I read some stuff in that book. The one that Fero has. And it let me like, do the thing where I was like, 'Boom' He's not just a projection.' He's really... It's Fantasma. It's Fantasma. [exhales]

Jack (as **Lem**): Oh my god.

Austin (as **Benjamin**): My dad said that you were really like, smart and powerful. He said some other stuff also. But-

Jack (as **Lem**): Hm. [Nick laughs]

Austin (as **Benjamin**): -that you would definitely be able to help in a situation like this.

Nick: Um, [laughing] Fantasma looks at Lem and says,

Nick (as Fantasma): Well, I'm happy to see that my reputation precedes me. [Keith, Jack, and Austin laugh]

Jack (as **Lem**): Do you not-

Austin (as **Benjamin**): Sorry. This is not my dad. Lem isn't my dad. My dad's a different guy. He's not here right now. [Nick and Keith laugh]

Jack (as **Lem**): My name's uh... Lem King. We- we um... We like, worked together or I guess maybe as far as you're concerned like, will work together. [Austin laughs] Um... this is- that's not important right now. Ok. I'm gonna give you the rundown real quick. The stars are coming. There is maybe twenty or thirty out there, which is twenty or thirty more than could like, ruin this place. Like, one star is like, the end of the world.

Nick: Can we see them from where we are?

Austin: Oh, yeah. At this point-

Nick: OK.

Austin: -they're like, moving thro- They are- they are, in fact, marching towards your general direction cause they're going towards the central tower-

Nick: Yeah, ok.

Austin: -which is presumably where Samot is. And I'm gonna- I'll start addin' them to the- to the thing.

Nick: Um-

Jack (as Lem): Uh, re- real quick. You can't touch them. And you can't touch the- Do you see that stuff they're leaving behind? You can't touch that, as well.

Nick (as Fantasma): I see.

Jack (as Lem): Uh, Fero, he's like a sort of- like, a small angry... [Austin snorts a laugh; Keith and Nick laugh] He's like a small, angry like, guy. Um, he's around here somewhere. You'll also work with him in the future, so he'll recognize you. Um, there's also like, a... a tall human who runs this place. Um, Ephrim?

Jack: And Lem just like, turns [Jack and Austin breath laughs] and like, runs back into the ruins of the... of the university. [Nick laugh]

Nick (as Fantasma): Uh, well met, I suppose.

Austin: Ephrim, do you also show up here?

Sylvia: Uh... I think Ephrim's first instinct was to run straight to the tower, actually.

Austin: Ok, so you probably run past them at this point then. That makes sense.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Fero, let's talk about you.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You're up in the air. You're a bird.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: What's- what's poppin'?

Keith: I found Samot right away.

Austin: How do you- No, you don't know that.

Keith: You told- you told me- You know, you already said.

Austin: What?!

Keith: You were like, 'You turn into a bird, and you're in the sky, and you see him-'

Austin: No.

Keith: -is what you said.

Austin: What I was talkin' about was-

Keith: No?

Austin: No, you didn't see Samot right away. Absolutely not did I say that. [Jack laughs]

Keith: I swear to God you said that.

Jack: This is like a-

Austin: No, I said Fantasma.

Jack: This is great tactic from Keith.

Austin: It is.

Keith: No, no, no, no. Before- before Nick joined like-

Austin: You didn't.

Keith: -like, legit like, a, half ago.

Austin: No, I would not have made you not make a run- er make a roll to see him. Absolutely not.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, Keith. Are you talking about when you fly up and you see him in the tower like, earlier at the party?

[crosstalking]

Keith: No. No, no, no. I- Alright, maybe I'm wrong, but like-

Austin: You are absolutely-

Keith: -could have sworn-

Austin: I would not have said you just see him.

Keith: I could have sworn you were like- Well, cause you had- you had told us that he was in the air.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: And then when I went to go fly to find him, I could have sworn that you said like, 'Yeah, you see him, but we'll set that up for later and go.'

Austin: I said that you could look for him...

Keith: Ok.

Austin: Absolutely.

Keith: Maybe that's- Ok.

Austin: But I was not gonna be like, you made one roll, you found the dude. Um... and if I'm wrong, Ali, please chide me. But... but yeah. You could definitely start looking.

Keith: Ok. Yeah, I'm doin' it.

Austin: Uh, give me a... a um... Discern Realities.

Keith: Alright.

Austin: I will give you a plus one forward because of you know, flying around.

Keith: And having lots of eyes.

Austin: Yeah, and also, you didn't need it anyway cause you crushed it. Um, go ahead and ask me some questions.

Keith: [laughs] All- Can I just do all of them?

Austin: [incredulous] No.

Keith: Alright.

Austin: It's three.

Keith: No. Um... [Austin laughs] Three. Ok. I need all of them. That's not true. There's a couple I don't need. Um... what should- what should be on- Uh, is that the best one for knowing where someone is? What here is useful or valuable to me?

Austin: Sure. So, I think the most- the most valuable thing here is that Samot is on the top floor of the central tower-

[0:15:00]

Austin (cont.): -which is a secret floor that we've seen in this show a couple of times before when Benjamin and Blue J run up there to play in the clouds. It's a secret like, floor that lets you walk around at the- like, at the level above the highest tower and kind of like, it looks like you're walking around on the clouds and sky. That is where Samot is.

Keith: Ok.

Austin: And you can see... You can see that he is... like, he has taken the stance of almost a composer. Um... also useful and valuable is a- the kind of very bird's eye view of the world right now, um, to the south, you can see lightning striking Malle's Fist. The- the place formerly known as the city of First Light, or Marielda. But it's- it's star stuff lightning. It's lightning with this white-yellow glow, and also it doesn't unstrike. When it strikes, it stays. And so like, Marielda is covered in this- and especially the... at this point, the- the um, [thinking noise] ba-ba-bah- the volcano in the distance. You can see like a cataclysmic- it almost looks like there's a tornado of lightning that has hit it. It's wild to see from here. So... that's- that's- Samot is doing some shit right now.

Keith: Ok. Wait, Samot is doing some shit?

Austin: Oh yeah. [pauses] I said he's composing. [pause] That lightning goes up-

Keith: Who does-

Austin: I'll- I should note from this perspective, you can also clearly see that that lightning is going up into the sky, piercing the clouds and going to... It's like, unifying above the clouds into a new structure. It's as if they're like- when the lightning hits the ground, it's pulling something upward into something else that's above the clouds.

Keith: What is about to happen?

Austin: I mean I- I think you can see this pretty clearly because of the shape that the stars are taking, which is as they touch things, things are turning into star stuff. And they are kind of like- many of them are panning out at this point to be like, a defensive border around the central tower to prevent people from getting in. And the tower itself is slowly being turned into star stuff so that people can't walk into it. He is turning this into his base of operations from where he can

perform whatever this ritual is. Whether it is reconfiguration or some other type of action, you're not necessarily sure, but Samot is doing some weird god shit, and the cost of that is going to be felt everywhere in Hieron, if Hieron exists by the time he's done.

Keith: Hm. Alright. Let me look through- Let me...

Austin: Mhm. Get one more. Remember to take plus one forward on these.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: After these rather.

Keith: So, I don't need to know what happened here recently. I already know what is about to happen. I already know what I should be on the lookout for. Um... so like, it's between... it's between who's really in control here and what here is not what it appears to be. But it appears to me that- that Samot is really in control here, and so... um... So, I guess then I would ask what here is not what it appears to be?

Austin: Um, [exhales] I'm trying to think if there's like, more to give you here. Um... there is- there is something else approaching. There is dust to the north that would be easy to un- to believe is just more of like, Samot doing some shit, but in fact, it is Severea on horse like, rushing as fast as she can back to the tower. But she'll be- she won't be here in the next like, few beats. It'll take her a little while to get here.

Keith: Ok. Alright. Then-

Austin: But she's on her fucking way.

Keith: I'm... I've gotta approach- I've gotta go towards Samot then.

Austin: Mhm. Sure. You take off in that direction.

Keith: We- we reconfigure into one panther.

Austin: Ok. One big ol' bird.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: What do you do?

Keith (as Fero): [shouting] Hey!

[Jack laughs]

Austin: There's no response. [Jack wheezes more laughter]

Keith: I'm closer.

Keith (as Fero): [shouting] Hey!

Jack: Does Fero have a record for shouting 'hey' at every god now?

Austin: Just a- Yea- yeah?

Keith: Every one that I've met.

Austin: Every one. I think that might- Yeah, maybe- you never met-

Jack: I think that's all of them.

Austin: I don't know that Fero ever met Samothēs, unfortunately. So, you don't- He doesn't complete the set.

Jack: God. Shit.

Keith: I can't remember for sure if I shouted 'hey' at-

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: -Severea and Galencia. [gah-len-see-ah] Galenica. [ga-le-ni-kah]

Austin: Almost certainly when you first met them both. Um... give me a... Defy Danger Dex to not be hit by lightning as you approach.

Keith: Defy Danger Dex.

Austin: Mhm. You can take the- if you want that plus one forward, you can have it, but-

Keith: That's a seven.

Austin: Ok. Is that- That's with the plus one forward. Er- is that the plus- That's just your-

Keith: Oh, is it with the plus one forward?

Austin: That's just your Dex. That's just your Dex.

Keith: I just- Yeah, that was- Ok. Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Alright. So, you're- you're attempting to like, get close enough to like, get his- to make him respond to you? Is that what the- your goal is here?

Keith: Yeah, yeah. I mean ev- I would land right in the tower.

Austin: Um, I will... You can do that, but uh, as you approach, he's going to strip this form from you. If you get any closer.

Keith: That's fine.

Austin: So yeah, so like, as you fly towards him, there's like a wave of his hand, and you just like, unbecome a panther and become a halfling again. And like, crash land into the top of the tower basically. Or not into- like, onto the top of the- of the-

Keith: Right.

Austin: Again, you're not standing on- on stone. You're standing on what looks like nothing.
[light laugh]

Keith: Clouds? Or nothing?

Austin: Yeah, like and not even- not even- Like, he is not even standing where the tower is below him. He is standing where there is nothing below him. You can look straight down and see like, people running around as the stars get closer and stuff like that. And he says,

Austin (as Samot): What do you want, Little Bird? I am busy.

Keith (as Fero): Uh, what are you busy doing? Cause it seems like it sucks.

Austin (as Samot): It is terrible and necessary.

Keith (as Fero): Why?! What?! [stronger] What?!

Austin (as Samot): Fero, I do not have the time to explain to you.

Keith: Um... is it- What is he do- Is he still like, working with his hands?

Austin: [over Keith] Like, he's like, one hand up- Yeah, you know.

Keith: Ok.

Austin: Some Magneto shit. Um, [laughs] you know, he's like working on... doing something. You can- you can press him on this and try to get an answer, but I don't know that he's interested in necessarily telling you.

Keith: Is he looking at me?

Austin: No... Uh, I mean-

Keith: I bite him.

Austin: Ok.

Keith: As a human- as a- as a halfling with halfling teeth. [Nick laughs quietly]

Austin: Yeah. [heavy sigh] I don't think he responds. I don't have stats for Samot. He's Samot. You don't have- He doesn't have HP.

Keith: I- I technically wasn't looking to do damage.

Austin: Ok.

Keith: I kind of just wanted to tr- Like-

Austin: No.

Keith: -see if anything would get his attention, really.

Austin: It- Stuff can, but not biting him. Not hurt- trying to hurt him physically. [Keith sighs] Like, he's... [exhales] He used to be the nothing. [light laugh]

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Ya know? Um, he's gonna keep working.

Keith: I...

Keith (as Fero): Why? Why is this the thing?

Austin (as Samot): Because I won't give up. And because it's already too late. If... I don't do this. [pause] There needs to be a world that has no idea what those like me are... A world with none of the history. None of the faith. None of the baggage of Hieron. A world of order and possibility. One where no one can dream up a god as terrible as... me or mine. [pause] Instead, if you wish, you could live here where... if the Spring doesn't kill you, the Heat and the Dark will. Or if not them, then the Ordennans or whatever's left of them after Hadrian and others are through.

Keith: God I don't know what my... move is. I mean he's really like, you know... a whole fuckin' god.

Austin: Yeah. [Nick laughs] And I think he continues. He's like,

Austin (as Samot): Fero. We have lived for so long. We have killed so many, even those of us you like. Even my father. Countless. Countless.

Keith (as Fero): So, the solution is one last big swing? I- It's like...

Austin (as **Samot**): I'm not swinging. Nothing is being destroyed here. It's being changed into something new. Something that we cannot go to.

Keith (as **Fero**): I was so- I was so close to...

Austin (as **Samot**): To what? [pause] To making it so that you could eke out some survival for another decade? Two? Three? Until what? Until I or Severeia decide to reconfigure it all? On a long enough timeline, we would. Maybe after you're dead, but we would. We would layer another level on top. We would find some way to ruin it for you again. [pause] And even if we died, your kind have proven that as long as we work on the blood and flesh of my father, you'll just dream up another one of us. Like Galenica.

Austin: Downstairs party. Um... Ephrim said you're moving to the central tower already? So, you kind of like, blew past everybody?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: So, I kind of want to make it so that like, you've made it into the interior of this tower whereas Fantasma and Lem and Benjamin, you're kind of outside of it. Also, at this point, I think like, we are getting shots of like, Red- Red Jack and Blue J fighting some of the stars. Um, and there is a degree to which... like, some of the other stars have begun to arrive, and some of them are splitting into different forms. You kind of get these ones that have like- are big and have giant hammers. [light laugh] And then there's other ones that are a little bit smaller and carry like, these swords of flame like the one you saw before. Not flame, but like, star stuff that's like, almost vibrating and glowing. Um, and there are shots of them fighting them- uh, fighting those- those smaller ones. And they're kind of working towards you also, so I think out- outside is Fantasma, Lem, Benjamin, Red Jack, Blue J, and then Ephrim is inside the tower. Uh, which means like, you're past the- There's like, five stars guiding- er, guarding the main entrance to the central tower- the north entrance to the central tower. What are y'all doin'?

Sylvia: Would I have been able to like- I'm happy if it's a 'no,' but like, was I able to see where um... Fero was flying off to? If I could follow him? Cause I'm a- I thought I knew about the...

Austin: The roof thing?

Sylvia: Like, I wouldn't know- The- yeah, the like, secret place for Benjamin and Blue J.

Austin: Uh, I think you maybe saw- I mean Fero was a big flock of birds, right?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Um, I think you could have followed Fero's eyes up, yeah. And like, [laughing lightly] he hasn't come back down.

Sylvia: I think that like-

Austin: He's still up past the cloud cover.

Sylvia: Yeah. [sighs] How- I- I think Ephrim's plan is to try and like... get up there.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: If that's where Fero disappeared to.

Austin: Um, so we're gonna get a thing from you that is like, you have to run up there faster than the building is turning into star stuff.

Sylvia: Alright.

Austin: Which is- That's a fun Defy Danger Dex.

Sylvia: I'll give it a shot.

Austin: Give me that Defy Danger Dex.

Sylvia: I got a... I got a zero for that. Um...

Austin: [laughs] 2d6 plus zero, you mean. You didn't roll a zero somehow.

Sylvia: Yeah, I didn't roll a zero. Sorry. I haven't rolled yet. I'm uh-

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: I'm stalling while I think about it.

Austin: Do you have any- Do you uh- that gear from before?

Sylvia: I was thinking maybe I could use that plus one here.

Austin: What would it be? What's the thing that you found in the dragon horde that gives you a plus one here?

Sylvia: Some sick Nikes. [Austin laughs] No. Um... I mean, the example we gave was like, a grappling hook.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Which could be fun, but I'm trying to think of something a bit more interesting. Um...

Nick: Good pair of pumps.

Austin: Gotta pump 'em up. [amused] Yeah. Take a knee and hit them pumps. Um...

Sylvia: Yeah, I think maybe it like-

Austin: Is it-

Sylvia: Some sort of- We- Where did fight? We fought it at the [overlapped] tower, right?

Austin: [over Sylvia] At the tower. That's the thing is like, there was so much shit there that you could find.

Sylvia: I could have found... Yeah. Like, maybe it's a little more interesting than just a rope with a hook on the end.

[crosstalking]

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: It's like this like, apparatus that-

Austin: Oh, like an almost-

Sylvia: -like, has mechan-

Austin: Yeah, it's like- it's like a Marielda era-

Sylvia: -mechanisms and stuff. Yeah.

Austin: -like grappling hook apparatus. My favorite post-rock band. Um, yeah. No, I think that's a good idea. I kind of like that. And like-

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: -it could even have a magical tinge to it, right? Like, it could even be a thing that like um... is doing some sort of weird levitation spell along with it. Just being a rope hooked into a grappling hook device. Do you know what I mean?

Sylvia: Yeah. It basically makes like, the person using it a little lighter.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: So it works better.

Austin: Yeah, I love it.

Sylvia: Yeah. Ok.

Austin: So yeah, you do it, and like, you're using that to get a plus one here because like, sometimes the star stuff has already gotten ahead of you, and you like, go outside and like, leap up the side of the building that it hasn't hit yet, you know? Or we'll see if you do that.

Sylvia: Oh man.

Austin: You should roll this 2d6 plus one.

Sylvia: Yeah, we'll see. That's an eight.

Austin: That's an eight. That's an eight. Um, so you hesitate or flinch or I give you a hard bargain, right? Is that the- That's the- that's the thing, right?

Sylvia: Uh, 'worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.'

[0:30:00]

[Transcriber gray begins]

Austin: Love it. Um... the... [thinking noise] tchoo-tchoo-tchoo- uh- So, I think that the... This is pretty simple actually. I think, along the way here, um, you're just gonna- you can get up to the top before the stars do, but you lose this device you have. Um-

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Like, it gets consumed by the star stuff. You have to- you don't have the time to, like, retrieve it at a certain point, so you just have to move on. Um- so you literally got one use out of this piece of gear. [light laugh]

Sylvia: Eh, that's fine.

Austin: It worked- it worked when you needed it.

Sylvia: It was cool.

Austin: Yeah, totally. Um, so you're gonna make it up there. And we'll- we'll have you interrupt this Fero conversation in a second. Uh- uh, Lem and Fantasma? How's it going down there with you, with these giant five star beings in front of you?

Jack: [deep breath]

Nick: Um, Fantasma says,

Nick (as Fantasma): These would be the stars, I presume.

Jack (as Lem): Yeah, these are the stars. I mean, you might have noticed they don't seem like- like, super bothered [Austin laughs] by us being here, which I feel is kind of their whole... that's kind of their whole thing. Uh-

Austin: They are- they are, like, yeah, 3 feet or 5 feet away from you, not responding to you talking about them.

Jack: Just no- no response whatsoever.

Nick: Uh-

Austin: Red Jack, who is this giant, you know, oni, is like,

Austin (as Red Jack): [sigh] One good swing and I could distract them for you, at least.

Jack (as Lem): Fantasma, what- what do you, um- what can you do? [Austin laughs] I- you know- [Keith laughs, loudly] I- [Keith claps] I don't mean that tactlessly.

Austin (as Benjamin): He can do, like, anything, basically.

Jack: But Lem doesn't know that, right?

Austin: That was Benjamin saying that.

Jack: Oh.

Jack (as Lem): Oh! Like, anything?

Austin (as Benjamin): I don't know, he's like- you're, like, really powerful, right? You're so smart, anyway. And that is like- you just seem strong. [Keith laughs]

Jack: Just, like, a glance [Austin laughs] from Lem at just, like, a guard that is going past, just like a- 'what's going on with these losers?'

Nick: Um. I'm gonna cast a spell.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: Do you just say that outright?

Nick: Yeah.

Austin: What are you- what are you-?

Keith: [in background] 'I'm gonna cast a spell.'

Nick (as **Fantasma**): [dramatically] I'm going to cast a spell.

Austin: Oh, we should note what you've prepared here, huh?

Nick: Um. Yeah, probably. Well-

Austin: I'm happy to be pretty flexible on that, actually.

Nick: What I- I didn't tell you what I prepared before, actually.

Austin: Oh, did you?

[crosstalking]

Nick: That list I gave you was just what-.

Austin: Oh, that was all prepared-

Nick: No no no no, no-

Austin: Oh-

Nick: No, that list I gave you was what was in my spellbook.

Austin: Right, that's what I thought.

Nick: Yeah.

Austin: So that's all- you have- uh, in these sheets we have- that are new, by the way- if you click over on 'Sub,' you'll see all of your stuff already there. Um, on your character sheet, if you open it.

Nick: Oh, yeah.

Austin: You can click any of them to roll the thing straight up. Um- I believe, which is sick.

Nick: Oh, that's cool!

Austin: Um, and you can also click in and prepare anything you wanna prepare and it'll tell you how many levels of preparation you have.

Nick: Ohh, neat.

Austin: Yeah, these- I wish we'd had these when you were playing. They're so useful, especially for classes like this.

Nick: Yeah. Okay.

Austin: But you- for now, go ahead and tell me what you're casting, and we'll worry about you hitting prep on stuff- prepare on stuff- afterwards.

Nick: Okay. Um, I am going to cast Dispel Magic.

Austin: Ooh. Interesting. Okay, so that says, [reading spell info] 'choose a spell or magic effect in your presence. This spell rips it apart. Lesser spells are ended; mag- powerful magic is reduced or dampened so long as you are nearby.' Uh, give me that roll! So that's- that is the Cast A Spell move, right?

Nick: Yes.

Austin: Which is- which says what? Can you read me how that works? It's 2d6 plus Intelligence, right?

Nick: Uh, yeah.

Austin: Alright.

Nick: So, um-

Austin: Go ahead and cast a spell. [pause] Your Intelligence is eighteen, right? So you have plus three?

Nick: Yeah.

Austin: Okay. [Nick clicks to make his roll]

Keith: Not bad!

Austin: Not bad at all. Cool to have a wizard. [laugh]

Keith: Yeah.

Nick: Do I-

Austin: Fwoof.

Nick: Oh, I did it. Okay.

Austin: You did it. fourteen. So you don't lose the spell, you don't need to put yourself in harm's way-

Nick: Nice.

Austin: Um, so is the spell- what is the spell that you're trying t- to dispel?

Nick: Um. I'm trying to dispel the stars in front of us.

Austin: So... they are a powerful spell, which means that you cannot just instantly destroy them.

Nick [over Austin]: Sure.

Austin: But! Their presence is dampened, and by that what I actually mean is the- you have, like, an area around you where the floor and the ground around them is no longer converted into star stuff, which means that you can, like, actually operate on and around them and inside the tower, without being instantly- [overlapped] fucked up by that.

Nick [over Austin]: Oh, okay, cool. Does it f-

Austin: Which is very useful.

Nick: Does it follow me around?

Austin: It follows you around. Yes.

Nick: Is it big enough for other people to be in it?

Austin: Yes. Yeah yeah yeah. It's like-

Nick [over Austin]: Okay.

Austin: It's like a bubble. It's like a, you know, like a Mass Effect 2-

Nick: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: You know what I'm talking about, right?

Nick: Yup.

Jack: You know, Arrell? Bubbles?

Austin: [laughing] Arrell bubb- [groan] It's like a... it's like a Magneto force field type situation. You know?

Nick: It's the, it's the bub- the bucket bubble from Crystal Chronicles.

Austin: Yes. Yes. It is that. It is that. Exactly like that. Don't go outside of it.

Nick: Um, cool.

Jack: Oh, yeah, definitely be careful.

Austin: Uh, and Benjamin's like,

Austin (as Benjamin): See, what did I say?!

Austin: Uh, and like, at this point like- there's like, a double bind here, which is- you, you do this just in time for like, you to be standing on the only stuff that is not star stuff now.

Nick: Mhm.

Austin: Outside of this bubble, like, the entire campus is slowly being taken over. [Nick winces audibly] The second wave of stars is arriving and Red Jack is like,

Austin (as Red Jack): We have to make a decision now.

Austin: And, like, unsheathes his giant odachi [light laugh], um-

Nick: So as a- can I describe this spellcasting?

Austin: [invested] Yes! Please.

Nick: As the star stuff is, like, slowly creeping towards us, uh, Fantasma raises his staff in one hand, does, uh- a little flourish with it, spins it around just with his fingertips, slams it back down on the ground-

Austin: Awesome.

Nick: -and then the bubble erupts from there.

Austin: And, like, it surrounds you, all around- like, and pushes back the stars.

Nick: Yup.

Austin: And Red Jack says,

Austin (as Red Jack): I appreciate the breathing room.

Austin: Um. And Blue J, uh, his child, um- kind of draws back their bow and notches an arrow and points it at the stars and is like,

Austin (as Blue J): Should we just- should we just go?

Jack (as Lem): [small breath] Emmanuel.

Austin: Is Emmanuel with you? I don't think Emman-

Jack: No.

Austin: No. So you just said this. You just said Emmanuel.

[crosstalking]

Jack: Yes. Where is he? I left him in the meeting hall.

Austin: You let him in the meeting hall.

Jack: What's happening in the meeting hall?

Austin: He was joining people to escort- He was, along with Chatterchin and Devar, I think, helping people get to underground inside the dormitories to the south.

Jack: Do we even know if that's safe?

Austin: It's certainly not safe. [pause] I don't know that anything here is safe. This is bad. This is a siege where the attackers always gain ground because they're literally gaining the ground.

Jack: Yeah, and also, yeah- you literally can't touch where the attackers have been.

Austin: The- the nice thing I will say is, they are coming in from the east of the- I guess when the southern group- when the southern group gets here, they will probably push through the dormitories. Um, but they are focusing on capturing this space. Um, and actually I guess really, once that bubble gets cast, the f- you know, I'd say three of the stars move forward from that group of five, because they see that Fantasma is inter- interfering with their- with what they're doing. Um. So there are three of these star beings. I think it's one with the hammer and then two with the swords.

Austin (cont.): The two with the swords almost look like, um, I guess actually though, the thing that I would- there is a degree to which, when they move, they sometimes leave bits of themselves behind in the- in the air that they're moving past. So it's like, there's an afterimage or sometimes all of them, they look almost look like they have their h- it's almost as if they have hair, um, that is like, a past image of themselves. It's very weird. It's hard to look at. As they move with, like, violent intent. Uh, they are gonna close in on you and try to hurt you.

Nick: When Fantasma sees that they are coming in this direction, uh, he makes a motion where he brings his hand down in front of his face.

Austin: God damn it.

Nick: And then [laughing lightly] you can't see him anymore.

Austin: [amused] Fuckin' cast- oh, you did, [overlapped] you got a sixteen on your invisibility spell.

Nick [over Austin]: I did. I got a sixteen. [Keith laughs]

Austin: God damn it.

Jack: [amused] Jesus.

Austin: Jesus christ. Okay-

Keith: I don't know if we've ever seen a roll that high.

Austin: Yeah, how is it that high? Wait. There is something happening here. Uh-

Nick: I rolled-

Keith: Twelve plus three plus- it's gotta be plus something, right?

Austin: Oh, you've- It's written in another plus three-

Nick: Oh, I typed-

Austin: No, that should just be zero.

Nick: Yeah. Oh. Oh, sorry.

Austin: Oh, oh, so it's only a thirteen. [Keith laughs]

Nick: [laughing] Right.

Austin: You've only actually rolled an eleven and a thirteen. So that should be plus zero.

Keith: Yeah.

Nick: Gotcha.

Austin: [coughs] That plus is like, if there's a different additional bonus. [overlapped] It automatically does it if-

Nick [over Austin]: Yes, I realize that now.

Austin: No worries. Um, so yeah. Fantasma's gone, um, instantly. Uh- [Jack exhales] and I think as-

Jack: Um-

Austin: Go ahead. Go ahead, Lem.

Jack: I think- I- [stammering] I think right now it's a decision of, like, do I try and find out where Emmanuel has gone after this fight or before this fight?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: It's just Blue- it's just Blue J and Fantasma and me.

Austin: And- And Red Jack.

Jack: [simultaneously] And Red Jack.

Austin: Yeah. Uh, you know you see other guards- [overlapped]

Nick [over Austin]: Uh, Fantasma, realizing that, in- from his perspective this is the first time he's ever done this in front of them- [Austin laughs] he says like, not in- you know, not loudly, not quite a whisper, but in like, sort of a hoarse, you know, that kind of whisper that people who don't know how to whisper do?

Austin: Uh-huh. [Jack laughs]

Nick: Where they're like,

Nick (as **Fantasma**): I'm still here, my friends. I'm just invisible.

[Austin and Keith laugh]

Jack (as **Lem**): No, no, no, we know. No-

[Austin and Keith laugh harder, over Jack]

Jack (as **Lem**): No, no, no. Okay.

[laughter still ongoing]

Jack (as **Lem**): No, no, no. It's okay. You'll- you're gonna keep doing this.

Keith: Is that w- is that what a whisper is?

Austin: [amused] Yeah, that's no, not-

Keith: Is that not the quietest someone can be?

Austin (in a sort of whispery, sort of Red Jack voice): That's it. Just- just about here, yeah.

Keith: [laughing] Hey.

Austin (in same voice): Hey, how's it going.

Keith: [loud whisper] Hey, yeah.

Austin (in same voice): I hope I'm not interrupting anything.

Jack: [loud whisper] It's me, Red Jack.

Austin (in same voice): It's- it's me.

Keith: [loud whisper] Don't tell anyone, but...

Austin: [laughing] Yeah.

Nick: Fero is absolutely one of those people that doesn't know how to whisper. [Austin and Keith laugh]

Austin: Um, the, uh- yeah. Fwoo. Um, [thinking noise] ba-ba-ba-ba-bah- I think, yeah, at this point Red Jack is taking action and says,

Jack: Yeah.

Austin (as **Red Jack**): We need to get inside and stop whatever this is.

Austin: Uh, and charges, like, shoulder-first with a pauldron, uh, to slam into one of the three stars that's approaching. Um, and does so, but the pauldron begins to take on the star stuff, uh, as it t- as he touches it- as he touches the star with the pauldron. And so he like, cuts- after he does this like, shoulder charge and knocks it back and down, he like, quickly rips the pauldron off and tosses it aside so he just has, like, the asymmetric pauldron look goin' on right now. Um, and he then, like, lowers his huge blade and takes a bottle off the side of his like, belt and pours something over his blade as if to treat it with some sort of like- In fact, I think he covers it with something and then, like, flicks it really quickly, uh, against, like, the stone stairs nearby. And it alights with, like, a blue flame.

Jack: I thought you were gonna say then dr- takes a swig from the bottle.

Austin: Oh! And then takes a swig from the bottle! Yeah. Uh-huh, yeah, absolutely. And then throws the bottle at the star that he knocked down, and it erupts into blue flame. [laugh] Red Jack- Red Jack rules. Okay?

Jack: Okay- I'm take a- I'm going to, um- uh, let me just check my stats here again real quick- yeah, alright, um. If I'm inside the bubble, do I need treated weapons to fight these things, or can I take a swing at it with the condition that I might lose my weapon?

Austin: You can take a swing at it all you want. I think the condition has been made clear that you might lose your weapon. In fact, I think the condition has been made clear that anything that touches these things, you are at risk of- anything that is just like, a piece of metal. You know what I mean? Um, magic weapons? Different, you know. But- but- yeah.

Jack: Mhm. Okay. Um. In that case, uh- I'm going to... I'm going to, um- roll Arcane Art. So, it's like- it's the bow and the violin again.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Um, and I'm going to target, um, Red Jack.

Austin: [laughing] Okay.

Jack: Uh, can player characters assist NPCs [overlapping] or is assisting specifically player characters to player characters?

Austin [over Jack]: Yeah. No, I can- I mean, it's- it's more quantifiable when it's player characters to player characters, but we'll roll with it.

Jack: 'Cause I- here's what I'm thinking, I have two- I have two things that I'm thinking here. There's 1d4... plus 1d4 Forward to damage, which I could cast on Fantasma, but based on what I've seen, Fantasma's gonna fuckin' wreck shop.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah.

Jack: Um. Wherever he goes. So I don't know whether or not that's necessarily my most useful thing.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I do have a- get a thing which is, 'the next time someone successfully assists the target with Aid, they get plus two instead of plus one.' And targeting Red Jack with that could mean folks could set up some kind of-

Austin: Exc- well, so that- that- there's a thing there which is, like, no one will be rolling to aid Red Jack.

[crosstalking]

Jack: Right, I suppose that's what I do, yeah, so that's-

Austin: Because Aid is a move that's used on PCs.

Jack: Ok, yeah. I just-

Austin: Um, whereas if you had a thing that was, like, 'heal 1d8' or like-

Jack: I could heal Red Jack.

Austin: You could heal Red Jack. Or 'plus 1d4 damage' from Red- you know what I mean? That's stuff that you could do. Um.

Jack: Mhm. But I think that Fantasma's probably gonna be way tankier than Red Jack.

Austin: [startled] Yeah? Maybe.

Jack: I don't know, how much d- how much damage-

Austin: Wait, tankier as in can take more hits?

Jack: Tankier as in can- I don't know what a tank is.

Austin: A tank means they can take a- take-

Keith: A tank takes a lot of hits, but doesn't do as much damage.

[crosstalking]

Austin: Related, we should actually write down-

Jack: Okay. That's not what I understand a tank to be IRL.

Keith: Wizards are classically glass cannons that can do a lot of damage but not take a lot of damage.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: [laughing] Okay.

Austin: Which, we should note really quick, your current HP is... four plus your Constitution, which is nine. Fantasma has thirteen HP.

Keith: Shit.

Austin: Which is not very much.

Keith: No.

Austin: So, the opposite of a tank.

Jack: Look, all I'm saying is, they're heavy artillery. [Austin laughs] They can take a lot of damage, but also they have a fuckin' big gun on the front!

Austin: [amused] Uh-huh. Blame WoW. Don't blame me. [Nick and Keith laugh]

Jack: Uh, I'm gonna- I'm gonna cast a- a- a plus 1d4 Forward to damage on Fantasma.

Austin: Okay. 2d6 plus Charisma.

Jack: Uhh, yeah, so I think Lem just says,

[0:45:00]

Jack (as Lem): Uh, I'm like a- I'm a musician. It's magic. [Keith laughs]

Austin: Oh, Fantasma, you absolutely still know some shit. Any- any opinion you wanna have about pattern magic is one hundred percent allowed.

Nick: [laughs] Okay. Yeah.

Austin: Um, so. What's the thing you've done? Is- plus 1d4 damage?

Jack: Uh, yes.

Austin: Okay. But you rolled a nine, which means the spell still works, but you draw unwanted attention or your magic reverberates to other targets, affecting them as well, GM's choice. I actually don't think this is, uh, the bounce around thing. I think this is that the- the- one of the other two stars simply walks over with a hand outreached, and reaches to touch your violin. Uh, give me a Defy Danger: Dex to avoid that.

Jack: [breathes] I just click Dex?

Austin: You just click on- or you click on Defy Danger. It's up to you.

Keith: And then it picks Dex-

Austin: And then you pick Dex. Yeah.

Keith: You pick Dex, yeah.

Jack: Oh, yeah. Sure, I see it.

Austin: Uh, that's a six. [Keith whistles; Nick makes a sympathetic sound] That's a- that's a failure.

Keith: Do you have a- a Forward or [overlapped] something from earlier or anything? No?

Austin: You have- you have like a weird gear Forward if you wanna spend that gear Forward here.

Jack: Violin case! [Austin snorts] No, anything here- this is a really cool narrative moment.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Jack: Um, and I don't want- I don't want to just go, like,

Jack (as Lem): I got a box!

Austin: [laughing] Uh-huh? [Keith and Sylvia also laugh] Um... I mean, this is a big deal, right? 'Cause this is- this is that-

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Wait, okay, wait. This is- is this the Samol violin? Or-

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Okay. Well...

Jack: My- my original violin, the violin, was destroyed a while ago.

Austin: Yeah, I thought so. So, the Samol violin now is touched- the star just reaches out and like cr- crushes it like, it's cardboard. Um, and it like, takes the form of the stars. Like the stars- I mean actually I think the thing that happens is- it's as if the star is eating it with its hand. So like, crunch, and at first, it- it breaks. And then it becomes star stuff all around where it's broken it. And then, as it opens its hand, you see that like- it doesn't drop anything. It's not like pieces of the star have fallen. It's like the star stuff has gone into this star.

Austin (cont.): Um, which is like- I mean, this was Samol's guitar. This was- insofar as Samol wove a pattern, insofar as Samol was- was- was himself, a bard and a pattern-worker, and- and a semiotician? This is what he did it with. And now it's just in this star. In the stars. Um. So. I don't know how you're-

Jack: [suddenly] Austin?

Austin: Uh-huh?

Jack: I have a- I have a- a ontological question about luthiery.

Austin: Sure.

Jack: [pause] Are a bow and a violin one unit?

Austin: Are you asking if you still have the bow?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: I think you still have the bow.

Keith: Yeah, in separate hands, right?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Okay.

Austin: Which means that if you're gonna start doing weird fuckin' bow magic, I'm super excited to hear what that's like, but I think you're gonna take- I think you're gonna take a minus one Forward on all- mage stuff.

Jack: What I mean to say is, the object of Samol's pattern has not been entirely destroyed.

Austin: Yeah. Correct. You still have the bow. For now.

Jack: Um. This is why- this is why it was a better choice than a guitar. [Austin laughs] At last we know- we now know why. [Keith laughs]

Austin: 'Cause it's decentralized. Yeah! Totally. Um, let's hop- in this moment, let's hop back upstairs.

Austin (cont.): Ephrim, you've emerged. You find this little, like, cubby hole that opens up into the sky. And you see, off in the distance, Fero and Samot talking as Samot like, works magic. And from here, again, you can see all the stuff that I described to Fero, um, you know, beyond the cloud cover, to the south, you can see the lightning striking all of the stuff in Marielda. You can see to the north that the stars have arrived from that direction also, and you can just see the terror down below all throughout the Last University. What do you do?

Sylvia: Uh, the first thing I'm gonna do is check on Fero. 'Cause I don't know what's happened here, so I don't know if [clears throat] I don't know if he's been hurt yet or anything. [overlapped] So that's- I'm definitely going over there.

Austin [over Sylvia]: Yeah. So how- do you call out to him? Or what do you do?

Sylvia: I- I run over to him! If I can.

Austin: Mhm.

Sylvia: Uh, and just like-

Sylvia (as Ephrim): Are you- did he- are you okay? Did the stars get you at all? Are you-

Keith (as Fero): [shouting] This shitbag's doin' all this- stuff! [Austin snorts]

Sylvia (as Ephrim): Uh- [dumbfounded] so, you're- g- good to know you're okay.
Awesome.

Sylvia: Ahh, I wanna pull out the sword I have. [light laugh from Austin] The crescent sun sword.

Austin: So, I think, as you do that- umm, okay. Let me just get this straight. This is the crescent blade from under Rosemerrow and the- the hilt that was recovered, that Lem recovered, from the Cult of the Dark Son, all during the Rosemerrow detective game. And then when you put those two together it became the blade- the sword that- that Samoths made for Maelgwyn, and then which was partially stolen by Rosalind Marroweater. But then also somewhere along the line, that sword became a sun, or the sun- I guess it's ambiguous as to whether it was the sun before Marielda. I mean, it couldn't have been that- I'm happy to keep it ambiguous as to why this became a sun. I like that blank space. I'm happy to keep that.

Austin (cont.): But it is tied to the sun. We know that when you put it together again, the sun came back, and so when you draw it- and I think this is the first time. You almost drew it during Alcyon, but I think this is the first time you've drawn it. At first, I don't think there's any obvious change. You're holding the blade in your hands. It is the blade that Samoths made for Maelgwyn. And then maybe you catch it out of the corner of your eyes. You- you sense- and see this there below you, because remember, you're up at the- above the tower. Below you, you see that the clouds- part of the cloud cover- is beginning to burn away from the heat of the sun.

Austin (cont.): Um, and then I think you can feel it on your skin and you're just, like, basked in this summer sun. This like- summer obviously has a connotation for us, but you know what I mean- where it is just your skin- you feel the warmth of the sun coursing through you. Through your skin. Through your muscles. And- and then sun is so bright. Everyone feels this. And then like, I think as it burns through you, the blade itself is replaced by the sun's own fire. Just, like, flowing through you from the sun. And it feels very powerful. This is a weapon that could kill god.

Sylvia: Uh. I'm gonna start walking towards Samot.

Austin (as Samot): Both of you. [sigh] Ephrim, stay back.

Keith (as Fero): Yeah- no one likes this!

Austin (as Samot): [exasperated] Of course they don't. I don't like this.

Keith (as **Fero**): You're the one doing it!

Austin (as **Samot**): Because it is necessary.

Keith (as **Fero**): Says fuckin'- says who?! [Sylvia mutters] It's crazy! I shouldn't even be the one-

Austin (as **Samot**): Ephrim, you know as well as I do what my kind are capable of.

Keith (as **Fero**): It- you're proving it.

Austin (as **Samot**): [slight pause] I am.

Keith: I have a move question.

Austin: Sure.

Keith: What exactly counts as an element? It says here on Elemental Mastery, 'when you call on the primal spirits of fire, water, earth, and air to perform a task for you'- is the trigger- is the Spring its own version of earth? Can I do-

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah! You can now- yeah, you learned the language.

Keith: Right. Okay.

Austin: Yes. Yes, absolutely you could call on the Spring. Which, by the way, again, there are like- that giant tree is right fuckin' there. Like, off to the side.

Keith: Yeah. [sigh] I- and- oh, second question. About the gear.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Um, when Ephrim used it, it was destroyed- is that just because of the mixed success?

Austin: That was the failed roll.

[crosstalking]

Keith: That was the failed roll.

Austin: That was the mixed success.

Keith: Okay. So it-

Austin: Or a- a mixed- a mixed success. It was a- it was my- it was the cost of getting a seven to nine.

Keith: Okay. Alright. Um, so... Sorry, Ephrim just showed up and didn't get to do much last round. Did-

Austin: Yeah, so let's- let's- let's, yeah, talk through Ephrim real quick. Um. Samot was making his case to you, Ephrim, and saying basically, 'you know- you know so well what my kind is capable of.'

Sylvia (as **Ephrim**): I mean... you of all people should also know what we are capable of.

Austin (as **Samot**): And I am, and that is why something new must exist.

Sylvia: I have a move question. [Keith laughs]

Austin: [amused] Yes?

[crosstalking]

Keith: Episode title. Really anticlimactic episode title.

Sylvia: Um, just so we're clear on it-

Sylvia and **Austin** (responding to Keith's joke): [amused] Yeah.

Sylvia: Just so we're clear, with the- when I did Watch The World Burn and reached out to the Spring... Can I do that with my other moves, or is that just like-?

Austin: Totally. Absolutely.

Sylvia: Ok.

Austin: Once you've made that connection! This is the thing, right? Is like- this is what Alyosha was saying. Is like, it is not- this is also true for the stars, that they'll- These things aren't just competing with each other; they are- they are-

Keith: Antithetical?

Austin: Antithetical but also integrating, right? Like, they are not- there are- if the world is a- hm. If the world is a jar of bees, [Keith laughs] as Uklan Tel once argued, uh, and the Heat and the Dark is the jar of bees around the jar of bees... Um, this is not like- um- This is not like emptying... Now I'm lost in this fucking metaphor. Uh, it is like- it's not like adding flowers and then the flowers are like, starving the bees or s- it's not like breaking the bottle. The bottle is still the bottle. The bottle has the same amount of air and the same amount of stuff in it. It's that, um, you're- it's not like you're reaching into a different bottle. You're reaching into the same bottle.

Austin (cont.): Like, your ability, Ephrim, is to reach into the bottle of the world. To reach into like, the fundamental reality of what things are made of and pull at that power and use it. Um- that- that fundamental power used to be purely the Heat and the Dark. But at this moment it was- it became the- it became the Spring also. Except that you didn't- you weren't looking for the Spring. Like, you weren't reaching down there and being like, 'are there some plants I can grab?' You were just looking for the Heat and the Dark and the fire, and so like, now that you know to look for it, you're able to reach a little bit deeper and like, recognize what you're pulling it. And you can pull at that. Um, I'll note that as Samot does this star stuff shit, it's also mixing in there, so like- that is part of the fire you're still kind of playing with, so to speak.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: So... remain a little bit cautious.

Sylvia: Um... Right. I'm just- so I have- [breathes in and out] I'm trying to think of a way- because, so- the way... How does the star- I need to ask so many clarifying questions.

Austin: No, no, please. Because, listen, if you need to ask them then so does the audience.

Sylvia: Alright.

Austin: And I would rather be super clear, in regular language, about all this shit. 'Cause the stakes are so incredibly high.

Sylvia: With the Spring... When it interacts with the star stuff, the star stuff destroys it? Or?

Austin: It has gone both ways. We've seen it both ways.

Sylvia: Oh, okay.

Austin: They've- they- it would depend on your roll, you know what I mean?

Sylvia: Um. Yeah.

Austin: Like, does- I guess I'll put it this way. Does fire boil water? Or does water douse flame?

Sylvia: Right. Um, so I have an idea here, and I don't know- [sigh] if it's within the realm of possibility here, but I wanted to try- With the move Zuko Style, which was the one where I can control the flame and move it-

Austin: Mhm?

Sylvia: If I reach out to the Spring, would I be able to- control, in some way, the way that it moves? Or it grows?

Austin: Totally. Absolutely.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: You're talking exactly about- yeah, this is exactly right.

Sylvia: Okay, so I think I'm gonna try and do that, then. Which is a plus Wisdom roll.

Austin: Which is- your Wisdom is one?

Sylvia: Plus one, yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvia: I have fourteen in that stat.

Austin: Oh, you're so close to that fifteen.

Sylvia: I know.

Austin: One more level woulda done it. [light laugh]

Sylvia: [sigh] Two points away.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Keith: So-

Sylvia: That's a three.

Austin: Well! Take one! Take one XP.

Keith: Real-

Austin: That's a three you rolled.

Keith: [quietly] Oh my god.

Sylvia: Actually, I rolled that four earlier, so I'm-

Keith: Hold-

Austin: [laughing] You leveled. Just now. Increase your Wisdom.

Sylvia: Yaaaay! [laugh] God.

Keith: Boy.

Austin: What were you trying to do? Let's resolve this before, Fero, I know you had a question.

Sylvia: I wanted to excel the growth of the big tree next to us.

Austin [over Sylvia]: Mhm. Yeah.

Sylvia: To sort of almost make it like, come crashing through.

Keith: [laughing] Great- [indistinct while laughing] One thing this tree needed to be was bigger.
[laughs harder]

Sylvia: But okay. Here's the thing. If I'm gonna pick between the plants and the stars, I'm picking the plants.

Keith: Yeah, same. Big same.

Austin: Mhm. You- so, two things happen. The tree gets bigger. It works. It smashes through the roof of the tower, and it claws its way towards you and like, it's going to like, interrupt Samot. And then lightning strikes it, and part of it starts to turn into the star stuff. And then it rewinds. Samot reconfigures locally, and it unbreaks through the tower and returns back to the size it was a moment ago. And in fact, Ephrim? You're back downstairs. Not all the way down, but like halfway down. Um. And it remains corrupted by the star stuff. One of its branches. [pause] Don't fail rolls around gods.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: He's really fuckin'- he's playing for keeps!

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Keith: Alright.

Austin: Fero, you are still here, and you saw the reconfiguration happen.

[1:00:00]

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Like, you're part of the- Actually, he didn't do anything to you. So, you don't. The thing that just happen didn't happen. Ephrim hasn't shown up yet. Ephrim hasn't said a word, [overlapped] You haven't-

Keith: I don't remember it?

Austin: You don't remember it, because he didn't do it to you. Whereas he did move Ephrim away.

Keith: Right. Because- [laugh] because that means- that means the idea that I had earlier doesn't seem like a copycat idea.

Austin: [laughing] Uh-huh!

Keith: Because that never happened!

Austin: Uh-huh.

Keith: I have the move Elemental Mastery. [general laughter]

Austin: Oh, it's so good.

Keith: [laugh] Austin. Does the Spring count as an element? [Jack laughs]

Austin: [amused, laughing] Yeah. The Spring counts as an element. [Keith laughs] I needed you to know that there was- When I started planning this season, a thing I thought about doing when- if this trigger got pulled- and it got pulled way later than I intended- was that I was just gonna start changing your stats. [light laugh] And see if anyone noticed.

Keith: Oh, wow.

Austin: That, like, Samot was just going to be like, 'no, you didn't take that level. You took a different move.' But I was like- [clicks tongue] 'Maybe I shouldn't gaslight my players. [overlapped] Maybe that's a little fuckin' too far.'

Jack: [amused] Yeah, that's a little cruel.

Keith: [laughing] Yeah.

Austin: Uh huh. But know that that is the sort of shit the Samot would absolutely get up to.

Keith: Yup. Um-

[crosstalking]

Austin: Um, so yes, it is an elemental-

Keith: Love the concept, though.

Austin: Yeah. Great concept.

Keith: But I'm glad that I still have an eighteen, uhh, in- uh-

Jack: You mean a fourteen?

Keith: In my Wisdom- no, no! [laughing]

Austin: [teasing] You mean a fourteen? Click.

Keith: Uh, uh- wrong button. Sorry.

Austin: So no, yeah, you do have Elemental Mastery.

Keith: So-

Austin: And, yes, you can use that on the Spring.

Keith: Okay. So- [thinking sound] I- and I'm glad this works out perfect, it's in an entirely different context than I meant it to be- but I, I know what my gear is.

Austin: What is it?

Keith: I found a s- I found a small, um, I guess I would call it a sprout. I found a small sprout of the- the closest piece of the Spring to the tower.

Austin: Yeah, okay.

Keith: And that's what I took with me.

Austin: Which means it must be- it must be very powerf- or it must be very, like, um- not powerful. What's the word I'm looking for? Like, robust, I think I said earlier. Because if it was able to survive being near the Advocate, then it must be like, real fuckin' good.

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: It must be from like a strain of the Spring that is powerful.

Keith: And I had a very specific thing to do with it, but if this goes bad I would rather have tried to use it now [overlapped] than not.

Austin [over Keith]: Than not. 2d6 plus four then, right?

Keith: Well, I also have my plus one Forward from my Discern Realities.

Austin: From the- yup. So 2d6 plus five, which means you're going to get a mixed success or better.

Keith: Yeah. Um. Elemental Mastery... plus two. Oh, will it automatically do the-?

Austin: Yeah, yeah if you add the plus two there it will.

Keith: Oh, I'm gonna delete my plus one Forward, then. And then put the two there.

Austin: Yeah, there you go. Perfect.

Keith: Thirteen!

Austin: That is a thirteen. So [reading from move text] 'when you call on the primal spirits of water, fire, earth or air to perform a task for you, choose two: the effect you deserve- you desire comes to pass, you avoid paying nature's price, you retain control.' So choose two of those. [laugh]

Keith: [clears throat] The effect I desire comes to pass.

Austin: Good one when you make a move.

Keith: Yup. And... I retain control.

Austin: What is the thing you- what is the effect you desire?

Keith: Samot is- has star stuff in him.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: I want- I want to attack it with the Spring. I want to poke- I want to push it out of him.

Austin: What's that look like?

Keith: I have this sprout...

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: And I can change it- I can change its shape, I can use it as-

Austin: Mhm.

Keith: And I think I just- I think it just explodes out of the palm of my hand and into him.

Austin: Okay. Um... and it- it- and you- but you don't avoid paying nature's price.

Keith: No.

Austin: What's that mean here? What is the price of this for you?

Keith: Well, so- the effect comes- [overlapped]

Austin [over Keith]: 'Cause this is probably-

Keith: The effect comes to pass, and I retain control so I don't think that like, some of it comes back at me.

Austin: No. But I think-

Keith: It's gotta be something else.

Austin: Is it draining you? Is it- is it fueled from you? Do you- [overlapped] 'Cause it's a- it has to be a cost.

Keith [over Austin]: Yeah, it's magic that's coming from me, so it-

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: It- it takes a lot to do s- anything to a god. I bit him, and he didn't even react.

Austin: And he didn't- he didn't do shit. You have good teeth.

Keith: I bit the shit out of him! You ever got bite by a person? That sucks! That's hard!

Austin: Not since I was a little kid. Yeah. [laugh] So yeah, I think it's- I think- I'm wondering like, is damage too boring here? Um... is the cost of calling on it something more interesting than that? Um- but I'm not sure. I don't know that I have like a quick thing that isn't just classic Friends at the Table 'you lose your arm.' So, I don't wanna just- you know, rely on that. Ah, but I- you know, I think it's draining.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I actually think it's like- it's draining- it's not just draining, it's like, um [clicks tongue] specifically, [overlapped] I think it is you take the con- you take-

Keith [over Austin]: Am I weak?

Austin: I think you're actually confused.

Keith: Confused?

Austin: I think, like, you start to- as you do this, you start to see the world the way the Spring sees the world. And holding onto the like, Fero-halfling perspective instead of the world tree perspective is like, taking you focus. Um. But this thing sprouts out of your hand and like- as if there were like, spears growing from it- like, slams into the side of Samot before he can react.

Austin (cont.): Um, and one of the things that we've kind of talked about here, specifically with the Heat and the Dark, is that- and also I just showed it with the star stuff hitting the tree- is that

when you're working with stuff at that pure kind of metaphysical level, that stuff sticks between reconfigurations. Hella almost died because you can't undo a cut from the Heat and the Dark. So, I think this, pushing the star stuff out of him, is like... a real fucking problem.

Austin (cont.): Um- uh- and I think like, it's an instant- like, the lightning, um, the lightning keeps striking, but he isn't in control of it anymore. You've made it so that he has effectively failed this same spell where it- he does not have control anymore. And I think he, like, stumbles backwards and is bleeding. Um. And there are just like drops of thunder and- or drops of lightning that have been pushed out of him. The same lightning stuff- the same star stuff that, like, healed him- they're like laying on the, kind of, on the ground sky up here.

Keith: Mhm.

Austin: Um, having been removed. And he says,

Austin (as **Samot**): Fero. You doomed everyone. [sigh]

Austin: And he pushes himself back up.

Austin (cont.): Uh, downstairs. Um- Ephrim, uh, I guess Ephrim, you're in the middle. Uh, Fantasma and Lem, Red Jack and Blue J, and Benjamin- you have one of them that you've knocked- you've like, dealt with, basically. One of them-or Red Jack now dealt with one of the five. Then you got your thing removed- your like, violin interpolated into star stuff. Uh, what are you two doing now? [pause] Still tryin' to get past them upstairs? Tryin' to take a different action? Lightning, at this point, is now striking everywhere.

Jack: Um.

Austin: Huge, just like, cacophonous noise as it like, shatters across the walls of the university and like, outside.

Jack: I think I have to go and try and find Emmanuel.

Austin: Uh... the, the question here, Lem, is how do you get across the parts of this ground that are covered in star stuff?

Jack: Yeah. Um, and like, I feel like this is- this is like, a... There are rolls involved here in a big way, right?

Austin: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Like this is not-

Austin: And I- I don't think that the method can be 'I just jump far.'

[crosstalking]

Jack: No, no, right. Like, it's like-

Austin: Like, it's well past that.

Jack: How good will jumping far do you in the middle of like, a volcano's lava flow where [Austin laughs] it's like, 'oh, yeah, I can jump maybe- I can jump five feet if I try real hard.'

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: 'And if I don't I will burn to death.'

Austin: So- so what do you have, and how do you communicate that you are going to check on your boyfriend?

Jack: I realize that we're really expressing a lot of kind of core theses surrounding Lem here but with my violin gone-

Austin: [amused] Yeah. Uh-huh.

Keith: You picked a bad time to start using it again. [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: Yeah. I mean, I wonder whether or not there would be a way of doing it where it's like, the framing would be identifying a safe passage. Whether or not that's in through the tower and try to find somewhere, like, downwards? Down under the ground?

Austin: [sigh] I established earlier that most of the campus is covered in it now.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: And so like I- maybe, like, in past and through, maybe? We did talk about it going upwards more than downwards? Um. And we do know that it connects to the menagerie and underground but I don't- I actually don't think it connects to the dorms that way.

Jack: Mm.

[crosstalking]

Austin: Um- I like, I-

Nick: You do-

Austin: Go ahead.

Nick: -know someone that spent a lot of time here.

Jack: That's true, but like, you might be able to walk places I can't.

Austin: No no no, let- wh- can you elaborate? Fantasma?

Nick: Um.

Austin: It sounds like you have something- in your mind.

Nick: Yeah, I mean, uh, there is a Spout- I have Fount of Knowledge, which gives me a bonus to Spout Lore. I could- I could p-

Austin: [amused] You should read that whole move, because it's very good. [light laugh]

Nick: Okay. Wait, Spout Lore or Font of Knowledge?

Austin: No, Fount- Fount of Knowledge.

Nick (reading move): 'When you Spout Lore about something no one else has any clue about, take plus one.' [Keith and Jack laugh]

Austin: Great move.

Jack: Mhm.

Keith: Not like we've been living here for a decade.

Austin: Yeah.

Nick: Well. True.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah.

[crosstalking]

Nick: Yeah, okay, I guess you're right.

Keith: But that's a very Fantasma attitude. That still works.

Austin: But there are a lot of- but there are things here with like- the stars, for instance, you know?

Nick: Yeah. Well, no, so I was getting at- like, asking a question of, like, something maybe they never found, even living here in a decade, that Fantasma might know about.

Austin: Right, right. Yeah, y'all lived here a decade; Fantasma worked and taught here for most of his life.

Nick: Yeah.

Keith: [quiet] Yeah.

Jack: Right.

Austin: So- there is a- there is absolutely a distinct difference here.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, 100%.

Nick: You also lived in the ruins.

Austin: Yeah, [laugh] right.

Jack: If there was ever a Fantasma who would know this, it would be this one, right?

Austin: Yup.

Jack: Like, the accumulated knowledge-

Nick: Yeah. 'Cause I was just there, like, [laughing] fifteen minutes ago. From my perspective.

Austin: Exactly. Yes. So go ahead, um- give me that Spout Lore.

Nick: Okay, well-

Austin: It's Intelligence, right?

Jack: Again, there's-

Nick: Is Lem... asking me? Is he gonna ask?

Austin: Good question. That's a good question.

Jack (as Lem): Okay, Fantasma, are you still there?

Nick (as Fantasma) ("whispering" very badly): Yes, I'm still here.

[Sylvia and Keith laugh]

Jack (as Lem): Okay, right. We're going to have to work on- okay. I need to- I need to get to, I think the dormitories?

Jack: Just like glancing at Blue J to check whether or not I have the right place in mind. Um-

Austin (as Blue J): Yeah, that's right. [overlapped] That's where I last saw them all.

Jack (as Lem) [over Austin]: My boyfriend- my boyfriend is in the dormitories. He's a- He's like a cook. Um, he- he- like-

Austin: He's like a cook! Red Jack, overhand, huge swipe with the giant odachi... [Keith and Nick laugh] Blue J like [shooting foley] shooting arrows at these stars... uh-

Keith: What are three other things about Emmanuel?

[general laughter]

Austin: Benjamin raises a magical shield around everyone-

Jack (as Lem): We met on a boat.

Austin: The stars break it open-

Jack (as Lem): He's like-

[loud general laughter]

Austin: 'Great baker.'

Jack (as Lem): Like, this is what it's for, Fantasma. Um... and I- I can't walk on that stuff, it'll kill me. Do you know how I can get to the dormitories?

Nick (as Fantasma): I understand, I understand. Uh, I believe-

Austin: That's an eight. So, I'll tell you something interesting. It's on you to make it useful.

[crosstalking]

Jack: [laughing] Tunnels run below the-

Nick: Wait, wait. That's not the- that's not the plus one, though.

Austin: That's a nine. That's still not enough.

Nick: Oh, okay, shoot.

Austin: You don't have another plus, do you?

Nick: [sad] No.

Austin: You don't have any other [overlapping] super good plus ones from Intelli-

Nick [over Austin]: No.

Jack: Could I assist him?

Austin (after clicking something): Oops. I did not mean to hit 'no' at all. That's not what I meant to do. Uh, you cannot. We've already rolled, unfortunately. I was just checking to see if there are any other plus ones here that- that are not here, unfortunately. Uh, so something useful, up to you to make it interesting-

Jack: No, the other way around.

Austin: Or, sorry. Other way around. Something interesting, up to you to make it useful. Um. [clicks tongue] The answer is- the answer is yes, there is a- I think maybe like, your old, um- There is a- In the central tower are the, um, the dorms for the teachers, right? We know that, like, the people who actually are teachers, uh, used to have- have their quarters in this place.

Nick: Mhm.

Austin: And on the floor- on one of the floors where those are, there was like, a portal, um, that- uh, you could use to go to the like, student dormitories. Uh, to check in on them. And it was like- it was a duty that no teacher wanted to do. Do you know what I mean? You had to do the rounds at night to make sure the students were asleep. [light laugh from Jack]

Nick: Sure.

Austin: Once a- you know, once a week or whatever. And it sucked. So if you can get there then you can use that- uh, if you can activate- if it's still there, and you can activate it, to quickly go to the dormitories. But you still have to get past the stars to do it. So, doesn't help you in this particular moment.

Nick: Um. Okay.

Jack: Okay.

Nick: I have another quick question.

Austin: Yes.

Nick: And let me know if I have to roll to know this, but- uh- Fantasma had a tower.

Austin: Mhm.

Nick: It was- he was- he had the tower of, uh, I forget what it was- what we called- we had a name for it at one point. Where- where is his tower? [overlapped] Is it just gone?

Austin [over Nick]: So, his tower would be among- No, it would be in this same- like, so, the map that you're looking at is not complete.

Nick: Okay.

Austin: Um, it is like, this is the biggest stuff here. But you see like Hadrian's house. It is probably similar like, 'boom', it's up here in the north.

Nick: I see.

Austin: There is- there are other little towers and like, smaller structures. These are like, the big big big things, y'know?

Nick: Mhm. Right.

Austin: Um- so, yeah. But yeah. Or- like, do you- are you trying to be like, 'I have a secret tower here'?

Nick: No, not a secret tower- No.

Austin: Which is also dope- Okay.

Nick: I-

Austin: I didn't know if there was going to be a David Copperfield reveal [Sylvia laughs] with the- the Statue of Liberty that secretly had-

Nick: Oh man.

Austin: See?

Nick: Oh man.

Austin: I don't know that you have a spell that- that is equivalent to that, but- I will say, 'Fantasmo has a secret invisible tower that no one has seen' is extremely good.

Nick: That is.

Austin: From the king of invisibility.

Nick: It is also incredibly Fantasmo.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Nick: He has the tower, where he retr- like, lives most of the time.

Austin: Yeah.

Nick: He already tells people not to disturb him when he's in the tower. [Austin laughs] But then he's got another one.

Austin: [laughing] Uh-huh?

Nick: [loud gasp]

Austin: Uh-huh? Oh, you actually have a move for this, don't you?

Nick: Do I?

Austin: I thought you had a spell that was already- can I see your spells real quick?

Nick: Yeah.

Austin: Um [thinking noise] da-da-da-da-da- maybe I'm thinking of a different thing. One second. Did somebody else just gasp?

Nick: No, that was me.

Austin: Okay. What were you gasping about?

Nick: I was gasping about, uh- a very personal thing that I- [Keith laughs]

[1:15:00]

Austin: [amused] Okay.

Nick: I've always had this- I've always had this, like, idea of an inverted tower which is really just a pit.

Austin: Oh. Sure.

Nick: Like it's a tower that goes in the ground. But I've always loved that idea.

Austin: Mhm. Um-

Keith: Just like ninety sub-basements?

[crosstalking]

Austin: Yes.

Nick: Yeah, basically.

Austin: Oh. Uh, yeah, so you do. You have this already. It is the- the move Self-Powered.

Nick: Yes- okay. Oh!

Austin (reading move): 'When you have time, arcane materials, and a safe space, you can create your own place of power.'

Nick: Right.

Austin (continuing): 'Describe to the GM what kind of power it is and how you're bring- binding it to this place. The GM will tell you, uh, one kind of creature that will [laugh] have an interest in your workings.' Um, and that's like, something you could have made before, right?

Nick: Right.

Austin: I'm not gonna make you re- retroactively roll to have made this. I mean, it does- there's no roll involved. You just would have made this when you were still Fantasma.

Nick: Right.

Austin: So like, yes. Is there an inverted tower or some sort of other magical thing that is close enough by that like, is another way to get to Samot, somehow? Y'know-

Nick: Yeah...

Austin: Or to, or to- you know, that connects to the central tower in some magical way. That lets you just avoid all these stars altogether.

Nick: Yeah, so okay, yes. I think there is- there's this- Fantasma's got a secret basement. [laughs] Basically.

Austin: [laughing] Great. Even this- even this, uh, Fantasma is a secret Redditor. [Sylvia laughs]

Nick: Yeah. [laughs] Yeah. Um, so yes, that's- that-

Austin: What's it- what's it look like to reveal this- this place?

Nick: Uh, well, we'd have to get into the tower first.

Austin: Okay, so it's- you go into the tower, and then you can reveal where it is.

Nick: Yeah.

Austin: I gotcha. I didn't know if it was a second place out here.

Nick: No.

Austin: Okay. Um, alright, so once you get past these stars, then. There's still a bunch of stars in front of you. Um, you could also just try to like- try to get past them past them, but it will be

hard because it's not one of those things where you can leave behind people to defend as you move, because then they'll be consumed by the star stuff because they'll be outside of the bubble, you know?

Nick: Right. Maybe none of this is actually useful in the moment. It's- cool bits of-

Austin: Ah- we'll get there.

Nick: Okay.

Austin: We'll get there. Um.

[crosstalking]

Nick: So- but-

Austin: I think actually in this moment- go ahead.

Nick: No, yeah, so in this moment, is the lore that I spouted earlier- is that still true, or are we going-

Austin: Do you want to move it into this other thing? Which is like, you have a way to teleport there from your secret tower? Your inverted tower?

Nick: Yeah. I mean-

Austin: I'm happy to retcon it that way. That's not that big of a retcon, you know?

Nick: Okay, yeah. I mean unfortunately if it was in the central tower- is that where we said it was before?

Keith: Yeah.

Nick: Yeah yeah yeah.

Austin: That's what you just said.

Nick: Oh, oh. No, it would be- yeah. Okay, yes. No, perfectly. Yes. Perfect.

[crosstalking]

Austin: So it is in the center- the-

Nick: It's in the-

Austin: Your inverted tower is like underneath the central tower.

Nick: Yeah. Of course he would put it there.

Austin: Ok, gotcha. Of course, again, yeah. Which again matches what-

Keith: Just like down here?

Austin: Yeah, well like, and also is a great Arrell-Fantasma like, parallel, right?

Nick: Yeah. Uh-huh.

Austin: Um. So I think this is the moment where, like, Benjamin says like,

Austin (as Benjamin): [sigh] I can- I can do this. Alright? Just- give me a- give me a couple- give me like thirty seconds.

Austin: Um, and begins to like, grab stuff from various pouches and tosses it in the air, and is doing like, some arcane shit to do what is going to be a very powerful attack spell on these- on these stars. Um, the moment that he begins to do this, though, the other two who are watching the door step forward and now you're- you have to contend with all five of them. Lem, what do you do? [pause] Lem and Fantasma, obviously, but-

Austin: Fantasma just did a bunch of...

Nick: I'm gonna take my, uh, Quick Study plus one on whatever Benjamin's doing, by the way.

Austin: Awesome. Which is, what, detect magic? It lets you-

Nick: No. It's, um, when- 'when you see the effects of an arcane spell, ask the GM the name of that- the spell and its effects.'

Austin: Mm.

Nick: 'You take plus one when acting on the answers.'

Austin: Good call. So, uh, we've seen this- we saw a bit of this before. Uh, uh, Benjamin is about to do a Fireball. Which is 2d6 damage, but he is actually about to go do a Fireball that is, um-

Keith: The Gohan Fireball?

Austin: The Gohan Fire- the Greater Empowered Magic Fireball. So, it will be a spell effect is doubled; spell's targets are doubled. Um. So it will be a 4d6, um, a 4d6 Fireball that affects everybody nearby twice. So, very powerful. And in fact I think at the- at this point, as like, he's building this fire in the- in front of him, and he's doing stuff like tossing ash in the air, and then it turns- it like lights in fire as he moves his hands around, and he's like holding it. Um, you know,

kind of hovering in between two of his hands. And he's like- it's almost as if he's spicing the fire [Nick and Keith laugh] with various like, ele- components. He's like,

Austin (as **Benjamin**): Everyone get behind me!

Austin: And Red Jack is like,

Austin (as **Red Jack**): I have it from up here, boy!

Austin: And Blue J is like,

Austin (as **Blue J**): No, Dad, get behind Benjamin right now.

Austin: Um, but the stars are gonna charge him. So, he is in a dangerous position. Is anyone stepping in to protect Benjamin in this moment?

Jack: Yes! I am. [rubbing palms together]

Austin: Are you- what are you doing?

Jack: Um, will you let me take- uh, ooh- shit. [Jack and Austin laugh] Um, I can probably try and sing pattern magic, but at a really heavy, uh, cost. Um- what's the opposite of a buff?

Austin and **Jack**: [simultaneously] A debuff.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Um, and all of my pattern magic that, uh- Pattern magic has really nasty consequences if you just whiff it.

Austin: Mhm.

Jack: Um.

Austin: Let's start in the fiction, though. What is Lem doing? Before you look at moves. Like, what is the effect you're looking for?

Jack: Um, I- like literally putting himself between the stars and Benjamin, I think.

Austin: Well, then that's probably just Defend, right?

Jack: Yeah.

[crosstalking]

Austin: That's when you stand in defense of a person, item, or location.

Jack: I'm just aware that if I try and hit these things with my- sword-

Austin: Yes.

Jack: That's the end of the sword.

Austin: Uh-huh.

Jack: But like, he doesn't need long. I don't have to hold them off for long. Right?

Austin: No. You need- you need him- you need to hold them off for long enough for him to yell 'duck!' and then a big fireball's gonna go over your head and slam into them.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Um.

Austin: Right?

Jack: Is my sword- do I have the long t- no, it's short and messy, right?

Austin: No, it's short and messy. Yeah.

Jack: Shit. That doesn't give me long once I hit it.

Austin: Mm-mm.

Jack: Okay, I mean... yeah. Let me check defend. 'When you spend'-

Austin: It's plus Con.

Jack: (continuing to read move): -'in defense of a person, item or location under attack.' I have a zero in Constitution. Um.

Austin: Is that true? Wow.

Jack: Mhm! Lem is not very con- constituuous. [Keith laughs]

Austin: Yeah, apparently.

[crosstalking]

Keith: No constituents.

Nick: He has no constituents, yeah.

Austin: [laughing] Right.

Jack: [laughing] He has no constituents. Um, but I think it's much more the action. We're learning- we're learning more about this narrative beat, right, rather than whether or not it succeeds. If that makes sense.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Totally. This is- this is, this is Lem taking action.

Jack: Oh! This is where my gear comes in.

Austin: Oh, what's your gear?

Jack: It's a, um-

Austin: Second violin. [general laughter] No-

Jack: I've fuckin' thought about this, Austin. There's a Swedish, um, [Austin laughs] keyed violin called a nyckelharpa.

Austin: Uh-huh?

Jack: Which is like a- you know hurdy-gurdys?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, of course.

[crosstalking]

Austin: Oh, this is fantastic-looking!

Jack: Imagine a hurdy-gurdy except instead of turning action, you literally had a bow. So, you're basically playing keys but you are also bowing strings.

Austin: This thing is incredible!

Jack: Yeah. Could I have one? [Nick laughs] 'Cause, like, my problem with the violin has always been, you know, fretting, um- strings.

Austin: Right. So this has just- you got keys to put..

Keith: How do you spell this? Let me- I wanna see what one of these things look-

[crosstalking]

Jack: N-y-c-k-e-l-

Keith: Oh, there. Found it.

Jack: h-a-r-p-a.

Keith: Harpa. That's what I was missing.

Austin: This is rad.

Jack: All I'm saying, Austin, is- season seven? [Austin laughs] Season seven?

Austin: Uh-huh? Yeah.

Jack: Season seven, maybe?

Austin: Uh-huh. I'd love to hear you do some shit with this thing. Hey, a couple years, you could save up for one.

Jack: Yeah! Exactly. It's not- it's not a second violin or a nyckelharpa. It's a, um-

Austin: Aw. I was excited.

Jack: What's the like, guard that goes above a gauntlet? It protects your forearm?

Austin: Like a vambrace? Is that- is-

Jack: Like a vambrace...?

Austin: Yeah, it is a vambrace! I got that right, apparently.

Jack: Oh hell yeah. [laugh]

Austin: Holy shit.

Jack: Wow. Yeah, it's a vambrace.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: It's a- it's a black iron vambrace. Um-

Austin: Okay.

[crosstalking]

Jack: That was just recovered from the, um, I'm trying to think if there's- more-

Austin: And you were just like, 'this looks cool,' is that basically it?

Jack: Yeah, 100%. Lem has never worn armor, really, in the same sense that, you know, armor works. But I think Lem as someone being like, 'my arms are important when I'm doing pattern magic'-

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Uh, time to pick this thing up. Little did Lem know that- the violin was about to be destroyed and they'd instead just be taking a position with it in front of- uh, somebody.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Uh, so I'm gonna take a plus one Forward.

Austin: Take that plus one Forward. I bet this thing has some sort of weird magic that if you spent some time identifying, you could find.

Jack: I was thinking about this. Is there any sort of, like- I'm trying to think if there's any- we don't often have plot-critical characters from the past wear heavy armor. [overlapped] Most of our heavy armor wearers are now. Um-

Austin [over Jack]: No. Um- the only ones I can think of are, like, Red Jack-

Jack: Mhm. Who's wearing his right now.

Austin: Kindrali- right. Kindrali-

Jack: Way too big for Lem to wear.

Austin: Way too big for Lem. Uh, some of the Golden Lance people, maybe. The original ones. But they're not up here. Um, we don't have any- we don't have any, like, old knights. We don't have any like-

Jack: Oh no, actually, I mean I think here's the thing, right? Which is that like, even this late in Hieron there is interesting magical armor with stories behind it that we just haven't seen.

Austin: Oh yeah! Right. And this is one of those pieces, is what you're saying.

Jack: Yeah, a hundred percent.

Austin: Yeah, okay. Sure.

Jack: Ahhh, so let's, uh, let's go for this.

Austin: Mhm.

Jack: Did that add my plus one? Yes.

Austin: Yes [laughing] and it's still a seven.

Jack: Look, it could have been a six.

Austin: So, good job. It could have been a six! Exactly. So, uh, when you defend and you get a seven, um, you get to- you get one Hold, basically.

Jack: Okay.

Austin: So, one for one, 'you can redirect and attack from the thing you defend to yourself, halve the attack's effect or damage, open up the attack- uh, the attacker to an ally, giving that ally a plus one Forward against the attacker, or deal damage to the attacker equal to your level.' Um, so is this redirect an attack from the stars to you?

Jack: Uh, yeah.

Austin: Okay. Um.

Jack: Mm- mm- hmm.

Austin: What's up?

Jack: Or is it half? No. I don't want them to hit- I don't want them to hit Benjamin.

Austin: Uh-huh. I mean, that's understandable. Um- give me one second to remember how to do a, a big dice roll thing. One second.

Jack: Oh, can we do a small dice roll thing? [lightly laughs]

Austin: Yeaah, about that. Um... so the way that group damage works- in a case like this, there are five of these things- or I'll say, I'll say four of them- I'll say three of them! I think Red Jack and Blue J managed to kill two fuckin' stars. Good for them. Um- so I believe that the way that this move works- not move, the way that the damage from multiple things work is that it's the highest damage then plus one for every other monster in the group. Um, and so, from these, the ones that you're fighting now, that will be- and you're just gonna take this damage- um, I hope it goes well for you.

Austin (cont.): I hope you're not about to sac- well, you know? There's worse things than sacrificing your life for- for Hadrian's son, right? Uh... They do the best of 2d4 damage- sorry, not 2d4. 2d10. The strongest one here has one of those swords instead of one of those hammers. Um, and so they do 2d10- that's the best of this- plus four, so that's... plus four is fourteen- uh, er, sorry. I rolled a three and a ten. They take the ten then plus four, and then plus another two. So sixteen damage to you, Lem King.

[crosstalking]

Austin: Uh, that ignores armor.

Jack: And Lem just goes down.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I'm not dead, but I have two hit points.

[crosstalking]

Austin: Jesus. So this is like-

Jack: So, this is like an explosion of light and lightning and- blood and-

Austin: And honestly, swords. Yeah, swords and hammers as they like-

Austin (cont.): You try to fend them off with this vambrace. You're like, blocking them. Like, the hammer hits your arm, and your arm goes limp. You know? You turn and try to take a hit from the side. Um, it ain't- it ain't- it ain't good. Sylvia¹ in the chat says 'that would one-hit K.O. me, god damn.' Yeah! They're- They don't fuck around. But then, Benjamin says,

Austin (as **Benjamin**): Duck!

Jack: And I don't need to. 'Cause I am on the floor.

Austin: [laugh] Uhh. Yeah! And then, Benjamin casts a fireball. Uh, you taught him Fireball, by the way. Fantasma.

Nick: Oh!

Austin: I think he explicitly at one point was like, 'yeah, I learned this from some books, probably,' and that's not true at all. [Nick and Jack laugh] And Benjamin does... twenty-two magical damage- oh wait, did I even- is that right? Yes. Twenty-two magical damage to each of these stars.

Jack: To each?

Austin: Each one, which- I'm checking my math- obliterates them all.

Keith: [impressed whistle]

Sylvia: Holy shit.

Austin: So, there's this huge blast of fire from the ground, um, and-

¹ The name in the audio recording is no longer in use, hence the audio/transcript discrepancy.

Keith: That would've killed the dragon.

Nick: Whoa.

Austin: Say again, Fero?

Keith: I think that would've killed the dragon.

Austin: Oh, yeah. Benjamin- I said Benjamin was Gohan.

Jack: Is that- is this magical fire, or is this fire that, like, burns the hair on the back of your- your head?

Austin: It's both. It's both of those things.

Jack: Oh, okay, both. [laugh]

Austin: Yes. So you've, by the way, yes. So, so Lem, I think you're a little singed. [Keith laughs]

Jack: What- what color is it?

Austin: I would jokingly be like 'roll 1d4 and take damage'-

Jack: And then I'd *die*.

Austin: And then you would die. But I'm not gonna do that. I think it's just orange, regular-looking fire. [overlapped] Y'know, it's a fireball.

Jack [over Austin]: Okay.

Austin: He hasn't gotten to the point where he's like, adding his own personal flair to these things yet.

Jack: The magic bit of this fire was that a person made it from their hands.

Austin: Yes. And he goes like,

Austin (as **Benjamin**): [exhales] Alright, we should probably go. Oof. I have a headache.

Nick: The, uh, surprise of the fireball causes Fantasma to drop invisibility.

Austin: [laughs] Perfect.

Nick: And he just says,

Nick (as Fantasma): Good show, my boy.

Austin (as Benjamin): [pause] Thanks. Um-

Austin: And he, like, heads ins- he's like,

Austin (as Benjamin): Should we go in?

Austin: Uh, and you're able to. It hasn't undone the star stuff all around besides in your bubble, but, you know. Uh, Ephrim, you hear a huge explosion from below. [light laugh]

[1:30:00]

Austin (cont.): And then you're in the middle of this, this tower, still. You goin' up? You goin'- I guess- You're go- You are in a precarious position, Ephrim.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Because I think the star stuff is probably at your fucking heels at this point.

Sylvia: I think- like, I have to go up, right? Like, even- [overlapping] even if-

Austin [over Sylvia]: Yeah, you can't come down.

Sylvia: Well, but also even if that was the option, Ephrim- Ephrim's aware of the rewriting, right? [overlapping] 'Cause it happened directly to him?

Austin [over Sylvia]: Yes. Ephrim knows that the reconfiguration happened, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, so he- he'd be very angry about that anyway.

Austin: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Sylvia: So... I'm runnin' back up there to get caught up with Fero.

Austin: Oh, right. Um, when you get back up, Fero has already done the thing of piercing the stars out of Samot, and Samot is standing up and is like,

Austin (as **Samot**): You don't know what you've done.

Austin: Et cetera. Uh, and now the lightning is just coming down all over the world. All over Hieron, it's smashing into the ground, um, and is drawing up bits of stuff.

Keith: I see Ephrim, and I go,

Keith (as **Fero**): This shithead did all of this shit! [Austin and Sylvia laugh]

Sylvia: Alright. Uh, I'm gonna... [clicks tongue] I'm gonna continue my trend of rolling things, but replacing fires with plants.

[crosstalking]

Austin: Okay. What are you gonna roll to-

Keith: It's gone really good so far.

Sylvia: Well, I have a cool name for this move, so I'm gonna just roll it.

Austin: Alright. Let's see it. What's th- oh- oh, Blooming Brand, fantastic name.

[crosstalking]

Keith: Yeah, that is a really good name.

Austin: Good name. Uh-huh.

Sylvia: Um, and-

Austin: What are you making? 'Cause you get, what, you get- uhh- how many of these things? Two tags?

Sylvia: I choose one tag.

Austin: Oh, one tag.

Sylvia: And it keeps [overlapped] Dangerous and Three Uses.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvia: I think I'm just gonna go with, like- I guess Near would be f- uh- My idea for what the weapon is, is that it's not actually forming a new weapon.

Austin: Mhm.

Sylvia: It is the- it is vines and plants from the Spring surrounding the crescent sun sword.

Austin: Yeah, ooh. So you're like buffing the crescent sun sword, basically?

Sylvia: Basically, yeah.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvia: Like, it is giving the weapon its shape, in a lot of ways.

Austin: Got you. Is it- are they- what do the flowers, or the plants, look like? Are they just vines?

Sylvia: Umm. Yeah, I think it's, like, thorned vines, but then there's a couple, uh, flowers that look similar to the daisy that I got-

Austin: Amazing.

Sylvia: Around, like, the hilt, and on the blade there and there.

Austin: Alright, so then what is the thing that you're- What are- Are you doing- I mean, if you're applying it like that to the thing, you could take- If you take Near, that's basically extending its reach.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: If you take, like, plus one damage, then it's just like giving your other sword better damage. If you're- you tell me what you wanna do here.

Sylvia: Umm.

Austin: 'Cause it's- what is it by default? What is the- what is the range on-

Sylvia: Oh, gosh, I actually don't know. I think we just had Close on it, maybe? It's like-

[crosstalking]

Austin: Yeah, that makes sense. I mean, it-

Sylvia: It's like standard sword stats.

Austin: Yeah. Because you're using it to enhance this other thing, I'm not gonna be too... tricky here.

Sylvia: Um, I think- yeah, maybe I'll go w- I'm torn between the plus one damage and Forceful.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Um, I'll go with Forceful.

Austin: Okay. Interesting. Cool.

Sylvia: Then I th- [light laugh] [sigh] You know what? I gotta do it at least once a season. Time to attack a god from this family.

Austin: [laughing] Okay.

Sylvia: I think I'm gonna have to swing on Samot. He's trying to kill my home!

Austin: That is happening. Give me a hack and slash.

Sylvia: So I roll a-

Austin: This is a very special weapon that you're using. This is the sword that you killed Maelgwyn with. So, it is not like it is a- this is not just a rando sword.

Sylvia: Mhm.

Austin: I want to underscore- underscore that.

Sylvia: Do I still use Intelligence for this because of the Blooming Brand?

Austin: Yeah, Blooming- yeah, totally, I'll- I'll extend that. Give me an Intelligence roll. So that's, what is that, 2d6 plus two?

Sylvia: Plus two, yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: That- [sucks in air] [noise like of a hand hitting a desk]

Austin: That's a six.

Sylvia: [dismayed] I can't roll to save my life today!

Austin: Uh-huh.

Sylvia: Almost literally. [sigh]

Keith: Maybe- maybe literally.

Sylvia: Maybe literally.

Austin: [thinking noise] You- god. Love to swing a sword at a god, huh?

Sylvia: I do! I do love to do that. [sigh]

Austin: I think he, at this point, is like,

Austin (as Samot): [tired] No more. [pause] No more.

Austin: And you, like, thrust at him with the sword and he reaches out, and he grabs it. He grabs the sun-fire as if it were a, a solid thing. Or he makes it a solid thing as he does it. And he just has like a vice grip on it. And it is absolutely burning his hand, but he just holds it, and he holds eye contact with you. And then he snaps it. He snaps the sun in two and I- I- he snaps it in two.

Keith: Does half disappear or is it- cle-

Austin: It's cleft into two. It's like cleft into two half-suns, and like, that's just a fact of this world now, is there are- there is- there are these two suns now. It's like- the thing that I keep thinking about is like, that uh, that shot that shows up in anime a lot- or really I'm thinking about, like, towards the end of Cowboy Bebop, there's a moment- there's a shot where you can see a window breaks, and behind the window is the moon. And the way the window breaks- like this diagonal cut through it- makes it look like the moon has been cut diagonally, and kind of, like, the two halves shift away. And I think that actually happens to the sun for real, where there is this diagonal slash through it, and the two parts begin to like, move away from each other, as if they're losing friction. And then they start to flicker and dim. Um.

Austin (cont.): And I guess like, to be clear, you could still swing the other half of the sword, which is back to just being a metal sword again, um, and do regular damage and all that stuff, if that's a thing you wanted to keep doing. Um, but- yeah. And in fact I think, you know, he just kind of tosses the top part of that blade away and like, down to earth or somewhere else in the tower.

Austin (cont.): Um, and then reaches out with his reconfiguration just on you. Um. Very- like, and just like, touches your chest to do some damage. Uh, taking the best of this 2d10- Hey! That's not so bad. That's only a six.

Sylvia: [relieved sigh]

Austin: So that's a two plus four, so six.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: Um, as like, part of your- actually, you know what, I know exactly what he's doing.

[**Jack de Quidt's** "[Something](#)" begins playing in the background]

Austin (cont.): It's like, he knows there's the weakness in your arm from the Heat and the Dark. And he like, further opens that- that wound. And like, again, I actually think th- here's- I think this is real god shit. Real god hours. Subtract six permanently.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: Samot don't play.

[someone low whistles]

Sylvia: Now I have a total of ten HP.

Austin: Phwoof.

[**Jack de Quidt's** "[Something](#)" plays out to end]