

SPRING IN HIERON 32: INSURMOUNTABLE ODDS

Transcriber: Cole

Austin: Alright, everyone gets together. And there's like, torchlight, and there's like, uh- You know there's probably- Corsica has like, arranged for the blowing of trumpets. Like, you're going off to do an amazing thing. And she is wise enough to be like, 'and people are gonna fuckin' hear about it.' And there's like a crowd that gathers not just of the people inside the wall, I suspect that this is like, just to the north of the um- of the university's walls.

So, there's like, other people gathered here. It's probably like, outside the Outhouse which you'll pass through. [light laugh] Like- or it's just beyond the Outhouse maybe, you know what I mean? Like maybe it's like, on the other side of the- the river. And there's a lot of light there. It's- I think it's your group plus Red Jack, plus Uklan Tel... plus... plus Victo- Hmm, I think that might be it. I think Victoria and Gloria might stay behind, in terms of just like, not over committing. Then I think before everyone sets off, Red Jack turns to like, face all of you. And is like,

[Jack de Quidt's '[Ace!](#)' begins playing]

Austin (as Red Jack): This is not the first time a gang of motley heros has ridden together into the dark to face insurmountable odds. It is not the first time that the weight of the world has hung on so few. And it will not be the last. In that, we should take some respite. Heroism, it seems, is not such a unique thing. If we fall, others will rise. And if we succeed, we plot a future in which so many others will thrive. We win either way. It is a strange thing to say this, but this will not be the first time I have faced this beast. Not exactly. And what I can tell you about it is that it is ferocious like nothing else. Driven the way an apple which falls from a deciduous to the ground to the very idea of obliteration. And we are driven by the only greater thing. Existence itself. I did not know Samol as well as you did, but he once told me that the thing the Heat and the Dark hated the most was the joy of creation. And so, I say this. Let us laugh while we swing our blades. Let us enjoy this violence because we do it in service of what is and what might be. And there is no greater service than that. Ace!

Austin: [foley of Ace neighing] And hops up onto his horse and begins to ride into the dark.

[Jack de Quidt's '[Ace!](#)' finishes playing]

Jack: Does there like- He doesn't look back for the rest of- everyone to follow him?

Austin: Yep. Not at all. [laughing throughout]

Jack: He's just like- "ok, I'm-" [laughs]

Austin: He's like, 'I'm out here. I did my thing. Uh, this is your cue.'

Jack: 'I'll see you at the dragon.'

Austin: Yep. God.

Sylvia: That's a pretty good lead to follow. I'm gonna ride off right after him.

Austin: Yeah, we get like, the image of everyone on their horses riding out into the dark, disappearing from- from the torchlight and the- and passing through the- I guess, actually this is on the other side of the star stuff barrier already. And like, riding off into- into the dark.

Keith: I'm actually not on a horse. I am a horse.

Austin: [resigned] Ok. There it is.

Ali: Mm.

Austin: Great. Alright, we should do a roll for Perilous Journey.

Keith: I'm- I'm excited to do the Dangerous Journey roll because usually we only have enough people where everyone has to go.

Austin: Right.

Keith: And now, people that suck at it don't have to roll.

Austin: [laughs] Wow. Alright. When you-

Art: I insist on rolling. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Austin: 'When you travel through hostile territory, choose one member of the party to act as a trailblazer, one to scout ahead, and one to be quartermaster. Each character with a job to do rolls plus Wisdom. On a ten plus, the quartermaster reduces the number of rations required by one, the trailblazer reduces the amount of time it takes to reach your destination-the GM will say by how much- and the scout will spot any trouble quick enough to let you get the drop on it. On a seven to nine, each role performs their job as expected- the normal number of rations are consumed, the journey takes about as long as expected, no one gets the drop on you, but you don't get the drop on them either.'

Keith: Uh, I've got a plus four on this.

Austin: [laughs] So, pick the one that's the most important.

Keith: Um, so like, probably- probably this journey is safe. That's the one?

Austin: The like, trouble- the trouble...

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, so if there's trouble, we get the drop. Is that t- That's- Is that scout or trailbl- which one was that?

Sylvia: That's scout.

Keith: Scout?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Anybody- everybody cool with that?

Jack: Uh huh.

Dre: Uh hm.

Janine: Uh hm.

Keith: Alright. Cool. I'm rolling. Thirteen.

Austin: Thirteen. That's a success. Alright, so that's scout done. Sorry, that's- Yeah, that's scout. Yeah, so then we have trailblazer and quartermaster.

Dre: I'm tryin' to remember, what do you roll for those?

Austin: It's all uh...

Keith: All wisdom.

Austin: Wisdom, yeah.

Janine: Wisdom.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Ali: Ooo, I have my telescope if anybody- [overlapped] wants to use it.

Keith: [interrupting] No. I have your telescope.

Austin: Yeah? [Ali laughs]

Keith: Yeah. We went over- we- we talked about this last time. [Dre laughs]

Austin: You just used it just now.

Keith: I just used it just now.

Austin: You used up that plus one to get a thirteen. [Sylvia laugh]

Ali: Oh.

Austin: Three more than you needed. [Ali laughs]

Keith: I mean, if I- I guess I can hand it back to Hella and just-

Austin: No, you can't. You can't- Two people can't use it in the same roll.

Keith: You gave it to me- [laughs]

Ali: No, but I want it back.

Keith: You- [Ali and Keith laugh] Ok, I'll give it to you now. You can have- Now, you have it back.
[Austin laughs]

Janine: I can imagine Fero pulling it out, doing the thing, and then Hella being like, 'What the fuck?' [laughs]

Austin: Me, too. Yeah, it's very good. I love it.

Ali: Yeah, that's exactly what happened.

Austin: I love it to death.

Keith: She gave it to me. I don't know.

Austin: Oh my god.

Ali: Not full time.

Janine: What's everyone else's wisdom? Does anyone else have a three or a two?

Dre: I have a two.

Jack: I have a one.

Janine: I have a one also.

Ali: I have a one. I'm as wise as Lem is? [Keith and Janine laugh]

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Wise- Remember wise just means like, looking and stuff. It doesn't mean like-

Keith: Wise means uh, you learn some good history. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Janine: Wise means you know what goes in a salad.

Austin: Right. Yes.

Jack: Lem does not know what goes in a salad.

Dre: It's quartermaster, what else?

Austin: And trailblazer.

Dre: Trailblazer.

Austin: Trailblazer is time. You get there quicker. Quartermaster is you get there not being hungry. You don't want to fail that roll.

Dre: If I do Trailblazer...

Jack: Oh, yeah. Cause failing that one means that we go into the fight, and we're like, tired and bad, right?

Austin: I will- Uh, you will get a debility if you fail that roll.

Jack: Mm. So, we really don't want to fail that.

Janine: That is important, yeah.

Dre: So, yeah. I'm definitely rolling on one of these.

Austin: Ok. Which one?

Dre: Since my wisdom is two. Um...[blows out air] I guess quartermaster.

Austin: Is everyone else good with that?

Ali: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Janine: Uh hm.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Alright. Let's do it.

Dre: Ok. Just straight up wisdom, right?

Austin: Straight up wisdom.

Dre: Hey, thirteen!

Sylvia: [quietly] Nice.

Austin: Thirteen. So, that's a-

Keith: Nice.

Austin: That's a- that's quartermaster we said, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Uh hm.

Austin: Alright, so I want everyone to take a point of preparation.

Jack: Where do we mark that down? Just in-

Keith: Plus one forward? Is that the-

Austin: It's a plus one forward. Yeah, Bolster is 'when you spend leis- when your time- uh, your leisure time in study, meditation or hard practice, you gain preparation. If you prepare for a week or more, take one preparation. If you prep for a month or longer, take three. When your preparation pays off spend 1 preparation for plus one to any roll. You can only spend one preparation per roll.' Everyone take one. So, it's a plus one- it's a plus one hold. You can decide to spend that plus one.

Keith: Ok, so hold one. And then there's a little slot to put one in. Great.

Austin: Yes. Yeah.

Jack: That's some dragon killing points right there.

Austin: It sure is.

Janine: No one else has wisdom two?

Sylvia: Uh, no I don't think so. I think we're all just- [inaudible]

Austin: [interrupting] Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh! Ephrim, doesn't your thing give you a bonus to this?

Sylvia: Uh... which one?

Austin: Your- your daisy. Your- your-

Sylvia: Right. Does it? Yes, it does! Ok. I got a plus two also.

Keith: Oh wow.

Austin: So, you also just have a plus-

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Ok.

Sylvia: Um, or like, the daisy gives me a plus one. My total is plus two.

Austin: Ok, so it's still equal.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Gotcha.

Sylvia: So... I guess I'll roll for trailblazer then? Um...

Austin: So, 2d6 plus two.

Sylvia: It's a nine.

Austin: Oh, it's a nine. I should have opened this up- er I guess, I don't know if you can aid or assist, can you? Uh, I think you can. Adaire, did you want to aid or assist here? It's fine- A nine isn't the worst thing in the world. A nine-

Keith: What are the consequences to- for this?

Austin: Uh, we- I should have asked before is the thing I should have done. Um, the- failing it would be bad. Succeeding at it would be good. And aiding and assisting- the failure- I would get to make a move as hard as I want if Adaire failed, but a mixed success wouldn't have a problem here because it would be a success which you wouldn't have known ahead of time.

Keith: Even if- even if Adaire fails it, that doesn't fail the whole roll. Just-

Austin: No, but I would still get to make a- the roll would still succeed-

Keith: Hard as you want, yeah.

Austin: -but I could still make a move here.

Janine: I don't- I don't have a good history with aid and interfere is the thing.

Austin: Right. It's 2d6 plus one, right? So, in fact, you even have a plus one with Ephrim.

Janine: I do have a plus one with Ephrim.

Austin: Ok.

Janine: So, maybe actually...

Austin: Cause you only need a seven to make that a ten.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Is my- is me laying out what that math is.

Janine: Ok. Let's- let's do it then. Alright. [sighs]

Austin: Aw, look at that. Eleven.

Janine: Ok.

Keith: Wow. Nice.

Austin: Aright. What's-

Jack: Adaire 'I've-only-met-one-god-I-didn't-like' Ducarte. [Austin and Keith laugh]

Austin: Uh huh. Between the two of you're able to cut down travel time. This is three successes on a Perilous Journey. [someone whistles] We've never pulled three complete successes.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I don't think we've ever gotten that. Which is great. Which gives us a lot of stuff that we can do when we get there. I want to talk a little about the journey before we get there. But uh, I mean the long and short is you're able to take this big imp- old, imperial road northwest up to Baron's Gate which is where Fero turned into a vole that time, and there was like the- That's where Corsica first showed up. And that's turned into like- that had been a little bit of a community that had kind of grown around that. The Advocate has already driven most of the people away from here, but you're able to like, restock on food and stuff. We don't need to go through the numbers, but like, it's an easy trip to that point.

And then, you're able to take the imperial road towards the Mark of the Erasure. And you start to see... a bit of the snow on the east side here, which is familiar to you, Throndir. Obviously this is like, towards your- heading vaguely in the same direction as Auniq, your home. Um, but pretty quickly the snow gives way first to the plants of Spring and then to ash and fire. Partially that Heat and the Dark which was already impeding here, but also to the flames of the Advocate which have scarred this place for miles and miles and miles. It is so different for you and Hadrian, um and... Was it just you, Hadrian and... Who else was on that trip with y'all? Fantasma? Is that- was that it? I guess so. It was before Adaire and Ephrim, right? Yeah, so for the two of you seeing this place turn to ash for miles is very weird. Seeing like, the- the uncovered stone of the mountains that are here where there had been trees and snow before, green and white, replaced with just like, gray and brown is strange.

Seeing the embers of the Heat and the Dark and of the Advocate's red flames is also strange. Um, it feels haunted. Before we get there though, I would love to actually zoom in on what those rolls meant. Just to make sure I'm getting this right. Fero, you got a thirteen on scout. Throndir, you got a thirteen on quartermaster which gives everybody a point of preparation. And then Ephrim, you got a... an eleven um... er no, sorry. You got a ssss- what'd you get? You got a nine, and then Adaire got an eleven on the- on the aid, and you pushed to a success. So, you get an eight plus the daisy plus Adaire's roll to get to a- to get to a full success. So, that's three full successes. Um, and then you were- Fero was scout, Throndir was quartermaster, and Ephrim was trailblazer. Is that right? That's the third one of these, right?

Keith: I was the one that gives us the drop on any problems and also-

Austin: Yes, so-

Keith: Or it's a cle- it's a safe journey or we get the drop.

Austin: Totally. In this case, it's- it's the- Well, we'll see, right? We'll see on part- one of those. I want to pay off all of these in a big way, I think, when we get there. But I do want to talk about just like, what's scouting look like for you, Fero? Just give me like, the like-

Keith: Um, well- [laughs] I think uh, as- as we learned... Hella doesn't know that I still have her spyglass. [laughing lightly]

Austin: Great, uh huh.

Keith: So, I think it's really spyglass heavy. I do a great job. [Ali laughs quietly] I've got the spyglass. Um-

Austin: You're like climbing trees and- and-

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, it's really- Yeah. Yeah, like getting up on trees-

Austin: Makeshift um-

Keith: -being able to look into- into clearings and the path ahead, and like- like um- It's- I mean- Oh, what does the scout do? Cause trailblazer like, finds the path, right? Scout just-

[0:15:00]

Austin: Yeah, trailblazer is specifically about finding the path. Scout- Oh yeah, I mean, here's the other thing is like, you don't need to sleep, right? Or eat which means-

Keith: Right, I could do it the whole trip.

Austin: Yeah. Exactly. Like, there's no- there's not gonna be an night where like, a roving band of bandits gets you or like, where the- where-

Keith: That's why they call 'em bandits.

Austin: That's why they call 'em bandits cause they're in a band.

Keith: They're in a band.

Austin: Uh hm.

[crosstalking]

Janine: No, that made sense.

Austin: It's actually a-

Keith: A rock and roll band.

Austin: Yeah, it's actually a pun. Most people don't know about that. But like, it's bandits. Like, a band. You know? [Keith laughs] The- [laughs softly] The other thing is like, yeah, the Advocate doesn't get the drop on you, which is what a failure here probably looks like.

Keith: Yeah, could you imagine like the- the trees are dying and/or going up in flames as we're trying to get out of them?

Austin: Right, right. Totally. I mean, so maybe that's one of the things that you do get here, too, is just like, there are moments in the night where- or in the- in the day when maybe you're a little bit ahead, but especially I think the moments when like, you're the only one awake where you hear sound disappear for a moment as the Advocate roars. And um, Throndir, let's talk about you. You got this thirteen on quartermaster which is incredible.

Dre: Thanks.

Austin: What's- what does it mean for you to be- So-so in the um- you know, in the way it's written it's like, a quartermaster is the person making sure the rations go the right amount, but it's also like, person who is making sure that there's like, the right amount of oil like, being used and is putting out the fire and is kind of like, camp master, you know? Um, so tell me about what that looks like for you. And maybe we can zoom in and even- I mean just- Let's start with there. Let's start with- What's- what does Throndir, the quartermaster look like? [Dre laughs] And what does- what does a thirteen on that look like? Like, how did you do so fucking well on it?

Dre: Well, the first part is - is that whoever packed all the rations, packed food for me and Fero.

Austin: Right. Uh huh.

Dre: And uh, we don't eat. So- [laughs]

Austin: Uh hm.

Dre: There's just- there's just tons of food to go around.

Keith: I can't believe how many of us don't eat.

Dre: I know.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: It's really han- it's real handy though.

Austin: Is the answer two? Wait. Is the an- The answer's two, right?

Keith: It's two, but that's so many people that don't need to eat.

Austin: That's fair.

Dre: Relatively like, one person who doesn't need to eat is a lot of people. [laughs]

Austin: You're right. That's true.

Dre: [laughing] For any like, seven day journey.

Austin: Yes. Yes. So, that's a big part. But I- I would say like, that's a seven.

Dre: Right.

Austin: So, what goes from the seven to the ten? And what goes from the ten to the thirteen?

Dre: Um, I think maybe... I think it starts with Throndir basically just overworking himself. Again, it's that like- it's that still feeling pretty crappy about himself and like, just like... just wanting to be overtly nice and overtly accommodating. So, if it's ever like, you know, somebody has got the

second watch- is like, 'oh, I don't- I don't got to sleep, so I'll just do second and third watch,' and then like, 'well, I'll let whoever is supposed to be on first watch like, sleep in an hour or two hours. It's- it's whatever. It's fine.'

Austin: Right.

Dre: And Red Jack probably like, calls him on that [laughs] at some point.

Austin: Yeah, it's very much a- I think that's very much a situation where he says like- I think there's like, a night where Fero is up scouting, and then you are like, making sure everyone's horses are well-fed and are like, trying to prepare- over prepare for the next day, and he kind of like, comes over to you in this part of the camp. And he says,

Austin (as Red Jack): Thrandir, you know too much spice spoils the steak.

Dre (as Thrandir): Um... Ok, but I- I didn't cook tonight, so that's- that's uh... that's- I think you have to have that conversation with- Who- Who did cook tonight?

Austin (as Red Jack): No. It is a- a metaphor. You're trying very hard to... forgive yourself, I think. I don't know for what, but it is... not appealing. It is setting us off. Do the job. Do it well. This is all we need. You are a quartermaster. You aren't... our... I can't think of a thing here. [light laugh]

Dre (as Thrandir): How do you always manage-

Keith (as Fero): You are not our full-dollar-master. There you go.

Austin (as Red Jack): Exactly, Fero. Also, I'm speaking privately. [Dre laughs]

Keith: I'm just giving out of character- or in character sugges-

Keith (as Fero): I over hear- [shouting from far away] I overheard from the trees!

Austin (as Red Jack): Thank you!

Austin (as Kodiak): Rrr.

Dre (as Thrandir): Red Jack, you always manage to say things that are incredibly wise, but also like, really stupid. What do you mean 'what am I making up for'? I shot my best friend's son, and he died.

Austin (as Red Jack): And.. [exhales]

Austin: I think he puts a hand- He goes to put a hand on your shoulder, and instead like, pulls it away and like, shakes his head and says,

Austin (as Red Jack): Managing the oil in the lamp will not undo that. There is no amount of giving up your rations that will convince Hadrian that you acted in clear intent.

Dre (as Thrandir): So what does?

Austin (as Red Jack): Do the job. Let time pass. And perhaps you will never bring him back, but did you do a thing you know is right? Did you take the action you would take again? If so, you need not bother yourself with his approval.

Austin: I think he like, sits down on a nearby tree stump, like a very big one, and then he says,

Austin (as Red Jack): Now, I said that I would have third watch. Go to sleep.

Dre (as Thrandir): When are you gonna talk to Blue J?

Austin (as Red Jack): About what?

Austin: And he like, leans on his sword and looks up at you.

Dre (as Thrandir): I don't even know what [light laugh] cause neither of you will tell me what.

Austin (as Red Jack): You mean my fears?

Dre (as Thrandir): [quietly] What are they?

Austin (as Red Jack): That they will find reason.... That I will give them reason to do what I did to my father. And so on, back.

Dre (as Thrandir): I know what you're saying, but you need to say it.

Austin (as Red Jack): Did you know that...

Austin: And I think he like, nods over to Hella's tent where she is asleep, and he says that,

Austin (as Red Jack): A long time ago, I, in a sense, was in the land you call Aubade. It was not called that yet. I had been placed there by the Solarch. And so, I made it my mission to enter the sword and free myself, my father. Except when I broke the blade open and using borrowed magics, entered it, I found that my strength had made me tyrannical, even in the presence of the Lord Samothos. And so I raised blade against my father, against myself. And I found my way out. A favor for a god. And then later, I found my way to tyranny again and again. Countless years. Self correcting. It is a troubling cycle, except- except that I know in the end that death is always right. I always act with clarity of purpose and with strength in arms... like you did. And so, I worry that Blue J will

find righteous reason to end me. And I only hope that when they are my age, they will not fall to tyranny, too. Now it is third watch, and you should sleep.

Austin: And he like, straightens up. Like, he realizes he has terrible posture and like, pushes himself up on his giant odachi again and kind of like [clears throat] and looks out into the woods.

Dre (as Thrandir): They're not gonna do what you did, and they're not gonna do what I did either. They're- they're better than us.

Austin (as Red Jack): Then we have succeeded.

Dre: Alright.

Austin: Is that what a- is that- Go ahead.

Dre: Yeah, no. I think it's good.

Austin: I was like, is that what a thirteen looks like?

Dre (as Thrandir): Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Uh hm. Great. Um, ok finally, Ephrim uh, with your- with your cool compass and also Adaire. What does an ele- er a ten look like, on trailblazer which is like, you're finding the pathway, You're making sure we don't fall into like, crevices filled with the Heat and the Dark. You're making sure that like, there's no uh- you're not stumbling onto a pathway that leads you backwards or like, that gets you lost in the woods.

Sylvia: Yeah, I think with- with- One thing that I always kind of- like, even I forget with Ephrim is that like, canonically he spent a lot of his childhood riding a horse around the countryside.

Austin: Right, yes.

Sylvia: And like, running around Hieron.

Austin: That's true.

Sylvia: So, the way I'm seeing is that it's like- it's using that familiarity, those like, sort of like, old instincts and also like, 'oh yeah, I came through here when I was like, still with the church-'

Austin: Uh hm.

Sylvia: -or like, 'when I was younger' and stuff like that, as a way to sort of like, shave time off the trip. And I think... I think that the problems that come with that and why I need assistance is because things change over time, obviously. [Austin sighs] It's been at least a decade since then.

Austin: Yeah, and also this is like, the west compared to the kind of Steppe- the eastern steppes that you-

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: -were riding on, right? So like, not that- I mean I guess we're still kind of on that border area to start with.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: But we do know Adaire, as the mapmaker, right? One way or the other. Um, so is this- Adaire, is this just like- Can we zoom in here a little bit? I just- We don't get a lot of Adaire and Ephrim content, and I just want it really bad. I want to know what-

Janine: That's true.

Austin: -what this conversation-

Janine: I do have an Ephrim bond, too.

Austin: What was your Ephrim bond again?

Janine: Damn it. [laughs]

Austin: Oh, I got it. I got it. I got it. [Sylvia laughs lightly] Uh, it was, 'Ephrim carries a heavy load and bears uh- and bears it better than most. I don't need to help him with that load, but I won't add to it either.' That's interesting. Is this a situation then when you like- Adaire, you see that he is like... not struggling necessarily, but isn't quite seeing something that you see or that you know, and it's like, do you step in?

Janine: Yeah. So, I think the um- You know, part of the- the conflict with Ephrim in this situation is relevant to Adaire, too. Like, Adaire's the mapmaker, but she was the mapmaker ten years ago.

Austin: Right. Right.

Janine: And like, a lot of what she would recall is not relevant anymore.

Austin: Uh hm.

Janine: But at the same time, that ten years was not ten years for her out.

Austin: Right. True.

Janine: So, there is- there is a slight freshness in terms of like, 'ok, well, the route I would have taken through here is not an option, but-'

Austin: Uh hm.

Janine: -'I remember there was'- You know, it could be something as simple as like, there was this certain kind of really resilient rock along this one area that like, would be less likely to crumble away-

Austin: Uh hm.

Janine: -and less likely to get really fucked up. So, it might be a case of like- I think Adaire would maybe see Ephrim kind of struggling to find a path through and then- and would mention like, you know,

Janine (as Adaire): I think there's like, an escarpment this way that might- that might sort of keep us out of the worst of it, and let us kind of loop around to where we need to be.

Keith: [quietly in the background] Escarpment.

Sylvia: I like that. I also- I kind of like the idea that like, after that happens the first time, Ephrim's kind of like, checking in, before he makes a like, navigation decision, [Austin laughs] with Adaire. Like, he's like,

Sylvia (as Ephrim): I think it's this way.

Sylvia: And then he like, gives her a look to be like, [Austin laughs] 'Am I- am I right?' [Janine laughs] And if she nods, he'll stick with it, and if not, eh, not so much.

Austin: So good.

Sylvia: Yeah. Um, oh! And I really like the idea of- even if we're not u- even if like, we're not using one of Adaire's old maps or anything, I do really like the idea of them using the like... daisy compass with one of the maps to help them be like, 'oh, is there-' cause it also detects dangerous um-

Austin: Plants, right?

Sylvia: -the dangerous plants, right?

Austin: Yes. Yes.

Sylvia: So, like, 'oh yeah, this is pointing this way, so we won't go that way.' Just using them as like, an orienteering thing.

Austin: Totally. Totally.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I mean, yeah, the other half of this is like, that we probably di- we didn't um, even think about was like, the map- the Mark of the Erasure erases all maps. But the daisy works, right? The daisy still works in terms of giving you an absolute direction. Like, giving you- You- you're able to- It points back to the Last University if I remember right, right?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And so that gives you like, 'ok, that is southeast of here' and then also keeps you away from the plants that have made it into the Mark of the Erasure if any of them are dangerous.

[0:30:00]

And so, like that combination is pretty great because a lot of people who have in the past come into the Mark of the Erasure get lost because they're unable to really maintain absolute- absolute orientation. Especially at night if they're not like, up on- I mean, there- and there are no more stars. That's the other thing, right? [light laugh] Um, that's a big thing that changed since- since winter is there is definitely, through all of the history of this layer of like, of Hieron, people learned how to navigate using stars, and the stars are gone. And so that's fun. I hadn't thought about that. That's- that's a good thing. So, the daisy really helps here, too. That combination of things is- is pretty good. And you know, maybe is a good omen in some ways, right?

Like, it does recall kind of what Red Jack was saying when you set out- set off which was 'It is not you know- These things have happened before and heros come from all over, and there are a lot of them. There is not like, the great singular hero. There is this like, big group effort.' And so, this idea of it being like, 'Yes. Like, Ephrim is from the steppes and has traveled all around on horses when he was younger. And then Adaire used to be a mapmaker, and you know, doesn't have the same maps and the same knowledge of this area now, but- And then also, the daisy which comes from Alyosha originally.' So, it's like this- this kind of concerted effort from a group of people. I like that a lot. If anyone wants scenes before we get there, now is a good time. If people want to have conversations around a campfire or away from one, now would definitely be the time.

Jack: I'd like to talk to Uklan Tel, I think, before going in.

Austin: Yeah. I think he's been very quiet this whole time.

Art: Oh, that's the other person who was here before.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Ali: Huh.

Austin (as Uklan): Uh, hello, Lem.

Jack (as Lem): You've been here before?

Austin (as Uklan): Yea- yes.

Jack (as Lem): What did you do?

Austin (as Uklan): It was- it was with Hadrian and Sunder and- and Throndir and uh, Fantasma. They captured me, the pala- the pala-din, and I used the pattern to bring us all back to Velas. It was- it was- Samot was there, of course. And Tabard, who I've heard is... at Alcyon now.

Jack (as Lem): You sound nervous.

Austin (as Uklan): [exhales and stutters] The Advocate is- is [exhales] the Advocate. You know.

Jack (as Lem): Yes, it is. Do you know how it got that way?

Austin (as Uklan): [pauses] Lem, I... I was... Yes, I know.

Jack (as Lem): [long pause] I have not brought you here to redeem yourself, Uklan. The time for that is long gone. I've brought you here to see what little you can do.

Austin (as Uklan): [exhales] I know.

Jack (as Lem): Have I made a mistake?

Austin (as Uklan): No, of course- of course not. There is plenty for me to do. I am... preparing even now. Thinking of strategies. Trying to remember the layout. If we catch it in the air, there are ways we can bring it to the ground. Make its wings heavy so it cannot fly away. If- [exhales]

Jack (as Lem): You seem very easy to- willing to help.

Austin (as Uklan): Why would I not be? [stutters] I made a mistake, Lem. I own it. But I do not wish-

Jack (as Lem): You made a pretty consistent mistake over a long period of time.

Austin (as Uklan): How... Given... the winter was long, and we made it through, and I... I did not know they were the threat they were. I couldn't know.

Jack (as Lem): Do you know now?

Austin (as Uklan): Yes. Of course.

Jack (as Lem): Good.

Jack: And Lem just leaves.

Austin: [exhales a laugh] Ok. Uklan sits down in the sand- or the ash.

Jack: Ash, the fire sand.

Austin: Fire sand, yeah. Uh hm. Anything else? Is there a Hella and Adaire scene here?

Ali: Um, yeah. I don't know. I was- I was actually just thinking, I don't know if I should pull Thrandir aside.

Austin: Mm, also a good possibility.

Ali: Because this is maybe a good time.

Austin: Uh hm.

Ali: But um, yeah, no. I- We have to fight this dragon, I guess. [laughs] No, I think she would talk to Thrandir. Um, Hella and Adaire should happen, but maybe post-dragon.

Austin: Damn. Famous last words. [Janine and Ali laugh]

Art: Everyone brought their uh- their Last Breath rolls, right? That's the-

Austin: Uh huh. [Janine, Jack, and Ali laugh] Keep that in my back pocket, yeah.

Ali: Yeah, I'm good. Um, but yeah. I think that- Cause I think Hella's curious about like, where um- I don't want all my bonds to be blog posts, and they're so close to being it, but I think that there's like, [Dre laughs lightly] I really haven't known Thrandir for the last ten years, right? Um, he seems cool. But he shot a child. [laughs] So, I guess there's a lot I don't know about him now. Um.. [laughs]

Jack: Anyway, stories like these remind me of this potato recipe that I can show you. [Austin, Ali, and Jack laugh]

Ali: So yeah, I think that she finds a time to talk to him like, over dinner. If he's like, first scout or whatever, she stays up to- to approach him. Um... it's probably awkward at first, but yeah- I don't know. [Dre laughs] I- I don't know how to start [laughing] this part. Um, how do ask someone why they shot a child? I don't know. [laughs]

Austin: Good question.

Jack: Maybe that's where you begin.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Yeah. Um... [exhales and clears throat]

Ali (as Hella): So, what's been up with you?

Dre (as Thrandir): That's a- that's a broad question and a very interesting one coming from the person who is slowly dying.

Ali (as Hella): Yeah. Well...

Dre (as Thrandir): Sorry, that was-

Ali (as Hella): I have questions.

Dre (as Thrandir): That was more uh... [laughing] confrontational than I anticipated.

Ali (as Hella): Sure. What are you defensive about? [Keith laughs]

Dre (as Thrandir): Uh, [laughing] besides everything?

Ali (as Hella): Yeah, dude. What the fuck is happening?

Dre (as Thrandir): Are you asking specifically about Benjamin?

Ali (as Hella): Yeah. Mostly. What... Come on. Why would you do that?

Dre (as Thrandir): [exhales] I watched them kill Arrell four different times? Five different times? And-

Ali (as Hella): And?

Dre (as Thrandir): [sighs] I was- I mean, I was desperate. I was trying to think of something. I mean, when he first said that he can't die because his- he's you know, got his phylactery linked to Benjamin, I was like, 'ok, that's- that's probably bullshit, right?' And you know, again the killing five different times... and I was racking my brain trying to think of what to do, and that's when-

Dre: Austin, I'm trying to remember if it was- Which of the Golden Lance members-?

Austin: It was Victoria. It was- it was Victoria. Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Dre (as Thrandir): And that's when Victoria talked to me, and she told me that even if Benjamin were to die, he wouldn't stay dead. That Hadrian had the capability to talk to- I didn't know it was Adelaide- but to talk to her and bring Benjamin back.

Ali (as Hella): So, you're saying it was her idea?

Dre (as Thrandir): I mean, I guess. But I did it. I'm not saying it's her idea to get out of it.

Ali (as Hella): [sighs and whispers] Thrandir.

Dre (as Thrandir): He was... he was this close to killing Ephrim. And I mean, Fero turned into this crazy shit that I've never seen before, [Austin laughs] and it did nothing. [Ali/Hella sighs] He- he made Ephrim stab himself in the chest with the Heat and the Dark. And how long would it have been until Hadrian and then Rosana...?

Ali (as Hella): Well, then what are you gonna do about it now? I mean... you know... those two look up to you.

Dre (as Thrandir): Who?

Ali (as Hella): Benjamin and Blue J.

Dre (as Thrandir): I mean, I talked to Blue J, and I think they are teaching me like, how to live. And like, how to- I think they're now my mentor. [Austin laughs] I don't know. It's-

Ali (as Hella): Well, you might need one.

Dre (as Thrandir): Hella, why do you think I am so ready that if nothing else works...?

Ali (as Hella): Shut up. Fuck off. No. [laughs lightly]

Dre (as Thrandir): No, I- [Ali/Hella exhales] I just... I always thought that I wanted to do the right thing and good things because I saw what it was like to grow up without that, and now I'm wondering if I just wanted to do that to try and feel important.

Ali (as Hella): Well, you already are, so...

Dre (as Thrandir): Yeah, it sucks. [Austin and Ali laugh]

Ali (as Hella): It's complicated. That's all it is.

Dre (as Thrandir): I have sat and thought about it over and over, and I know just looking at the outcome, like just the raw facts of what happened, that I did the right thing. But it just feels awful.

Ali (as Hella): Yeah, I bet.

Ali: [laughs] I think Hella's just like, casually eating nuts or something. Like, she's-

Dre: Is-

Ali: She's sympathetic, but like, to a point.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Dre (as Thrandir): Listen, this is maybe too on the nose, but like, I- I know you did some- some stuff back in the day. [Austin laughs] How do you... like, have you ever been through something like this?

Ali (as Hella): [laughs] Oh my god, Thrandir. Of course I have. What are you talking about? [laughs] It sucks. It's gonna suck for a long time, but don't... [exhales] If you keep thinking that that decision is all you are, that's all you're gonna be. So, just get over it. And don't do shit like that anymore.

Dre (as Thrandir): [quietly] Yeah, it sounds like an easy two-step process.

Ali (as Hella): [light laugh] Yeah, one and two. It can be that easy. I- I don't know. I spent years in paradise, but...

Dre (as Thrandir): [sighs] I mean, your girlfriend seems nice.

Ali (as Hella): You've met her?

Dre (as Thrandir): I- I actually have. I didn't know that was her.

Austin: Oh, that's true.

Ali (as Hella): Oh. Yeah, she's great.

Austin: [laughs] God. Remember in winter when she twice almost and then didn't get to offer you and Ephrim deals in like, a really menacing way because that's who she was still. [Dre and Ali laugh] Great. So good.

Art: I love that that was Hella's like, 'I can pull myself up by my own bootstraps, why don't you?'
[Ali laughs] 'I just spent ten years living in literal paradise, and now I'm a great person.'

Austin: [laughing] While you were living in literally a game called 'Do Not Let Us Die in This the Cold of Winter'. [Ali laughing in background]

Dre: And by the way, you're supposed to play this with like, twice as many people-

Austin: Uh huh.

Dre: -as you're playing with. [laughs]

Austin: Sorry, I got it wrong. It's 'Do Not Let Us Die in the Dark Night of This Cold Winter.'
[Austin and Ali laugh] Oh, a downtime game.

Keith: And wow, it was a dark night, huh?

Austin: Uh huh.

Ali: You- you gain wisdom to spread it, and she's learned a lesson.

Austin: Wow. True. Mm. Mm, makes you- make you think. [Ali laughs]

Keith: Damn.

Dre: Make you think.

Austin: God damn.

Keith: Damn, you don't go to live- You don't go to paradise to live in paradise; you go to paradise to return.

Austin: Wow, yeah. Hm. Fuck, put it above my- my stove. [Keith, Sylvia and Ali laugh]

Keith: Did it.

Austin: Sometimes, I just want to like- I'm making pancakes-

Keith: Put it onto a pillow.

Austin: I want to just look up and just remember that one, you know what I mean?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Just really bring me back. Really send me uh, to uh- back there, you know? God. Um, alright. Anything else before- Go ahead.

Ali: I think that's it.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Um, I think Hella says,

Ali (as Hella): You're better than what you did. And you're better than what you think of yourself. So, get over it. [laughs lightly]

Ali: And then just gets up to leave.

Keith: Oh my god. [Ali laughs]

Austin: That's very Hella. It's so Hella.

Jack: Like, on the other side of the camp as Lem got up and walked away from Uklan Tel. [laughs] [Ali laughs]

Austin: [laughs] Yeah. Yep.

Jack: It's like, and passing each other by the campfire and like, nodding like- [Austin laughs]

Austin: Ugh, Dre in the chat says, 'So, do I owe Hella a copay now or... what's the billing situation?' [Ali laughs] Damn.

Ali: One soul, please.

Austin: Yeah. [laughs] Say your prayers. Pray to Adularia. Pray to Adelaide. [Ali and Dre laugh] Yeah.

Dre: Spread the good word. Here's these tracts.

Austin: Uh huh.

Dre: If you could just take these.

Austin: Yep. Put one of these in every hotel that you visit. [Ali laughs] Um, alright. Any other stuff here before we get to this thing? This fight could be over quick.

Keith: Um, I-

Austin: This fight could be over long. I have no idea.

Keith: I'm de- I'm debating whether to try and do um...

Jack: Oh, prep moves! Do we also have prep moves that we can do?

Austin: We- Yeah, we all have that, too.

Keith: Well, so I was- I was debating on whether or not I should be like, using Studied Essence on dragons.

Austin: Mm.

Keith: I don't really know if I need to be doing- Like, I- I don't know. I feel like, if the only way to win this fight was that one of us needed to be able to transform into a dragon, I don't think that that would be fair.

Austin: [laughs] No. [Ali laughs]

Keith: So, like it feels like it's like- I don't- Something I don't need to do, so, I don't know.

Austin: Yeah.

Austin: Um, maybe I should be um...

Ali: Does everyone want to sprout as much lore as we possibly can collectively on dragons?
[Dre laughs]

Keith: Yeah, like what do we-

Keith (as Fero): Hey, everybody get around the fire. What do we all know about dragons? [Austin and Dre laugh]

Art: Uh, real big.

Austin: Real big.

Keith: Real big. Put that- put that on the list.

Jack: Uhhh-

Dre: They got wings.

Keith: I've got-

Jack: Some-

Ali (as Hella): Ok, wait. So, we fought this one, and I can say for sure that its front legs will fuck you up.

Keith (as Fero): You mean where the big claws are?

Ali (as Hella): Yeah.

Austin: Uh hm.

Ali (as Hella): The front legs-

Keith (as Fero): Noted.

Ali (as Hella): Well, they're way stronger than the back legs.

Keith (as Fero): Ok, ok, ok.

Jack (as Lem): Yeah, I think while we're-

Art (as Hadrian): One of those claw, claw, bite dragons.

[0:45:00]

Jack: While we're here in this moment, do the three of us, like Adaire and Hella and me just like, lay down our experience of fighting this thing? Are we just like, 'it sucked.'

Austin: Yeah, but I want to be clear. You've never fought this thing.

Jack: We fought- we fought this thing's-

Austin: You fought-

Jack: We fought the line drawing of this thing.

Janine: We fought the Charmander to this thing's Char- Charizard.

Austin: Yeah, a hundred percent.

Jack: Oh.

Keith: Oh damn, Charizard doesn't even listen to Ash. [Austin laughs]

Jack: Austin, I have an out of character question.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: You- you know how you didn't plan for us to fight the dragon originally?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And that's kind of why it was so- part of why it was so impossibly difficult?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Did you ever plan for us to fight this-

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: - or have we just walked into the same-?

Austin: No, this-

Jack: Ok. Ok.

Austin: You- you, but it's- it's- I was never sure if you were able to be- if you were ever gonna be able to beat it as a single group. So, the fact that you've taken it upon yourselves to just like, do it is good.

Ali: Oh, cause we're seven instead of three or four.

Austin: Cause you're seven instead of three or four. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think it's doable with seven. [Jack laughs] I don't know! [Janine and Ali make noise in the background] I don't know. Like, the amount of damage this thing does is through the roof. Like, I'm not- I'm not lying about that. You've seen it hurt Hella once.

Jack: [laughs] What if we just go home? [Austin, Sylvia, and Ali laugh]

Ali: Well, no, ok-

Ali (as Hella): So, this is clearly- this is now the plan stage, and we should think of like, a- a close to the dragon group and maybe a behind the dragon group. And then also talk through strategy.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith (as Fero): Um, you- Well, you- you three fought not this, but something like this.

Austin: Uh hm.

Ali (as Hella): Uh hm.

Keith (as Fero): Ma- maybe let's pitch- We could pitch ideas for things I could try to turn into that would be helpful. What are its- Does it have a weakness? Is it obvious where- Is there an obvious weakness?

Ali (as Hella): No.

Janine (as **Adaire**): Um, when you tie its knees together, it struggles for a brief period of time.

Ali (as **Hella**): Yeah, there's that. But I stabbed it inside of its mouth, and it like, didn't even do anything.

Art (as **Hadrian**): Ooo.

Ali (as **Hella**): And it has a mouth now, so that might work, but-

Austin: Yeah.

Dre (as **Thrandir**): How like, how- Do the wings seem any more or less armored? Like, maybe I could like, shoot its wings. Like, clip it so it can't fly.

Ali (as **Hella**): Ooo.

Austin: This is the sort of conversation that you get to have and have the energy for because the rations are good. [Ali laughs] Um, Lem, do you want to do your Researcher move?

Jack: I do.

Austin: So, I think there's an irony here, Lem, cause the only way for you to do this is to look at um, maps of this place.

Jack: Mm.

Austin: Uh, but you can't do because you cannot map this place cause it's in the Mark of the Erasure.

Jack: Cause it is just not- it's not here.

Austin: But you have two- You have three people who could tell you about this place and who can kind of recreate what they remember about what the Mark of the Erasure- what Samot's tower looks like from memory. Four because Fero is here. So, you need to actually speak to other people to do this move, which is really fun.

Jack: Yeah, it's- it's the- it's an exact um, physicalization of the stuff we talked about in the last episode of Lem where like, Lem regrets not having been out there talking to people about stuff-

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: -and only having maps. So, I think that- I think what this is is like, 'Ok, just- just try and desc-' sitting around the fire like,

Jack (as Lem): Try and describe the place to me-

Austin: Yeah.

Jack (as Lem): -when you were here last.

Jack: And then just this visual of like, people being like, stepping outside the fire light and letting their eyes adjust to the darkness-

Austin: Mm.

Jack: -and like, pointing at the shadows of hills in the distance.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And being like,

Jack (as Lem): How does that match up to what you just told me?

Jack: And like, corroborating information from different people.

Austin: Yeah. I should actually note something about that shot- You describing that made me remember something here which is that, it is not too long before you can see the- the tower of Samot in the distance laying sideways. You know, shattered into a bunch of pieces.

Jack: Hm.

Austin: It's huge. It's the biggest thing you've ever seen in your life. Is that true? Ah, the only thing close to it is some of those big arcs in the sky from the- when the stars first arrived. Like, the big like-

Jack: Right.

Austin: -arches.

Jack: It's just impossibly big.

Austin: Yeah. It's like- go listen to us talk about Rigour, you know what I mean?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Like, it is the horizon.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: It is as big as the horizon- as anything- You know what I mean? Like, it's- it is like a skyline, but it's all one building that's fallen to its side.

Jack: Man-

Austin: And so you're in the shadow of that.

Jack: -I've just had a great idea for like, a visual image, but I don't know if it works because I don't know what you've got planned for the dragon, but like, do we occasionally just get flashes of illumination of fire-

Austin: Oh yeah.

Jack: -as there's- as like- so like, we'll be pointing out into the darkness, and then they'll just be like, this burst of fire, and it'll illuminate like, a stand of trees.

Austin: Totally.

Jack: -or like, a-

Austin: Totally. And it's been um- It has been- it's- you know, it's a long trip. This is like, a weeks long trip, so it is uh- There- I mean, it's less than that cause you aced all those things, but it's like, a long trip which means you have nights where this happens again and again, you know? There is not just a single instance of it. Um, so do you want to make this roll?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Researcher?

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Um... researcher...

Austin: Um, I think it's still intelligence cause it's still you putting together information, you know?

Jack: Yes. And this is not- I'm not gonna expend my hold here.

Austin: Ok.

Jack: That's for- That's a dragon killing one.

Austin: That's a dragon killing hold, for sure.

Jack: Um, beside like, if I don't do well here like this.

Austin: Jack.

Jack: Oh no, cause there's something else about not doing well, isn't there?

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Mm.

Keith: There's always something else about not doing well.

Jack: Hey, would anyone like to- Does anybody stand up for the fire and is like, 'that's wrong.'
[laughs]

Austin: Not at a five. There's not a plus one here. You can't get it. You can't get there, Jack.
You're at a five. You need a s-

Jack: Do multiple people want to come and tell me that I'm wrong?

Austin: You can only- Only one person can Aid and Interfere.

Janine: You'd have to use the hold, right? And then-

Art: Yeah, but six minus has a fun effect.

Austin: It does have a fun effect. So, let's read this move, Jack. Do you want to read from the trigger down?

Jack: Sure. Let's do it. 'When you spend at least a full day researching old tomes, dusty maps, and bits of lore about a nearby location, roll plus INT.'

Austin: [overlapped] Which is actually great cause-

Jack: The thing is Lem is just a bad like-

Austin: Well, I love it cause it means that he like- for a day of this journey, he was like, 'Arigh, Hadrian. Again, how many pieces of the tower are there? Would you- How would you line them up?'

Jack: It's just like, 'Tell me- Ok, look. Tell me about the frieze above the door.'

Austin: [laughing] Yeah, exactly.

Jack: 'It might be important.'

Austin: Uh hm.

Jack: 'How about the frieze above the door?' Um- [Austin and Jack laugh] Keith in the chat says, 'Ok, so I've been studying, and I think the dragon is actually really small.' [Keith laughs]

Austin: 'I've seen it. I've seen it in the sky a few times. It's tiny. It's like my thumb.'

Jack: 'It's tiny. Look, I can hold my thumb up-'

Austin: 'It's gone.'

Jack: 'What was that you were saying about the- the wood carvings in mugs?' [Austin laughs]

Austin: Alright. Do you want to finish reading the effect in detail?

Jack: 'Miss. On a six minus, choose one anyway, but don't describe it yet. Instead ask the GM what it will cost you or what you must do to gain that benefit.' So, I have this big list of things I can ask for.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Um, and it's 'you learn of a-' Oh sorry. 'You find part of a map, draw it out or otherwise present it to the group. You learn of a trap or similar hazard. Describe it and hold plus one prep. You learn of a dangerous enemy. It's a dragon, mate! [Austin and Jack laugh] Or group in the area. [Dre laughs] Describe and/or name them and hold plus one preparation. You learn of a valuable treasure. Describe it and where it's kept. You learn something useful about the area's history, layout or politics. Tell us what. Or you gain something that will be particularly useful in there. A key, a password, etcetera. Tell us what you got.' Now I'm happy to take advice here, but I am thinking either of 'Learn of a trap or similar hazard. Describe it and hold one prep.' or 'Gain something that will be particularly useful.' Um, I'm kind of leaning towards the latter, in terms of like, a- something that might be able to like, actively help us inside the tower or in the area or-

Austin: So, yeah. So, wait, which one do you want?

Art: The latter seems super fun with this condition, too.

Austin: Oh yeah.

Dre: Uh hm.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, totally. I think that the latter will also like maybe help us visualize stuff-

Austin: Oh yeah. So, wait- so tell me again-

Jack: -more clearly.

Austin: Tell me again which one you-

Jack: Uh, I want 'you gain something that will be particularly useful in there.'

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Brackets 'A key, a password, etcetera. Tell us what you got.'

Austin: [exhales] Um... so wait. Do I not describe-?

Jack: What will it cost me?

Austin: I tell you what it will cost you now.

Jack: What will it cost me or what must I do to gain this benefit?

Austin: You're going to need to- So, Uklan Tel I think probably is the one who tells you this.

Austin (as Uklan): The tower... Each of its levels is... I can speak, yes? It's fine?

Jack (as Lem): Yes.

Austin (as Uklan): Each of its levels- it sees into another world that might have been. In one of them, Ordenna had conquered all of Hieron, and in another the mage college had grown and magic was everywhere. If- if you could find one of those and- So, the thing is it's contained right now. The ruptures and history- and it's stuck inside of the tower. If you could open it up and align things just so- I think I have- We could- There's a- With... with the instrument you carry, you could build a bridge, and we could gain allies in this fight.

Jack (as Lem): What do you mean 'with the instrument I carry, I could build a bridge'?

Austin (as Uklan): You could open a door to one of these other worlds. But you would have to sustain the ritual. The pattern.

Ali (as Hella): Then we just have other world people walkin' in here?

Austin (as Uklan): If I could speak to the mages... Even if we could simply-

Ali (as Hella): You're not speaking to anybody.

Austin (as Uklan): [sighs] If you could then. The Ordennan dimension, of course, was destroyed by Fantasmo, but perhaps we wouldn't want their help anyway.

Jack (as Lem): What's the risk?

Austin (as Uklan): You would be... very noticable. You would have to perform the pattern, and the pattern would make noise and... you see.

Jack (as Lem): And were I to [sighs] target this mages' um, dimension, would there be a risk of getting another one? Or is it kind of like, you aim for one and that's the one you get if you're successful?

Austin (as Uklan): You- We would keep you close to whichever one you chose. We would need to.

Jack (as Lem): Ok, well-

Austin (as Uklan): Just something to know, at least.

Jack (as Lem): I'll keep that in mind. Thank you.

Jack: Uh, Lem just like, turns back around to the party. [Austin laughs]

Jack (as Lem): We all get that?

Dre (as Throndir): I mean, he's not wrong. They do exist.

Austin: You don't still have that thing anymore, do you?

Dre: What thing?

Austin: The like- magic orb thing.

Dre: The orange orb thing?

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: You know I never got rid of it.

Austin: You spend it ever?

Dre: I don't remember getting rid of it. I think I spent it.

Austin: Hm.

Dre: Is it a thing that just goes away once I spend it?

Austin: Uh, you know, maybe you have it, but it'd just get recharged if you brought it there, you know? [Ali snorts a laugh]

Dre: Ok. [Ali and Jack laugh quietly]

Austin: That'd be fun.

Ali: [overlapped] Thron- [several people are holding back laughs]

Austin: Like, if you brought it back to the place. [Dre exhales a small laugh] Uh huh. What's up?

Dre: Nothing.

Ali: How are we gonna- [laughing] how we gonna charge the orb?

Austin: [laughs] It's a different crystal. Ok.

Ali: [laughing] Oh ok.

Austin: Not that one. [light laugh]

Ali: Ok.

Sylvia: Important to ask these things.

Jack: Multiple. Um-

Austin: Oh you know what? There might- The one that he- So, I'm looking at- I'm literally looking at the last time this- this file was updated was April 5th, 2015.

Jack: Damn.

Austin: I'm looking at the list of various places here.

Jack: It's more than four years ago.

Austin: It is. It is more than four years ago, which is a long time. Um, he tells you that you have some options. Um, you have... the mage one, which is- it's- So, it is uh... It is literally- We've written down Disciples of Fantasma here cause that's what they seemed like, but they were like- it- it basically is like, a- the group that Arrell slash Fantas- that Arrell was- was working with. Uh, in a world in which the mages were just everywhere. So, that was one. There's also I think the one he would have actually talked- er told you about was- There was-

Jack: Like, pitched Lem on.

Austin: Pitched you on is um, a giant orcish harvest party. Um, that I guess y'all went to, but I don't... I don't remember... I-

Jack: What, like a sort of Over the Garden Wall, husking bee... type thing?

Austin: Yeah, I- I guess. I'm like- I'm so curious about how I described that years ago. Um, but that would probably be the one that he talk- that he would tell you about because that would be the one that you would be able to quickly communicate with- One, be like, 'I am also- I do

pattern magic. Help us in this moment.' Um, and he probably would trust them more than the mages who are tied to the Disciples of Fantasma.

Jack: Yeah. And also, it's just like, I don't know if we need more of them in Hieron.

Austin: Right now. Totally. But you know what we might need is like, a new orcish, you know, center given what-

[crosstalking]

Jack: And they'll all be having a good party. It's like, 'you enjoy the party.'

Austin: -given what you did to the last one, Lem.

Jack: What?

Austin: I'm just sayin'. [Keith laughs] It's like, a little bit of a- a nice bookend there.

Jack: I want to be clear. Like, this isn't... the- the failure that I had on that dice made you make a devil's bargain with me, right?

Austin: Yeah, this is not-

Jack: And the devil's bargain was 'you're gonna be very vulnerable and make a lot of noise when you do this.' This is not like a trap.

Austin: [overlapping] Yes, this is not a bad success. This is not a trap success. Yeah, yeah. This isn't one of those.

Jack: Ok.

Keith: Uh, real quick. What was the thing that we haven't updated in years? I missed that part of- I was away from the-

Jack: Like, a prep document for several-

Austin: Yeah, I have a prep document here from-

Keith: Oh, wow.

Austin: -here, and I have the transcripts. Shout outs to uh... which number is this? This is- this is twenty-six. Last heard in, 'Why are you here again?' Autumn in Hieron twenty-six. Shout outs to the transcriber, Amaya. You can find out more about this by going to twitter.com/

[1:00:00]

Ali: transcript_fatt

Austin: Thank you. The Ordennan one, blah-blah-blah. [reading and self-editing] 'another one of the zones that's been touched by the rupture. The music in my head that I'm imagining, is this strange combination, um, to our human ears.' Um, there's some drumming. There's like 'a plink-plunky- what we would recognize as like chamber music. But deeper in tonality.' It's like, chamber music mixed with very heavy, rhythmic drumlines. Um, I love it's like, I have to describe this other world. Let me start by talking about what music they're playing there. 'Banners that are really, intricate knotted symbols, painted on them. Some of them have long arcs. It's all very ornate, and handmade. Everything here feels handcrafted. You get in deeper and there is a mini-city.'

I think this is like, what Uklan Tel is describing to you basically. Uh, [thinking] duh-duh-duhhh 'Hundreds, of orcs, talking, and singing, and doing business in a marketplace. There's a big fire in the middle of the city block. There is a bunch of really nice smelling food.' These are all the checkboxes for me describing places. 'there is a live music performance. A low stage. They don't look like you. They don't look like Uklan Tel or Lem King. They're not dressed in the same manner. They're dressed in a manner that is not very outgoing. Uh, Lem and the Uklan and all of the Archivists are adventurers, so they wear leather armor. But these people have like, cowls and like, uh fabric clothing. They live in cities. They live in a- They do city things. They-' What the fuck am I talking about? Here is my literal quote: 'These are people who live in a city, and who do city things. Like, sell corn, [Austin, Keith, and Ali laugh] and who go to parties. Everything has a kind of-'

Keith: Wait, so they go to party?

Austin: Go to parties.

Keith: Oh, go to parties.

Austin: [laughing] Yes, 'Everything has a kind of crisp, fashionable value to it. Like, these are- This is- these are all- this is all clothes made to be worn. It's a combination of very plush stuff, and very flowing stuff. So, I'm picturing like a lot of like, long sleeves, and a lot of soft fabrics and textures. But they're still orcs, right? So, they're like buff as hell. And they're like big dudes, and huge ladies, who are just like ready to roll. With cool tusks, and stuff.' Um-

Jack: They're ready to roll.

Austin: They're ready to roll. I said this four years ago! They're ready to roll. [laughs] Uh, yeah-

Jack: And there's- there's a man and he's walking through the street, and he's saying, 'Boy, sure do I- sure do want to kill a dragon today. Boy howdy.'

Austin: Uhhh, god. Yep. Uh hm. Uh hm. So, I think that this is like, a different orcish culture that is like, a very urbane orcish culture. It's a very like, what if the orcs had made Marielda, ya know? In fact, it's probably literally what it is given that this is the- the um... the tower of Samot, right?

Jack: Right.

Austin: So-

Jack: [sighs] Ok, well, that's really- that's worth keeping in mind as like, a possible um, branch of the plan.

Austin: You know, yeah. Uh huh. Good to know that.

Keith: Um, I could use a- I could do a move.

Austin: What's your move?

Keith: I can do- I can use Communion of Whispers.

Austin: Ooo, good call. What's that do?

Keith: Communion of Whispers. 'When you spend time in a place making note of its resident spirits and calling on the spirits of the land, roll plus WIS. You will be granted a vision of significance to you, your allies, and the spirits around you.'

Austin: Ok. Give me a WIS.

Keith: We haven't been here for super long, but I was here for like, ten years, so-

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. You spent your time here.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You studied this place.

Keith: Alright, this is plus WIS. I'm pretty good at WIS, so fingers crossed.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Ten! Look at that!

Austin: Alright, um so-

Keith: 'The vision will be clear and helpful to you.'

Austin: Here's the first thing you note is it is hard for you to find a resident spirit. You got a ten, so I'm gonna let you have it, but like, you- you're like, 'Alright, I'm gonna just sit down and talk to some of the spir-' And like, there's stuff here, Fero. Like, there's stuff, but it's like, the thing that's happening to Hella. And maybe this is the easiest way for Fero to understand it. Like, you find a tree, and there is a tree here or a little sapling or something, but the spirit in it has been burnt away. Um, including stuff that hasn't been physically burned. Like, there are multiple types of fire happening here.

And one of them is killing people, things, lives from the inside out. But you get a vision of significance to you, your allies, and the spirits around you. Um... god, what is like, a tip here? [sighs] Uh, I- I mean- this is something you already kind of have... um... I will- I will say that this- the vision that you have is that when it is... when it is able to fly around freely... it is going to be next to impossible for you to kill. You're going to have an opportunity to keep it down on the ground and you have to do that no matter what. Because the other thing it can do is just leave, if you don't keep it pinned to the ground somehow. Like, you could get it down to one HP, and it could be like, 'I gotta go. Bye.'

Keith: Ok.

Austin: So, you have to deal with its wings somehow.

Keith: I have some sort of an idea.

Austin: Ok.

Keith: It's a bad- it's-

Austin: Great. Uh huh.

Keith: It's a bad one.

Austin: Yeah, I bet. Anything else here?

Janine: I'm realizing now that when I went in after- when we did the cultist stuff, I really should have used Heist.

Austin: Oh yeah? What's that do?

Janine: I think- I think Heist would have qualified there. But I don't think it qualifies here. But Heist is 'When you take time to make a plan to steal something, name the thing you want to steal, ' and then I get to ask questions that are like, 'What are the mo- What's its most powerful defense?'

Austin: Mm.

Janine: 'Who else wants it?' Like, things like that.

Austin: Hold onto that. You know what? Hold onto it. We'll wrap back around.

Janine: I mean it's a- it's a move I have, so it's not going anywhere. [laughs]

Austin: I know. I'm- [laughs] You know what I'm saying. Hold onto that thought. [Dre laughs]

Janine: I feel we should be trying to spout more lore, but also it's hard to like... know where the lore would be coming from there.

Austin: Right. Just your experience, I think. What you've seen. What- uh, I mean, Lem saw this dragon via Snitch's past also.

Janine: Mm.

Austin: Or a previous version of it.

Jack: Oh, that's true. Do I have any like, um-?

Austin: Spout Lore.

Janine: I- I actually would like to Spout Lore.

Austin: Go for it. Uh, Lem, do you want to help with this?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Ok. 2d6 plus whatever your- your bond number is with Adaire.

Jack: None, so probably not.

Austin: Ok. [Janine, Austin, and Jack laugh]

Janine: Alright. Uh, it's not gonna automatically take my hold if I just click Spout Lore, right?

Austin: No, it shouldn't.

Janine: Ok, and it's INT?

Austin: INT for Spout Lore, which is what? What's your INT? Doesn't matter.

Janine: It's supposed to be one. Yeah.

Austin: Well, you got- you did well. Um, did it spend that hold automatically?

Janine: Uh, no.

Austin: Ok.

Janine: I don't think so. So, it's-

Austin: Also, Lem take XP... for failing-

Jack: Oh, for failing the...

Austin: -for failing Researcher.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Um, cool. So, what do you spout? Let's see. 'When you- when you consult your accumulated knowledge about something, the GM will tell you something interesting and useful about the subject relevant to your situation. The GM might ask you "How do you know this?" Tell them the truth, now.' Um-

Janine: I was thinking about this being rooted in how Adaire sort of watched that dragon be reformed in the fight.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Janine: It seemed like the most reasonable place for it to come from.

Austin: Totally. Um, you- Here's one that's interesting, and I don't know if you can put it to use, but it is... It is an Advocate for the Dark. It is an ally to the Heat and the Dark. But it is not immune to the Heat and the Dark. Even as it brings it more into being. It is not um- [exhales] If you could get it to- If you could hurt it with the Heat and the Dark, it would hurt just the same as everything else. So, Ephrim, take note. Um, but also if you could like, push it into the Heat and the Dark or you know what I mean? Like, it- it is stuff. It is something. It is not nothing, even though it- it wants there to be nothing.

And also, it only- it wants there to be nothing, but it is not- it is not the Advocate plus the Solarch. If it had been that that- I mean, if it had been the Advocate plus the Solarch, the university is probably fucked already because the Solarch goes like, 'You know what we should do right away? Kill the university. Then we should go kill the City of First Light or Malle's Fist or whatever. Then-' You know what I mean? It's not directed in that way. Which is why it's fucking off up here. But the big thing is just like, it is- it is vulnerable to the Heat and the Dark, too, which is something. Anything else prep-wise here?

Ali: Um-

Austin: Can I give you a- one little thing here before we actua- So, cause I want to give you more options for preparations, basically. But it means me setting you- setting the stage a little bit more. Which is here is the tower of Samot. What I need you to do is- uh, one, Hieron's Breath isn't there actually because it's- that was in Samol. Samol took it with him and then gave it to- to um, Samot. So, that's gone. And also, none of the snow is here anymore. But here is the- this is it. I mean, this is it down to the fact that like, that little sun icon was Hadrian five years ago, four years ago. That book was Fantasma up in the north. And that arrow thing- That- that quiv- uh, quiver, is that right? Those are called?

Dre: Yeah, it's a quiver.

Austin: Quiver was Throndir. But this is it. This is the- the map where- of Samot's tower. And you see um, kind of sitting on top of this, not even sitting on top of, but like, laying on top of this kind of second to the northmost uh, section where there is just kind of raw like, below- like, inside the building you can that there- inside like, the structure itself, you can see kind of howling energy from where there is kind of raw, unshaped possibility. So, magic, basically. There's raw rupture. And on top of it, on top of that part of the building is the apocalypse dragon- is the Advocate. Um, and it is asleep. And that is what you get for succeeding on so many of those rolls. It's asleep. It's like, you played Monster Hunter real well-

Keith: Damn.

Austin: -and you found the thing while it's resting. Which means you get an attack here. You get an opening gambit as complicated as you want.

Keith: Ok. So, I... had-

Austin: [overlapping] So, I just wanted to set that up before. Someone else had a thing. Real quick.

Keith: Ok.

Austin: But I- but I think Ali was about to do something.

Keith: Ok.

Austin: But I wanted to get y'all to this point. And also again, everything here is burnt. There has been like... You remember that um, for those of you who were here before, this was like, a- a paradise in the snow, right? Like, it was like, miserable all around this place. Huge blizzards, etcetera. But then suddenly it bloomed into green and- and you know, fields of flowers and all of that has been torched. It's brown and yellow and sickly. And the buildings themselves have been torched in similar ways. And in fact, I think you see that like, there's a bit of um, the- even the rupture that is- that is left- like, the raw rupture below is almost like, um... It is a different color than it was for like, Fero who saw this not that long ago. It was normally like, a bluish purple, and here it is like, a blackish purple, in the Heat and the Dark sense. Like and again, for

Fero who can sense spirits and stuff, it ain't good here. This used to be such a place of life when- when Samol was here, and is now just- who knows?

Keith: Course now they stole his bones and wrecked his house.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Um, so Ali, Hella?

Ali: Yeah, I was wondering if there was a way to re-up on peace before I fight a dragon.

Austin: How do you do peace? What's- How do you get peace again?

Ali: I have to fulfill Death's task to me.

Austin: Which is to spread her word, right?

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: Um... I will- [exhales] Let me- let me look at your sheet really quick. It's been- There's been some time, so I want to say like, you would have been able to do that if we'd played out a big, extended downtime. Do you know what I mean?

Ali: Yeah, um, I'm wondering if- Can I just... This is dumb. I was wondering if I could like, put a thing in one of the temple rooms here. Just be like, 'if somebody else finds this, they'll know she's important.'

Austin: Mm, that's not a bad thing though actually. Like, is like a setting-

Janine: A stack of MLM flyers [Austin and Ali laugh]

Austin: Well, no. It's like- Is there a statue or something that you have? Is there a- is there something to like, put her in the collection of- Cause like, this is the- this is the area where the party first learned that there were- that there was a Samotheon. That there were five temples. That was a reveal in season one. [Ali laughs quietly] That they're like, 'oh shit, there's a bunch of other gods.' But what if you did make a makeshift sixth temple? What if you did, in the place where there are the five idols, leave a sixth that was of Adelaide. And was like, 'Here is- here in the great place of power, you will be known.'

Ali: Yeah.

Austin: I think that's sick, and I think you can take a peace for that for sure.

Ali: [laughing] Ok.

Austin: And then I think I'll give you just one more from downtime. That like, you've had time to spread her word um, you know, during the downtime that we didn't zoom in on.

Ali: Ok.

Austin: During the- like, the Alcyon coming home time, basically. So, you should have two.

Art: Hey, in- in this group... who- who should be- who should be protected?

Austin: Good question.

Ali: Oh.

Dre: Lem? If Lem is holding open this portal and is going to be vulnerable trying to maintain this song...

Art: I think I need to be closer than that. Cause I have a- I have the sword that ignores all armor.

Austin: Right, you should be up in it.

Jack: That's true. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: This thing has a lot of armor, let me tell you.

Ali: Well, Lem can still be your ward, and then you know, if he gets hit over there... [Austin and Ali laugh softly]

[1:15:00]

Jack: Could you just ping the map where the dragon is real quick?

[crosstalking]

Austin: Uh, yeah. In fact, I was gonna put a dragon on the map.

Jack: Can you put a dragon on the map?

Austin: But it's where it says, 'Raw Rapture' up here.

Dre: Maybe...

Jack: Wait, where?

Austin: Top- top left.

Jack: Oh, I see.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Uh hm.

Dre: Maybe before we do that, I was gonna have Thrandir scout around and do a Discern Realities.

Austin: Good call. Go ahead and do that.

Jack: Can I just check real quick? Um, it being asleep is as a result of us rolling super well on the journey.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: Is that the benefit that you mentioned about us going and trying to stomp him now?

Austin: No. No.

Jack: No? Ok, cool. Cool.

Austin: There is a much bigger one of those.

Jack: I'd have been a bit disappointed.

Austin: Yeah. No, don't worry about it. You're good. Please.

Dre: Um, can I count Kodiak being trained in search as aiding me for Discern Realities?

Austin: Yeah, I think that's ex- I think that that is actually explicit in the books. Wow, really?! 2d6 plus four, you got an eight?

Dre: Yep.

Austin: God damn.

Dre: One plus three plus four.

Austin: Wait, what is Kodiak's cunning?

Dre: Two.

Austin: Oh yes, and you got a- Yeah, ok.

Dre: Uh hm. Yep.

Austin: Fuck.

Dre: Good news is with my move, I do get one additional question.

Austin: Ok.

Dre: So, I get two instead of the one.

Austin: Alright. So, go ahead and give me those- those questions.

Dre: Um, what here is useful or valuable to me?

Austin: Uh, I think you're able to go recharge that orb. To give you- It's like another- It's just a plus one hold, right? That's what it was for all that time ago?

Dre: Right. I think so.

Austin: Um, so you're able to like, go back into the mage realm here during like, your prep and like, 'I'm gonna cut in here real quick and recharge that shit.'

Dre: Because I'm either asking um, what should I be on the lookout for or one of my specific questions which is one of- which of my allies is the most vulnerable?

Austin: Ooo, I almost just answered that one, but yeah.

Dre: Any thoughts for- from the group?

Ali: Mmm... I'm leaning the first.

Jack: Yeah, same.

Dre: Ok. Then yeah, Austin, what should I be on the lookout for?

Austin: Um, the... You get- you get like, a plus one for this, right? Forward when acting on this? Is that the thing, right? So, then I would say the biggest thing here is that the- the landscape has been ruined in such a way that it can be hard to anticipate gaps that fall directly below into lower lamina or even into the Heat and the Dark itself. Um, like the landscape because of the way this dragon has- this dragon's fire works, sometimes destroys- It's like- it's like the ground has a lot of volume, but not a lot of weight. And it won't hold you up. You will fall through the fucking ground in some places, and you can notice it by the way the sand- or like, the ash again and the dirt look. If you look for it just right, you can see that there's like- It's almost as if there are pitfalls that have been dug. Do you know what I mean? And you know how to look for those now that you've seen it. But like, I think you- you probably see you know, a- You like, walk through a place at one point, and a stick falls through down. And you look down, and like, 'oh shit, this goes real far. This is not good.'

Dre: Ok, good to know.

Austin: Uh hm. I think on- all this is under this gigantic tower that's like, again the tallest thing- You're- you're close to it now. So, again it is like- it is like being near skyscrapers um, for

characters who've never been around things that tall, unless you've been here. And that's sideways. Like, it's fallen on its side, so standing up is like- it's like a space elevator in science fiction or something. That's how tall it is. But it's fallen over, so it's not that tall in this moment. Anything else here? I've added the dragon to the map.

Keith: Um, anything else meaning anything else before we start the fight.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Oh my god.

Keith: Um, I-

Austin: Shout outs to [AshleyTheNightAngel](#) on Deviantart for their great drawing of an apocalypse dragon from I think the game, Dragon City.

Ali: Hm.

Keith: Uh, so I have a- I have an animal that I would like to transform into. I have a chimera I would like to transform into.

Austin: Sure. Tell me about your chimera.

Keith: So, do you remember the dragons from um, the floating isles?

Austin: Yes, the serp- the like, jeweled serpent thing, yeah.

Keith: The jeweled- Yes, exactly. So, it's- Those are- those are very big, right? Those are really long?

Austin: They're long, yeah.

Keith: They're long. That's the- that's key because the other part of it is um, a centipede.

Austin: I hate this.

Keith: And so all down this dragon's body are those- [Ali sighs uncomfortably] those grabbing centipede claws.

Austin: I hate it.

Ali: No. No, no, no.

Keith: I don't know. I'm thinking it- [Austin exhales] you know, if you're like, 'eww, bugs' maybe don't, but the- the type that I'm thinking of is the tiger centipede. It's not the biggest centipede in the world, but it is one that might live on a mountain.

Austin: I hate it.

Keith: So, that's-

Austin: Don't-

Keith: -It might- under a rock, it might be in the backyard.

Austin: Don't look this up. It's just gross.

Sylvia: Ahh... ahhhh.

Austin: Yeah, ok.

Keith: This is not the grossest one I could find, but it is one that's-

Austin: I bet.

Ali: On a mountain?

Art: [overlapped] Could we not have a podcast anymore? [Austin laughs]

Ali: Don't-

Keith: Yeah, yeah. These things live under rocks and moist areas. So- so now imagine sort of those jeweled serpents, those long-

Austin: Yeah, uh hm.

Keith: Those really long dragons.

Austin: But with these claws like, down its- Uh huh.

Keith: That- with yeah, and so I was-

Austin: Also, just a cool, fun note is people could ride on those dragons, which was sick.

Ali: Oo.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Remember they were using them as literal transports, so just a thing to note.

Keith: They were a- they were like- they were using them like buses.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: It was almost upsetting, but-

Austin: It was, yeah.

Ali: Can we bus Fero up to the sleeping dragon and then just like, jump off him and stab it?

Austin: That's what I'm- Yeah, I mean I'm saying.

Keith: So, the- My move here, those claws- So what a- what a centipede does- the way a centipede hunts is it takes its prey-

Jack: Oh damn.

Keith: -and it wraps its whole body around and uses those-

Dre: Oh damn.

Keith: -arms to lock it in place.

Austin: Mm.

Keith: And then it poisons it until it dies.

Austin: Great.

Keith: Um, but I felt- I felt like being able to lock a dragon in place-

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: -might be a very useful thing.

Jack: Mm.

Austin: Yeah, I could say that that seems useful in this specific fight specifically.

Keith: So, Fer- so Fero sort of like, does the thing where you know, the classic animorphs- you're getting lower and closer to the ground, but he just keeps growing and growing [Austin exhales] and growing. And it's- it is outrageous how big this thing is.

Austin: Give me the fuckin' roll.

Keith: Alright.

Austin: Ugh. And don't make these be real. Roll like, good, but not too good.

Keith: I don't know if I could do that on a chimera. I don't think- I think it just works on- Cause you told me that it gives me a hold towards using Origin of the Species.

Austin: Yes, ok. You're right. You're right.

Keith: So, this cannot become real-

Austin: You do it as a specific thing.

Keith: -unless I do it intentionally. Yeah.

Austin: Ok. Yes, ok.

Keith: Ok, Chimera...

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Oh, no I'm not- I'm rolling Shapeshifter.

Austin: It's a seven which is low-

Keith: Alright, hold-

Austin: -for Shapeshifter. Jesus Christ.

Keith: That is- that is- yeah.

Austin: Get all these twos and ones out of here.

Keith: That's two plus one plus three.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah.

Keith: That's what I- Oh, wait, it-

Austin: Plus one more. Did it spend that hold on you?

Keith: It did spend the hold. That's fine.

Austin: Ok.

Keith: I'm using it. [laughs]

Austin: [laughing] I'll let you cause it did.

Keith: It did.

Austin: Ok.

Keith: Um, so I've got two hold.

Austin: On this creature, or on this thing.

Keith: And yeah- and so, I get one move per- I get like, one bonus move per part of the chimera.

Austin: Mm.

Keith: And so I- I think that I would like my move to be um, both a poisonous attack and a like- um, an immobilization sort of wrapping sort of attack.

Austin: The thing with that is that's two- that's two moves from the same part of the creature.

Keith: Well, the dragon is like, also kind of like a snake, right? It's-

Austin: Yeah, so I guess you're saying-

Keith: It's constricting.

Austin: -you could do a constriction type thing instead of a- Yeah, I can give you that.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I can give you that.

Keith: Ok. Alright. I can- I can switch it up if you want.

Austin: No, that's fine.

Keith: The poison thing was just icing, so-

Austin: Yeah, it is icing, but it's- You know? We talked about icing. Icing is good.

Keith: Icing is good. Love a cake with some icing. But not too much.

Austin: Not too much. Ok. Alright, anything else here? People thought- If people thought the pre-Arell fight was planning a murder, let me tell ya. [light laugh] [Ali laughs] So, what is our opening-

Keith: Do you guys want-

Austin: Yeah, what are we doing?

Keith: Oh sorry, is this a bad time for a Nantucket nectar fact?

Austin: You know- [tied up]

Ali: Uh hm.

Janine: Kind of.

Austin: You know-

Janine: We only have like, a half hour left, right? [Keith laughs]

Austin: Hit me up. Hit me up with this Nantucket fact.

Keith: 'Following a 1921 shipwreck, islanders collected coconut oil by the ton off Nantucket's eastern shores and used it to make soap.'

Austin: Cool.

Ali: Hmm.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Mm.

Austin: Interesting.

Keith: Very normal fact.

Austin: Very normal. [pause]

Ali: Alright, what's the first move here? Who's moving in?

Keith: I...

Ali: Fero, right?

Keith: I think it's me. I think it's me.

Austin: It's probably you.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Do we want to think about Hadrian's ward?

Austin: Yes. We need to name a ward.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Oh boy. I mean, is it Fero then?

Austin: It might be.

Keith: Is- is it me?

Art: But Fero's not gonna be in danger.

Keith: [overlapped] I mean, who's got the lowest health? I'm not gonna- I mean, I'm- I'm... I can heal myself.

Art: Is it Ephrim?

Keith: Like, I literally heal myself.

Austin: Mm. Maybe it's Ephrim.

Sylvia: It might be me, but I was also gonna say, one, we're all in danger.

Austin: True.

Sylvia: And two, like, I was planning on hav- on hanging back which I mean, probably won't help a ton in the long run. But if you want to protect somebody that's going to be close up, uh I wouldn't like- I- Cause I have a good constitution and stuff, even though I've got shitty HP. Like, I can-

Keith: What's your HP at? Like, fourteen?

Sylvia: Seventeen.

Keith: Ok.

Sylvia: It's fine.

Art: Ok, who's going up?

Janine: I-

Keith: You might get killed in one hit from this thing.

Sylvia: Look, I might!

Austin: This thing is really strong. I'm very worried.

Dre: It's probably gonna be you, I'd say.

Keith: Alright. Alright, I'm- We need- Yeah, name the ward and um- and I'll roll.

Janine: I...

Art: Just tell me. Just give me a quick list of people coming up. Fero, me, I assume Hella?

Janine: I don't really have much choice cause I mostly do what I do with swords.

Austin: Uh hm.

Art: Alright, Adaire?

Janine: My health is sixteen. That's after I just leveled and was like, I need more health, so I went from fifteen to sixteen. [Austin laughs] Uh... [laughs]

Austin: That could be all the difference.

Art: Alright, I will take- I will take Adaire as my ward.

Austin: Uh, someone do me a favor and just tell me how much armor you each have individually.

Ali: I have three.

Art: Two.

Sylvia: I have one, but I get plus one from my retainers-

Austin: Ok.

Sylvia: -when they fight with me.

Jack: [exhales speech] I don't have any.

Austin: Wait, are your retainers with you?

Sylvia: Uh, should- I probably should have declared that, huh?

Austin: You should have- Yeah, yeah, but just tell me who.

Sylvia: It's ok. Uh, I was just gonna bring all four of 'em.

Austin: Yeah, yeah. Good. Yes.Good.

[crosstalking]

Keith: Leave one home to water the plants.

Art: If not now when?

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah. Even the priest came. I even brought the priest, you know?

Keith: Fero has two armor.

Austin: So... so no one has four or more armor?

Dre: Nope.

Keith: [laughs] No.

Austin: Ok, good to know.

Janine: No.

Art: I don't like the way you asked that.

Austin: I know. Me either.

Keith: Oh, so I- I guess- I don't know. This could be um... Maybe I'll- maybe I'll do it later if we really need to. I could have given someone a magic weapon.

Austin: You should do that now.

Keith: Do that now? Ok. Or I should- Can we re-

Austin: Yes, you retcon-

Keith: I'm retconning that I did that before I was big.

Austin: Yes. Yes. Yes, that's a spell. You have to cast that spell?

Keith: Yeah. How do I cast a spell?

Austin: Wisdom. It is...

Keith: Wisdom?

Austin: Yes. You also would have had to have chosen that spell, but that's fine.

Keith: Should I choose the rest of my spells right now?

Austin: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Keith: So-

Austin: So, one of those is magic whatever- magic-

Keith: Yeah, Magic Weapon.

Austin: Yep.

Keith: We're gonna do... What's Sanctify? No. [Austin laughs]

Austin: For the record Sanctify is about making sure you have like, good food and water to eat and drink.

Keith: Yeah. Uh, so I guess I'm gonna do-

Austin: [quietly in background] Sanctuary?

Keith: Uh, Magic Weapon, Cause Fear, and Cure Light Wounds.

Austin: Ok, I will say we have lots of Cause Fear in this party.

Keith: Oh, ok. That's fair. Yeah, Hella's really good at that, right?

Austin: And- and Adaire also has fear knives. I will also say I am not sure... I am -

Keith: That you can make a dragon afraid of you?

Austin: I am- This dragon.

Keith: This dragon, right. Yeah.

Janine: Or want to?

Austin: Right. Right. Yeah, cause those- Cause Fear also has some negative- Cause Fear can also be like, 'it hits you.' But you know, maybe. Maybe it's time. So, I'm- I'm just suggesting maybe a third thing.

Keith: I could- I could make a- I could make a home base with Sanctuary.

Austin: That's kind of sick.

Keith: Yeah. Um, do you- Maybe- [amusedly] maybe I can go put it where Ephrim plans on standing. [Sylvia laughs]

Austin: Love it. Ephrim and-

Sylvia: Sure.

Austin: -and Lem maybe could be in the Sanctuary.

Keith: And Lem, yeah.

Austin: I'm not gonna make you roll for these spells because I don't think- I think part of getting here early has been you're able to set up.

Keith: Yeah, ok.

Austin: So like, I want you to-

Keith: Yeah, this is not- This is pre-combat, right?

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Like, we're not in it yet. So, I guess there's like, time for stuff.

Austin: Oh actually, you know what? The fail- the fail for spells isn't too bad, right? The fail for spells is- I'm just gonna check. I'm sorry I'm moving your sheet around.

Keith: You forget the spell, right? Until the next time you-

Austin: You just forget- like, the spell fails is the actual failure. It is not- I don't get to make a har- a move as hard as I want when you fail a spell. It's the spell fails.

Keith: Ok, alright.

Austin: So, you should roll for these.

Keith: Um, so ca- so- so, I'm gonna roll first for um... Who wants- Uh, probably... who's got the best sword? Was it Hella or Hadrian has it, right? Hadrian's got the best sword for this.

Austin: You- Maybe you want-

Art: Um...

Dre: Hadrian's sword already ignores armor and everything.

Austin: Yeah.

Ali: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, but what if I can add 1d4 to it in an- a sword that ignores armor? That's pretty good.

Austin: I will say- The alternative there is you let another weapon actually hurt it.

Keith: Oh, yeah. Good point. Ok, so who else is coming up on the dragon?

Dre: Ok.

Austin: Um, Red Jack is coming up, also, by the way.

Ali: Yeah, I'm gonna be front- frontline party.

Austin: Um, I would suggest-

Janine: Yeah, I'm preparing to get murdered also.

Austin: Adaire maybe is the person who can do a lot of damage, but who currently can't do any magic damage.

Keith: Ok, yeah. I'll- I'll give it to Adaire then. Um, and-

Austin: That would be my suggestion. I- Again, I should not have-

Keith: I was- I was deciding between Adaire and...

Austin: -fan of the characters etcetera.

Keith: -and Hella.

Austin: What's that look like? What does being blessed by Fero and by the earth and Galenica and Severe... Like, what's that look like?

Keith: I think it's- I think it looks silly. [Austin and Janine laugh lightly]

Austin: So, what happens to your rapier?

Keith: Just the idea that Fero is doing magic, right?

Austin: Yeah, so wait, what-

Keith: Like, it's a fuckin' funny idea.

Austin: It is. What happens to Adaire's rapier? How's it marked by your blessing?

Art: It's got a clown nose on it and... [Austin laughs]

Keith: Um, I bet it um... I bet it's- I bet it's really subtle. Like, it- it um- I bet it adds like, an- like an edge. Like a visibly magic edge to it that helps it-

Austin: Uh hm.

Keith: -get through a thing. And so a rapier's already a thin sword, and so adding an edge to it- Is ra- Rapier is not the kind that-

Austin: No edge.

Keith: -kind that is pointy- it's- A rapier's pointy.

Austin: It is only pointy.

Janine: Um-

Keith: Ok, so- ok.

Janine: No, I think you're- you're thinking of an epee, I think. A rapier does have an edge. Rapier has- It's like a very thin blade. But-

[1:30:00]

Austin: Oh, you're right. It does.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: It does. You're right. You're right. You're right.

Keith: Ok.

Janine: An epee is the one that's just like, stabby ending.

Austin: Uh hm.

Keith: Ok. So, I- it will give it like, an extra- like, a magic edge that will help it get through the dragon's hide.

Austin: Ok.

Keith: It's subtle. It's a simple sword; it's a subtle effect.

Austin: Sounds great.

Janine: I appreciate the taste and elegance.

Keith: Thank you. I'm going to- I'm gonna choo- I'm gonna forget the spell. It's revoked by my deity.

Austin: Alright, cool. And now Sanctuary.

Keith: Sanctuary.

Austin: Same thing.

Keith: Cast a spell. Eleven. Great.

Austin: That's an eleven, so you keep that. Uh, what's- what's that look like? What's the space look like that you make with the Sanctuary?

Keith: Um...

Austin: How is it marked? Is it just like, life comes back in that space?

Keith: Um, that's what I was thinking- Actually, I was thinking that I was gonna- I was gonna find some grass...

Austin: Mm, uh hm.

Keith: And that- but uh-

Austin: No, that's good, too. I like that, too. Like, the last little bit of living grass here somewhere?

Keith: Yeah, and like, ta- like, not to like- actually clip a little bit up and make a circle with it.

Austin: Yeah. That works. Cool. And inside of that, everybody who- What is it? Everyone... uh, I have to actually look at this spell again. What's it called again?

Keith: It's- it's- It hurts people with malice that come in, and it lets you heal an extra 1d4.

Austin: Mm. There you go. That's a good place to be. Be in the sanctuary.

Keith: Oh no, you are alerted whenever someone acts with malice within the sanctuary.

Austin: [laughing] Alright, well I think you'll-

Keith: But it doesn't do damage.

Austin: I think you'll know if this dragon-

Keith: You'll know. Yeah, yeah, yeah. [Art laughs] Hm, dragon.

Austin: But an extra healing ain't bad. [laughs]

Keith: The dragon's on the way-

Art: We find out this dragon has a friend. It's a flea. [Austin laughs lightly]

Keith: The dragon's on the way, we'll figure out whether he's acting with malice or not when he crosses the threshold.

Austin: Yeah, alright.

Keith: But yeah, I- I can heal. I can do some ok healing so, if- if someone needs healing, I am technically able to do that, and we'll get an extra 1d4 which is nice.

Austin: Totally. And anybody using their healing themselves or healing other people.

Keith: Yeah, I-

Austin: Lem can heal.

Keith: Big note. I've been doing- I've been doing one of my moves wrong. I don't think it's been a big deal. Austin, I messaged you about this. I don't know if you saw.

Austin: Yeah, I saw.

Keith: But uh, and I think I used to do it right, but balance which I have been getting- gaining one hold whenever I take damage to heal people, I actually am supposed to take one hold whenever I deal damage.

Austin: Big difference. You do a lot of damage.

Keith: Big difference-

Austin: But whatever. Good to know the right way.

Keith: Yeah, I- I feel like it's probably helped and hurt at different times, so it would balance out probably.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Um, ok so-

Austin: Alright. Anything else? Yes. Alright. [pause] What's going on?

Jack: So-

Austin: So, Fero is like, flying above this thing.

Keith: Yeah. Um...

Jack: Does it make a sound as it sleeps? [Austin begins snoring and breathing like a dragon]
Can we like, hear it breathing? It's just like, awful deep snoring?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. Actually, no it doesn't. Remember?

Jack: Oh, it doesn't breathe?

Austin: As you get closer and as you-

Keith: Oh.

Austin: -as you would be able to hear- it's snoring in inverse. It's sucking-

Keith: It like, stutters nothing.

Austin: Yeah. Like, quiet- The- the world just goes silent in a rhythm as it's snoring.

Jack: Hm.

Austin: So, you get like, the wind whistling through the air, and then it just like, [foley of air stopping and blowing and stopping] Like that. It's as if the wind is gasping for breath.

Janine: Can- Can I go invisible with my dog?

Austin: Yes. Yeah. Are you on top of Fero?

Keith: Yeah.

Art: That sure seems terrible.

Austin: Are you getting dropped down on- are you getting dropped down on top of this roof?
What- Like, what are you all doin'?

Art: Yeah, I guess the roof is as good a place as any.

Austin: Alright, uh...

Janine: I would still like to be invisible.

Austin: You're invisible, for sure.

Janine: Thank you.

Austin: Alright. [sighing] Allllright. So, first hit is gonna be damage as established.

Keith: Damage as established, so I-

Austin: Which means- which means that you don't have to roll to hit.

Keith: I would like to use my um.. My- my gri- my grapple move off of that.

Austin: Sure which will be the thing that pins it.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So that is just- an attack with a note that like, it has to struggle to get away from you or something basically?

Keith: Uh hm. Uh, is this a dangerous animal?

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, the one you built? [Keith and Jack laugh] Yeah. Uh huh. I'm gonna say uh... let's go yeah. Uh huh.

Keith: Sorry, so what are the- what are the rules gonna be on the grapple since there's not a grapple system in this.

Austin: We'll figure it out. Where- where do we normally get... God, also thank god there's not a grapple system.

Keith: It- So, it just says like- like, come up with moves with your GM.

Austin: Right. Right, right, right. Um-

Keith: Like, it just says do that.

Austin: Let's do... Um, let's do based on the- You know what I'll do? I know what I think it is? It's that you have to keep it up. We're gonna invent grapple- grapples real quick. So-

Keith: Ok.

Austin: Or the big- Here's what it is. It's- it's a Hack and Slash option. When you Hack and Slash, normally you get to choose from like, three things, right? You get to choose- Sorry, it's you- you choose- You can do extra damage or expose yourself to an enemy. So, now it's like, when you succeed at a- When you get a ten plus, you will either- you'll do two of the following- Sorry, so right now Hack and Slash says, on a ten plus, you deal damage or your- and you avoid the attack. Now, it'll say you deal damage and you pin the enemy. On a seven to nine, you'll choose to either deal damage or pin the en- pin the enemy and regardless the enemy will

make an attack against you as it thrashes around. Fero, you've- Ok, so you've dropped them off. You're hovering above it. It's snoring in this way that's erasing the sound. What- what does your weird dragon centipede wrapping it up look like?

Keith: So, I think that when it's above like- like, if you're uh- Ephrim on the ground-

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: -it looks like the- it looks like my dragon just starts falling. Like, it doesn't- it doesn't do a dive bomb. That's not the sort of dragon that it is. It's not like a bird, you know? So, it just sort of starts falling, and as it falls, the falling slows and then it just hits on top of the dragon and just kind of, in an instant just thrashing and grabbing.

Austin: And as it's doing that, from your back, Red Jack in all of his armor leaps from you and grab- grabs onto the very front of the Advocate. Actually I think probably grabs onto it, draws his sword, and tries to stab it, and the blade just breaks. It just breaks on the Advocate's scale. Uh, and is like, trying to help you pin this thing down so that the- so that it can't breathe fire on everybody, right? Like, you have its body. Red Jack has its face for as long as he can hold it. Just a big oni wrap- arms as far apart as he can, tryin' to keep this giant dragon's jaws clenched, you know? Which I love this image of just- you're saying like, the- your dragon is just like, very slowly falling like a snowflake or something, and then a huge explosion of nonsense.

Keith: How big is Red Jack that... that Red Jack has control of this thing's face. Is its face-

Austin: Control's a strong word.

Keith: Ok. That he can even reach its chin and its like, snout.

Austin: Red Jack is a giant. Red Jack is a giant oni, right? Red Jack is- is-

Keith: Right.

Austin: Red Jack big. [laughs] Red Jack big.

Keith: But isn't its like, head the size of a house?

Austin: His head's the size of like a- I've been imagining it as like, bigger than a car, bigger than a truck, but not quite a house. I think- But I think like-

Keith: Like a little story house?

Austin: Think about it like Red Jack- You know maybe it's like on the ground holding this thing by the nostrils and shoving down into the ground. Do you know what I mean?

Keith: Oh, yeah. That makes it so much sense.

Austin: Like pulling a garage door down.

Keith: Right.

Austin: [laughing] Except instead of a garage door, it's a face.

Keith: Right, yeah.

Austin: Um, and just like, feet- just 'rrr' like, holding down as best as it can as the body thrashes. But uh- but again, this is a moment where- this is the first attack, and y'all all got the drop on it. Which means everybody's going to get the ability to hit this thing once- just like, to swing on it once basically-

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

Austin (continued): -without you know- as a sneak attack effectively.

Keith: Uh hm.

Austin: It can still counterattack. Failures will still require- you know, will still hurt people, but it- One, I don't think it's gonna hurt this away group very much, and two- like, the far group. And two, it can't fly away, which is a big thing. And it can't like, take to the air because you have it pinned to the ground.

[Music plays out to end]