

Autumn in Hieron 21: The Storm Over Tristero

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ALI (as Hella): You asked me before if I came here to help you, and I—I really did. I get angry, and I get distracted, and that's what happened when I let them take you. Um. *[pause]* I can't—um. So! *[awkwardly laughs]* I- I don't have my sword so I- I- I guess I...we could...I met your dad.

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): Excuse me?

ALI (as Hella): *[strained]* I met your dad. *[laughs nervously]*

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): My father is dead. I killed him.

ALI (as Hella): Yeah, no, but he's... *[laugh of disbelief]* You're from Nacre, you don't know how this works?

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): *[scoffs]* I- I don't know what you're talking about, but I think you should leave.

ALI (as Hella): I just—

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): *[calling]* Guards!

ALI (as Hella): No, no... He wants—he wants me to kill you.

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): *[sound of disbelief]*

ALI (as Hella): And I don't want to. But if she's going to, then why don't I?

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): *[laugh of disbelief]*

ALI (as Hella): If you're gonna be tortured—

AUSTIN: He stands up, and he's like... *[Keith laughs, ALI laughs nervously]* He's like looking over his shoulders.

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): *[upset, disbelieving]* You threw me to the dogs and now you're gonna kill me? This is what's gonna happen right now? Alright, fine. Let's go. Why not here.

AUSTIN: He starts crying.

["Eve's Light Parade" by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

KEITH: Previously, on Friends at the Table...

JACK: I guess I'm just...I just don't wanna see, like, the city of Pompeii get just destroyed by warships turning up.

AUSTIN: Uhh—

KEITH: Hold on, hold on, hold on! Hold on. *[laughs]* I'm going to grab Lem.

AUSTIN: Woah!

JACK (as Lem): Wait, whoa, no, dude! I would like to--

KEITH (as Fero): *[interrupting]* You're gonna ring that bell! Don't ring bells. Bells bring guards.

JACK (as Lem): *[indistinct stuttering]*

ALI (as Hella): Don't ring that bell.

JACK (as Lem): Okay, fine. Right. Let's just...right.

ALI (as Hella): Yeah, they don't need to know.

JACK (as Lem): *[resigned]* No, they don't need to know.

ALI (as Hella): No. No no no. Don't touch that bell.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro Doce): Her highness has spent a lot of time...seeing her people live full lives, and wondering if this could go on for much longer. You can only see some people decide to leave their lives behind so many times before feeling like it's a failure of your own. That if you offered them more, a larger world, that they wouldn't choose this plane of existence.

JACK (as Lem): H-h-how do you feel about Ordenna?

KEITH (as Fero): How do you feel about their warships and about a bunch of them at once?

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): It used to be said that Nacre was a place so beautiful that you carried it with you when you left. That's how the empire of Nacre spread. Not through war, not through conquest, not through faith.

["Eve's Light Parade" ends, followed by a short pause]

ALI (as Hella): I... *[sniffles]*

KEITH: Aww, Hella!

ALI: Well, she's also crying!

KEITH: You made Calhoun cry!

JACK: We're not in the room anymore.

AUSTIN: No, you guys are all downstairs.

KEITH: I know, but I'm still—but still!

ALI: I just...

AUSTIN: You do hear, as you're being put into your cells, him shout "guards" that time, though. You do hear that from way at the top.

JACK: *[strained]* Oh god...oh god...

ALI: Oh no!

AUSTIN: It's like...door close. Clank. *[Faintly]* "Guards!" Way in the distance.

JACK: *[muffled laughter]* Oh my god...

ALI (as Hella): I...I'm so sorry... I really...

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): I'm giving you three seconds to get out of here.

ALI (as Hella): *[Indistinct noises]* I...

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): I don't know what the *fuck* you're talking about.

ALI: Do I have to roll? Austin, what is—

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, you have to—I mean, sure!

KEITH: I—

AUSTIN: This is a Hack & Slash.

ALI: If we can just metagame for a second though, like—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: She doesn't have her sword, and...

AUSTIN: No, but she's pretty confident she can kill him.

ALI: No, I know that. But Tristero specifically said like, "you're the only one who can do this--"

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: "—'cause you have that sword."

AUSTIN: That's true.

JACK: I think maybe the sword's like, uh...like an add-on. *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: Like an ownership thing?

AUSTIN: The sword would have... The sword certainly would have helped, is what I'll say.

ALI: Okay.

KEITH: Have you thought about how you're going to kill this guy in his cell and the queen who has us captive specifically doesn't want him dead?

JACK: And the fact that an invading army is...

AUSTIN: She's— no no no you guys can't do this. *[Ali laughs]* This isn't—you can't put this pressure on her. She's already committed. Make the roll.

KEITH: No, I know, I just...

ALI: Yeah...

AUSTIN: She's thought about that, I'm sure.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: This is a Hack & Slash roll.

JACK: *[faintly]* Oh my god...

ALI: Well, she said, like, "What do you want me to do?" And he was like, "Sure, kill me." *[laughs]* So, she'll do it?

JACK: Well, he wasn't like, "Sure, kill me." He was like *[hesitantly, ending meekly]* "Sure...kill me?"

AUSTIN: No, he was like "*[scoffs]* Great. Sure. Fuckin', good. Kill me." And then threatened to beat the shit out of you if you didn't leave. And at that point... Roll Hack & Slash. You've committed.

ALI: *[pained groan, sniffles]* That's a strength roll?

AUSTIN: That's a—that's a strength roll, that's correct.

ALI: *[laughs]* Okay.

JACK: It's emotional strength. "Ah..."

AUSTIN: Yeah. True.

ALI: *[strained]* Mm... I'm so sorry...

AUSTIN: Alright, so you rolled a 9.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: On a 9...you either... You deal your damage to the enemy, and the enemy makes an attack against you successfully. So make—do your damage roll.

ALI: Oh.

AUSTIN: Which is...somewhere on your sheet.

ALI: d10?

AUSTIN: d10. Yeah.

ALI: *[pause, then strained laughter]*

AUSTIN: Ah, d10 plus 1d4, also, because you have merciless.

ALI: Oh, wait—

AUSTIN: By the way, a thing you have is Merciless, so also roll a 1d4.

ALI: Okay... *[muttering]*

AUSTIN: And tell me what are you doing? Are you just, like, swinging at him?

ALI: I... *[laughs]* When I imagined this scene three months ago, she was gonna choke him, but that—

AUSTIN: What's what I have in my mind also.

KEITH: I also have that on my mind.

ALI: But that's... That's been done so well already on this podcast. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: You know, well, again, one of the nice things about— *[Ali laughs]* And here's *one of the nice things* about the world, is now, retroactively, all that time you spent yelling at Art for choking a man to death, a man who didn't really do anything wrong... *[Jack laughs]* In my mind, here's what happens. The punch comes quick. You catch him in the stomach, that's that 3 that you gave him, right?

ALI: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: And that does damage, but like, you know, he's a big dude. Also, he—one second, let me remember how this works. *[typing]*

ALI: *[very faintly, sighs]* God...

AUSTIN: He does three damage to you.

ALI: *[very faintly]* I hate this.

AUSTIN: So, so, I think you like, catch him in the stomach with a good gut punch and he like, hits you back in the face, but then like—

ALI: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: You kind of, like, keep pushing up in the gut with your fist and then reach out and grab his throat and do like one of those like, nice leg sweeps?

ALI: Mm...

AUSTIN: Like, just like you put your foot inside of his legs and pull it down and he drops.

ALI: Yeah...

AUSTIN: And...let me do another. Wait one second, let me see how this works. *[typing]* Okay, you are choking the life out of him. Not just from...you can feel that there is a hand—that there is something else with your hand around his neck, slowly draining the life out of him. It's not long before you...before you see the life drain out of his face. But because of where you are, of course, his face still animates. You've already killed him one. Do you keep choking him?

ALI: *[pause]* Oh my god. Yeah? *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Okay, give me another damage roll.

ALI: 'Cause, I mean, this is... Oh no, I hate this... *[strained laughter]*

AUSTIN: *[typing]* Plus the 4. The d4.

ALI: Oh.

JACK: Oh, geez.

ALI: I hate doing this. *[laughs]* 1d4?

AUSTIN: Yep. And then... his father... *[typing]*

ALI: *[muttering]* That's just great.

KEITH: *[softly]* We were supposed to have just a nice time in Rosemerrow.

AUSTIN: Okay. *[Jack scoffs]*

ALI: I know...

AUSTIN: His body falls forward past you, but your hand is still around his ghostly neck. Do you keep choking him?

ALI: *[sniffles, long pause, strained laughter]* I don't even—I... Ugh, god. This is a lot for her.

AUSTIN: This is a lot.

ALI: *[laughing]* This is a lot for Hella. And then she's doing this just, like, sobbing.

AUSTIN: Mmhm.

ALI: I guess...she doesn't even have it in her to process that she's taking multiple lives. Right?

AUSTIN: Right, probably not. This is happening really quick.

ALI: She's...she's just doing it until the job is done?

AUSTIN: Right. I will—yeah. I think he makes eye contact, though.

ALI: *[softly]* Oh.

AUSTIN: I think he has to, right? Like...looks up at you.

ALI: *[muffled, laugh-crying into her hands]* Fuck this game!

AUSTIN: *[turns away from mic, laughing]* Aw...

ALI: But like, yes, right?

AUSTIN: But yes. I- I... *[sighs]*

ALI: But she's...she's not gonna let go?

AUSTIN: Or is she? Like, again, if she is, then this is one of those moments where...*[Ali sighs]* we have to...where it would be cool if she didn't, or if she did. If she does or doesn't, I think those are both cool outcomes here, *[Ali laughs]* but, like, they're *big* outcomes for who she is.

ALI: Oh my god... No, she—I mean... *[sniffles]* She started it, and like, what's the point of stopping, actually though? *[Austin laughs]* Like, no, but like, actually—

KEITH: The point of stopping is we're here to save him!

ALI: *[laughs]* Like, so she's gonna let go and be like, "oh, sorry about that, I changed my mind halfway through strangling you"?

KEITH: That happens!

ALI: Like, right? *[Austin laughs]* No...no, it doesn't really happen. And like—

KEITH: We—okay, hold on.

AUSTIN: Mm...

KEITH: So we fuckin'— You got this guy captured, then you got *us* captured, and then you killed the guy that we came here to save! And now we're still captured.

ALI: So here's the thing, and I thought about this for a while.

AUSTIN: Mmhm!

ALI: And the thought of Hella just being like...so dumb, or just like, so...like, proud of herself, that she'd be like, "Haha I can make a deal with the devil, and it's fine."

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

ALI: And it just isn't, like she would be like "I can't live with a curse. I don't want to be cursed. I really like Calhoun, but I- I- I was given a task—"

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: "I made a deal. I'm a lady of my word."

AUSTIN: You've killed a lot of people before, for *way less than your life*. Right?

ALI: Right!

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: And, *[whispers]* he's probably gonna die anyway! Me just strangling him is better than him being tortured by his own sister, by his own people.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: So, yeah! Let's—I'll just roll again. Who gives a shit! *[laughs]*

[Austin groans in the background]

ALI: *[laughing, muttering, still upset]* I hate this. I hate this so much.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, I don't even need—

ALI: Oh, that's a much better roll, that's fine.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I don't even to roll the rest. That's enough. *[pauses, sighs]*

ALI: *[laughs]* That's great. This is fantastic. I'm just gonna throw the d4 back in.

AUSTIN: Oh look at that, you got max damage on that one there! *[Jack chuckles]*

ALI: Perfect!

AUSTIN: That's great! That's good.

ALI: *[softly, emphatically]* Fuck this.

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): *[strained whisper]* Hel—

ALI: *[laughing]* Fuck all of this.

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): *[strained whisper]* Hella—

ALI: This is a good- this is a good Hella episode.

AUSTIN: And then...

ALI: I'm actually crying, by the way.

AUSTIN: Aww, buddy.

ALI: As a player.

AUSTIN: He—

JACK: It's the veracity of a recording.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It's a... it's a... It surprises Hella, *["Autumn Not Winter" begins playing]* the sound it makes when her hand closes in on itself. That's how hard she was squeezing when his ghostly body vanishes. It's like a *clap*, is how hard she was squeezing. And it echoes in this big empty room. *[pauses]* You guys want to take a break?

KEITH: Yeah!

JACK: Yeah, should we take a break?

ALI: Um...

JACK: Or, how do you feel?

ALI: If you guys want to... I *[indistinct]*

AUSTIN: I need to run to the bathroom again.

ALI: *[laughs]* Okay...okay.

AUSTIN: We need a break. We'll be right back. Also I need water.

ALI: *[strained sigh]*

JACK: Well, it's out of the way now.

[long pause, as music continues]

Austin: We were just saying that Fero's whole thing is like...he thinks that people could build a better world, we shouldn't want to go backwards, you know, *[sighs]* That was what literally drove Calhoun out of Nacre.

KEITH: Right.

ALI: Right.

Austin: And then, in the end, he was like giving into a different vision of what could be. A world that could be better. That is *not* necessarily what...Fero would think *[laughs]* is a better world.

KEITH: No, but I think that he was—I think he's just conflict—I like, 'not know what to do'

[AUSTIN: Mhm] confused in a tower, sort of. *["Autumn Not Winter ends]* Like, I don't think that...I think that he was more giving up than changing his mind.

AUSTIN: Right. Sure. I think—but I also do think that there was a...I hoped I conveyed that he didn't have the same, like, *youthful* vigour that he had when he left Nacre.

KEITH: Right, yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That like, he left the world and forgot how bad dying was.

KEITH: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: Or had to face how bad dying was, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Like. Had 30 really cool years. And then like, “Oh, right, everyone i know is dead now. Cool.” That sucks.

ALI: Yeah, I had got the sense that like he was an alcoholic for a reason.

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

JACK: Yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The world is weird. I don’t know, I... I do want to be clear that I didn’t want his turning to drink to be like...me preying on old stereotypes of like boozy sad people.

ALI: No no no, yeah.

AUSTIN: But I do—like, I think there was part of him that is just a party guy.

KEITH: Because that part didn’t emerge until way after that.

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

ALI: Yeah...no, I mean cause there’s one half like, drinking on a boat is fantastic.

AUSTIN: Right, drinking on a boat is *fantastic*. [*Ali and Jack laugh*] But also, it’s extra fantastic when you can live your life that way where it’s just this rolling party of randos, right? And not deep connections that you know are going to die before you.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Right?

JACK: Yeah.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: So, I think that that's how I kind of imagined him.

JACK: Oh! Also!

AUSTIN: Yes?

JACK: I guess it makes the fact that he um...that he was kind of so ready just to go ahead with crazy boat party mission...

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: Makes a lot more sense? Because he's just not really worried about dying?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Exactly.

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: He was also fu- *out of his head*.

AUSTIN: He was out of his head super drunk. *[Ali giggles]*

KEITH: He was *out of his head* drunk.

AUSTIN: But like...it's easy to get like that when, like, whatever!

KEITH: Yeah.

ALI: Right. Yeah.

KEITH: It's just weird 'cause like the whole... Besides the first session, where he was *in* the first session, like the first session was...

AUSTIN: He was.

KEITH: But after that, like, second session onward every single thing that we've done, besides the holiday episode, has revolved around Calhoun.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: Who is now—

AUSTIN: Well, Calhoun and Brandish, I think is the other side of that, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That...yeah. I think there was a double thing there, but yes.

KEITH: Right. Well, for Hella specifically, Brandish.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

KEITH: I never gave a shit about Brandish as like—or, Fero never gave a shit about Brandish as anything else other than like, “That’s the guy that took Calhoun!”

AUSTIN: Well, that’s the thing, is like...Fero ended up being the only one left only caring about Calhoun.

KEITH: Right.

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AUSTIN: Everyone else found another thing to care about, which is really interesting. Like, you know, Lem got here and saw this great city and met Emmanuel and...Hella had this shit with Brandish and then with the current form of....oh boy, I just remembered something else. Okay!

ALI: *[strained, worried noise]* *[Jack chuckles]*

KEITH: “With the current form of—”?

AUSTIN: Tristero. So.

JACK: Do we need to clap?

AUSTIN: Yeah, we need to clap.

JACK: Okay let me get time.is.

KEITH: Ah, no, we don’t need to clap.

AUSTIN: Are you sure?

JACK: Oh, really?

KEITH: Unless anybody paused. Yeah.

ALI: Are you sure?

AUSTIN: No one paused.

JACK: No no no.

KEITH: Yeah, we're fine.

AUSTIN: Oh oh, last time we had to clap because Ali had to restart her recording.

KEITH: Right.

ALI: Yeah. Yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. And also, I think probably a lot of that should be left in, a lot of that good discussion we just had.

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah. I was thinking of either putting in a voice note being like "hey this is is some cool discussion I'm going to edit it down [AUSTIN: Right right right] to cut out whatever garbage". I'm either gonna be like, "Ah, skip to this point if you don't want to hear it" or I'm going to cut it out and put it at the end.

AUSTIN: Sounds good.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, so... *[sighs]* We're gonna say that was like midday? And...it *storms*, for hours, after that. Well, you know, it starts now, but everything that follows, pretty much for, I think, the rest of this session...just remember that there was just a torrential downpour. Thunder and lightning, just constantly, for the rest of this session. So. Hella, what do *you* do?

ALI: Um. Well—

AUSTIN: Standing in an empty cell.

ALI: I— she's just...sobbing.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: But like, the guards come in, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, at a certain point—after like five minutes, that guard comes back.

ALI: So, I—

AUSTIN (as guard): *[concerned]* Uhhhh!

ALI: Her move here is that like, once she hears the door open, she just raises her hands and like, through her sobbing, is just like,

ALI (as Hella): It was the will of Tristero, just... *[sniffles]*

AUSTIN (as guard): Where is he?

ALI (as Hella): Take me to the queen.

ALI: I guess he's still on the floor?

AUSTIN: No—wait, his body's on the floor, right right right. Yes, yes.

ALI: Okay, yeah.

KEITH: Are you real sobbing or fake sobbing?

AUSTIN: Uh, sounds like real sobbing. *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: It sounds—no i mean, it would—it's bo— I understa— I believe it as real sobbing, but also, “it was the will of tristero take me to the queen” definitely sounds like a planned line.

AUSTIN: Yeah, well...

ALI: *[laughs]* I just—

AUSTIN (as guard): Ahhh—

ALI: No, I think that like, in her moments of being like, why did I do this?

AUSTIN (as guard): *[increasingly panicked]* Ahhhhh—

ALI: Cause now she has this moment [AUSTIN: Right] to like consider what her- what she's done.

AUSTIN (as guard): Wh- umm...

JACK: This poor guard...

AUSTIN: This—William—

JACK: *[laughing]* Has completely screwed it up.

AUSTIN: William Talfrod is not— This is a bad day for Willy.

Keith: He thought he was getting the garden district!

AUSTIN (as William): Oh, fuck. Oooh, fuck!

ALI: *[laughs]* He'll get there.

AUSTIN (as William): *[panicked]* Whuh.. I'm f— I'm screwed! Wha— You stay right—ahhh....

AUSTIN: He closes— he slams—

ALI (as Hella): *[emotional]* I won't move, I won't...

AUSTIN (as William): Ugh! You're—! *[frustrated]* Naaargh! *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: Slams the gate- or the door shut on the cell. And like—

JACK: Have we heard this, distantly?

AUSTIN: I think you hear the—

JACK: Like, this reaction?

AUSTIN: Yeah, like really distant though. Like, he's way up the top of the tower, you know.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: There is definitely just like a scream of like,

AUSTIN (as William): AAAAHHHHH. *[Ali and Jack laugh]* I can't believe this...

ALI: Laughing Well, can they hear it over the thunder?

AUSTIN: No, probably not. *[Ali laughs]* Alright, so. You— He- he, like, hustles away. And you wait there for quite some time.

ALI: *[muffled, into hands]* Oh no... *[soft, exaggerated crying noises]* Don't just leave me in this room!

AUSTIN: The thing that they do hear... *[Austin and Ali laugh softly]* Lem and Fero definitely hear a kind of bellowing *[angrily]* "What?!" echo up through the tower. *[Ali and Jack laugh]* Uh, and... *[sighs]* I think hours pass. I think they just leave you in there.

ALI: *[quietly]* Oh my god, do they? *[Jack laughs softly]*

AUSTIN: Yeah. Because there's a lot of, like, running around. I mean, in my vision of what's happening here, there's lots of, like, people running through the streets delivering messages to different people and like, trying to figure out what the *fuck* just happened. *[Ali and Jack laugh briefly]*

JACK: Just like an immediate lockdown.

AUSTIN: Right, like, plus it's pouring, right? And people are like sprinting from cover under the rain...

JACK: And, let's be clear—

ALI: So this is like...the blizzard situation again.

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: That everyone's just like, "oh, we don't know how to deal with rain", and also this is just horrible.

AUSTIN: Well, it rains here, but this is like a *terrible* rainstorm, you know.

ALI: Yeah.

JACK: The fucking Ordennan armada is rolling into town! *[laughs]*

ALI: Oh, does that fuck them up? That probably—

AUSTIN: The rain?

JACK: I don't know.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Eh, I don't know. I don't think they're that cl— I think that they're still a day away, you know what I mean?

KEITH: Yeah yeah yeah.

ALI: Okay.

KEITH: I guess—never mind.

AUSTIN: Two days away still. So... Um... *[Ali laughs]* Geez, yeah, okay. Like I said, I have to- I have to—

ALI: Yeah, what do you do?

AUSTIN: This is one of the reasons why— One of the nice things about dungeon world is that you kind of just build these fronts, and you don't prewrite a lot of stuff? *[Ali and Jack chuckle]* Though I *did* have a different vision for how this session might go. *[Ali, Jack, and Keith laugh]* I'm glad it went this way, this way is way better, because this game is cool. So. After a few hours...

JACK: Austin is the man, is the guard in this scenario. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yeah. "Fuck. Fuck! Fuck." No, I'm fine. *[sighs]* After a few hours, two different guards, plus Veneer, who's the warden of this place, show up at the top cell. Um. Lem and Fero, it's weird that Hella never showed back up, huh? *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: Yeah, I was actually gonna see if I could— If I could leave as a bird and go see if I could figure out what's going on.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's fair.

JACK: I'm not super into that plan, cause then I'm just in the middle of this room in the rainstorm...

KEITH: Oh you don't want to be alone?

JACK: And both my friends have disappeared.

KEITH: I'll stay.

AUSTIN: Jack, I'll give you an XP if, over the course of this next scene, you are able to write an appropriate short poem *[Jack: spluttered laughter]* that's in the book of King Tristero about a rainstorm.

JACK: Whoa, will you really?

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure.

JACK: Yeah, alright.

AUSTIN: Because like, that's what you do. That's what Lem does, is reads this, you know, turns to that book of poetry as- after Fero leaves.

JACK: Okay, sure.

AUSTIN: So yeah, so go for that. *[Austin, Jack, and Ali laugh softly]* Fero, you fly up, I think, probably just in time to see Veneer and the two guards show up. He nods to the body and they grab it by its legs and start pulling it away.

AUSTIN (as Veneer): *[low voice]* What the hell have you done?

ALI: I—

AUSTIN: He walks in, and like—

KEITH: So this is after hours?

AUSTIN: This is hours later, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And he like, single-hand shoves you back against the wall.

AUSTIN (as Veneer): He was *royalty*. What *are* you?

ALI (as Hella): I did what I...I was asked. I did what I was asked; I did what I promised.

AUSTIN (as Veneer): Who? Who did you promise?

ALI (as Hella): *Tristero!*

AUSTIN (as Veneer): *[heavy breath]* You're mad. Ah... If I had my way, you'd be dead right now.

ALI (as Hella): *[quietly]* I... I.... You're probably right.

AUSTIN (as Veneer): I'm... *[deep breath]*

AUSTIN: He is like... He is like a hound, like...but he's holding his own chain, you know? Very close to letting go.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN (as Veneer): And you ruined any chance that William ever had. I hope you're happy.

AUSTIN: And he marches off and slams the door shut. Leaving you in that cell. He stands on the other side of it now. It's almost like he did that so he would keep himself from you. Do you know what I mean?

ALI: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN (as Veneer): You'll be on trial tomorrow.

ALI (as Hella): Great. That's great. That's cool.

AUSTIN (as Veneer): The queen knows and is *not* pleased.

KEITH: *[sarcastic]* No? She wasn't... She wasn't into that?

ALI: Can I just...I mean...

KEITH: "Your dad told me to."

ALI (as Hella): I...

AUSTIN (as Veneer): You'll see no mercy from me. I'll hear no words.

ALI (as Hella): Wha—

AUSTIN: And he leaves.

ALI: *[sighs]* I guess to talk to ??? 0:23:30

KEITH: Who was that?

AUSTIN: That was Veneer, who is the warden of this place.

KEITH: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: The kind of big, stout military dude.

KEITH: Gruff, yeah.

AUSTIN: Gruff boi. *[pause]* So what do you do—what do you do, Fero? *[Ali sighs]*

KEITH: Ahhhhhh... I'm...

AUSTIN: As you see the body be dragged away?

ALI: *[pained noises]*

KEITH: Okay... I'm going to...I'm gonna make a fuckin' noise so that Hella knows that I'm there as a bird.

AUSTIN: Ca-Caw! Caw! Ca-coy!

KEITH: And then when she—

ALI: The window's open, right? You can just come in.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you can just come in.

KEITH: No, I'm *not* coming in.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Oh boy.

KEITH: I'm making a noise so that you know that I'm there and then I'm leaving.

AUSTIN: Ohhh...

ALI (as Hella): Fero, wait...

KEITH: And I'm going—

AUSTIN: Where are you going?

KEITH: I think first I'm going to see if I can scope out Ventaro.

AUSTIN: Okay. You find him in the...uh, what is the name of his library, I've written it down... It is the Jeweled Athenium. Which is the- this building here. This kind of like central, tall, thin tower.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: He is... You.. He kind of pointed that out to you while walking through the streets this morning, let's say.

KEITH: "Hey, that's my library."

AUSTIN: That's his—yeah. He's like, "Eh, this is my library, there's a bunch of old books here. A bunch of old everything here." This is a— He probably even specifically said "Oh, you know, this is where your friend Lem will be working!" And he—

ALI: Oh god...

AUSTIN: And I think he even said like...

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): *[sighs]* "I don't know that boy very well, but I do- I do- I could see him taking over my role one day when I'm finally ready to move on."

KEITH: That's so morbid that they're just like, "Yep, this is where you guys are now!"

AUSTIN: Ah, you know. This is how it works. So...

KEITH: Is he by himself in here? Or is there like a hubbub?

AUSTIN: No, this is a bit of—there's a bit of a hubbub because it's raining. Because people are already outside. It was kind of like a "oh, I guess we'll go to the library..."

KEITH: Oh, but this isn't a death—this isn't a Calhoun-related hubbub.

AUSTIN: No no no no, no one—as far as you can tell, no one knows anything about Calhoun yet.

KEITH: Okay. I'm gonna transform back into Fero.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: I'm gonna go up to, uh...go up to...

AUSTIN: So he's in like a mid level floor. Like uh, like...let's say 9 floors up this tower, [KEITH: Yeah] and each floor is dedicated to a different, like...it's like a different wing, right?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: And I'm gonna say that this whole floor is dedicated to...

KEITH: Autobiographies.

AUSTIN: Yeah, autobiographies from—these are all Pre-Erasure autobiographies. Let's say biographies, too. It's a whole floor, right?

KEITH: Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: So like...memoirs, autobiographies, lots of like, found...

KEITH: Letters, collections of letters.

AUSTIN: Right, yes, yes, ephemera in general. And he is working on a...he's like in the middle of researching something about a Pre-Erasure king. He is looking at a...I guess you don't know this, so I'm not gonna say anything. You don't get to know exactly what he's researching.

KEITH: Alright.

AUSTIN: He looks at you with surprise when you come in.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): You should be in your cell.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah—

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): You shouldn't be here.

KEITH (as Fero): Wait, how come?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): *[frustrated noise]* After what your friend did, I think it would be best if you stayed in your cell.

KEITH (as Fero): Oh, so you do know.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Yeah. Yes. *[Ali laughs]* I was informed of the crime that you and your friends have committed.

KEITH (as Fero): Nah, it's fucked up, right? I was super mad! We came here to rescue that guy!

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): I don't—I need—hmm. [*strained breath, pause*] I don't think that there is a greater gift than what we've offered you. And you threw it away. Please leave. I'm asking you as a state official. I'm asking you as your senior. I'm asking you as someone who had a very nice breakfast with you today. Please leave my workspace.

KEITH: His—the pendant that he has that is the same symbol as [AUSTIN: mmhmm] the ring that Gregalo gave me...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: That's—is that all over Nacre, or is it just, he has—

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: No?

AUSTIN: He has it.

KEITH: Alright, I'm gonna—can I show him my ring and be like, “Yo, what up now, though?”

AUSTIN: Sure, you can try it, sure.

KEITH (as Fero): I've got this ring, can we talk yet?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): [*strained breath, pause*] How do you have that?

KEITH (as Fero): A buddy gave it to me to show to anybody to let them know that we were trustworthy and doing good stuff for cool people.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): I don't understand. Bring it here.

KEITH: I bring it—I give it over to him.

AUSTIN: He hand waves you forward, like, you know, palm down, fingers curling in.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: He takes a look at it and like holds it up to the light...

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): This is new.

KEITH (as Fero): Uhhhh yeah.

AUSTIN: Well, it's like—yeah.

KEITH: It's new-er.

AUSTIN: It's new-er.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): I don't... *[pauses]* Are the—hmm... Who are you, really?

KEITH (as Fero): Umm... Just a...adventurer.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Who gave this to you?

KEITH (as Fero): Uh, his name was Greggy...Gregalos.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): I don't know him...this is interesting. You—

KEITH (as Fero): What is it?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): You don't need to know. Where were you originally headed?

KEITH (as Fero): We were going to Rosemerrow.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Rosemerrow? Why...

KEITH (as Fero): Uh, there's a big ol' tower there, we're gonna check it out.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): *[a beat]* Interesting. *[pause]* It doesn't matter. I need you to leave.

KEITH (as Fero): *[hopeful]* Can you tell me maybe a little bit about what's up?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): No. I need you to leave.

KEITH (as Fero): Alright. [AUSTIN: what's up—] Can I have my ring back?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): No.

KEITH (as Fero): What?!

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): *[brief sigh]* Fine.

AUSTIN: And he like tosses it to you.

KEITH: I transform into a bird and I catch it in my beak.

AUSTIN: Great. He is unimpressed.

KEITH: Agh, come on, this guy is like a stone wall! *[Austin and Ali laugh softly]*

[TIMESTAMP: 0:30:12]

AUSTIN: Lem, how's it going in the room? *[pause]* Lem?

KEITH: Lem?

AUSTIN: Lem might be muted.

JACK: My mic was muted, sorry.

AUSTIN: Yeah, your mic was muted it's fine.

ALI: Jack—okay.

JACK: It's unmuted now.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: 'Cause you can hear me.

AUSTIN: I can.

JACK: Uh, Lem's pretty freaked out by this situation.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm!

JACK: 'Cause presumably—are there—there are windows in this—

AUSTIN: No one knows, yeah—you don't know at all what's happening, still.

JACK: But I can see that stuff is just like happening outside, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I mean, you're a bit far away from like the city streets, but there's definitely a hustle, a bustle. The storm is really unsettling.

JACK: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: There's lots of motion through the prison. And like, you know, you're alone.

JACK: I think Lem is maybe beginning to get a sensation that sometimes adventuring...isn't very fun?

AUSTIN: *[laughs lightly]* Sometimes.

ALI: Mmm...aw, Lem.

JACK: Like, he's just on his own, and he's just like—

AUSTIN: Yep.

JACK: He got up and sat down, and then read through some books.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: And then got up and sat down again, and then like tried to listen through the door, and *[laughs]* and he's pretty worked up, I think.

AUSTIN: Did he find a poem about a rainstorm in that book?

JACK: Yeah! Well, sorry, I thought that it was he was adding to it.

AUSTIN: Oh, that—I mean...

JACK: Is what I did, but...

AUSTIN: That would be fine too.

JACK: Yeah...how much XP is this worth?

AUSTIN: This is worth a point, which is a lot in this system.

JACK: *[laughs slightly]* Okay, sure. *[reading]*
The differences between the rain on these old terra cottas
And the wind on these painted shutters
And the water pooling underneath the sills
And the rain that trickles through our gutters
And irrigations and hallways back home

Is something to do with the sound
Or partly to do with the color
As it sits in the hand and on the pages
Or partly to do with the dust smell
In the white streets in this town that shouldn't exist
And definitely, definitely doesn't exist
Or perhaps it's in the sight of the droplets seen from the spire
Falling clean through the chairs and tables
And diners and fruit sellers
Shrugging wet hair out of bright eyes
And looking up at the storm over Tristero

AUSTIN: *[pause]* Yeah, you get a point.

JACK: Yeah, cheers.

AUSTIN: You get a point for that. I'll give you a point for that.

ALI: Yeah. That's a point-worthy. *[Jack laughs slightly]*

AUSTIN: Also an episode title is in there, for sure.

JACK: Ah, thanks. It's, well, I love the way that Dungeon World is a system where I can just be awarded XP for...

AUSTIN: Eh, that's not really a system, that's just. Any good GM should give you points for when you write poetry. *[Ali, Jack, and Keith laugh]* As a rule, in any game.

JACK: Midway through the session.

AUSTIN: Yeah. So—

JACK: Yeah, so, I don't think it helped, writing, for him.

AUSTIN: No?

JACK: Nope.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: I think he's still freaking the hell out. Well, he's not f—like he's not banging against the windows, or anything.

KEITH: Well, he wrote sort of a morbid poem.

JACK: Well, but I think he wrote it like in three sections [KEITH: Mmhmm] standing up and peering out from the window.

AUSTIN: Right, sure, sure.

JACK: So he's definitely going to be happy when anything happens, I guess, in this room.

AUSTIN: Sure. Fero, do you go back there? Or what do you do?

KEITH: Yeah, I—real quick, out of—

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: —the thing.

AUSTIN: Out of character.

KEITH: Right. *[laughs]* Out of, quote, "character".

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: My—the—that's the Fantasma club, right, the ring?

AUSTIN: That is what you—yes, but you don't—yeah, yes. *You* know it—

KEITH: I don't know it yet.

AUSTIN: You know it. *You* know.

KEITH: I know it, Fero doesn't know it.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: Right. I was trying to see if I could get him to tell me early.

AUSTIN: That is what you know. And I think I may have told you this already...no, maybe I haven't. That's what you the player knows about that group at this point.

KEITH: Right. Just because of the holiday episode which has not happened yet.

AUSTIN: Right, right.

KEITH: So, yeah, I guess I go back. Unless I can find the queen.

AUSTIN: I mean, you could go towards the palace, certainly.

JACK: *[laughs]* Oh, dude.

ALI: Oh, no...

AUSTIN: That's a thing you could do.

JACK: The city is on lockdown, like...

ALI: Oh, yeah, I would not. I mean, I can't say. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: She...yeah, you can find her.

KEITH: Yeah, if I can find her, I'm gonna find her.

AUSTIN: She has a huge balcony at the top of the palace.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You know, like her bedroom's at the top of the palace.

KEITH: Yeah, most people can't fly up there.

AUSTIN: And you can.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You know. Are you in your panther form?

KEITH: Yeah, I'm a panther. *[Keith and Jack laugh]* I'm in my panther form.

ALI: Oh, this is like a horrible day.

JACK: Like, Fero is just...Fero's taken the renegade options [AUSTIN: Mmhmm] at every point.

KEITH: Renegade? No, I feel like I'm the only paragon here!

ALI: I don't know, I feel like three panthers in a storm is a really bad omen. *[Keith and Ali laugh]*

AUSTIN: You find the...*[chuckles]* You find... Okay, so you land on her balcony.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And, you can see into her room, and the room is, of course, palatial, right?

KEITH: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: It is gorgeous, mix of whites and cream colors and some gold. And the whole thing—it feels like it opens up forever, right, like every—even from just looking in from the balcony, everywhere you look it feels like, “oh, but then I could go into that door, and that looks like it could go—and there’s a hallway there...” It feels like the whole room has folds in it that will keep opening.

KEITH: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: And you spot...one, you spot the queen at a desk looking down at a piece of paper that she’s writing on. Or, she’s writing on a piece of paper. At this beautiful sprawling desk facing out towards the balcony. So you kind of land exactly in front of her, you know, about fifty feet away from her or something. Behind her, on the back wall of this office, is a statue that looks sort of like the—it’s the same shape that the symbol- that the Gregalos symbol is.

KEITH: Oh!

AUSTIN: The small tower, the middle tower. And then the third thing that should be the tower, or, you know, the third thing going up, is in fact not the tower, but is Hella’s sword, standing straight up as the tallest of the three parallel lines. And it has a faint glow to it there. Adelaide is writing furiously and does not look up, but says,

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): Little bird, I wish not to be bothered. You’ve made things complicated. They could have been nice, and you’ve made them complicated.

AUSTIN: *[pause]* You note that she doesn’t correct herself to say “we” instead of “I”. It’s noticeable after a whole day of her saying—

KEITH: Her saying “I” and then going “nope, sorry, we”.

AUSTIN: Yeah. She does not do that.

KEITH: I’m gonna—I’m going to—hmm. I feel like it’s kinda rude to just like ask about, you know, wars and stuff, when her brother got murdered. Um...yeah, I guess I just go. I’m just gonna go.
[Jack laughs]

AUSTIN: Good. Okay, great.

JACK: Well, that was fruitful.

AUSTIN: Do you—

KEITH: Eh, well, I know that she's not like, she's not like furious with us, there's—

AUSTIN: Well...

JACK: *[doubtful]* Mmm...

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Well, she's not like violent at me.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: She's still calling me "little bird". I don't—there's a lot of things that I can do with information that Fero doesn't have.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: So I'm just gonna go.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: There was a chance that she was maybe not so upset about her brother's death, and that would have made it easier to ask questions.

AUSTIN: Sure. You go back to the spire, and to the room?

KEITH: Yeah, with Jack.

AUSTIN: Okay. You guys have anything to talk about there?

JACK: Um..

KEITH: Um..

JACK (as Lem): What's going on?

KEITH (as Fero): Hella killed Calhoun!

JACK (as Lem): Oh, no!

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah! *[Ali laughs distantly]* Isn't that fucked up?

JACK (as Lem): *[dismayed]* Why did she do that?

KEITH (as Fero): I don't know, I just saw them dragging his body away. I saw that the guard and the warden were like super mad at her, and so I cawed at her and left, *[Ali laughs]* and when I talked to Ventaro, he was mad at us.

JACK (as Lem): Why didn't you come back here?

KEITH (as Fero): Well, I wanted to ask him questions.

JACK (as Lem): Uh huh.

KEITH (as Fero): He wouldn't answer my questions. And I went and I saw the queen.

JACK (as Lem): Oh...

AUSTIN: Fired on all cylinders. *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH (as Fero): She seemed upset, so I just left.

JACK (as Lem): Uh huh.

KEITH (as Fero): And now I'm back here! *[Ali and Jack laugh]*

JACK (as Lem): Yeah, sure, great, great, cool.

KEITH (as Fero): Do you have any questions for me?

JACK (as Lem): Yeah, where the fuck is Hella? *[laughs quietly]* What?

KEITH (as Fero): She's still in the tower up there.

JACK (as Lem): Do we need to rescue her?

KEITH (as Fero): No.

JACK (as Lem): Wh—

ALI: *[laughs] [softly]* Oh..

JACK (as Lem): Why not? Like, it seems—

KEITH (as Fero): She killed Calhoun!

JACK (as Lem): ...But we're adventurers!

KEITH (as Fero): She has a trial tomorrow, she said—they were like, you've got a trial, she's got a trial tomorrow.

JACK (as Lem): What, so we're just gonna turn up?

KEITH (as Fero): What?

JACK (as Lem): Are we gonna testify? I d—

KEITH (as Fero): I don't know! I don't know.

JACK (as Lem): Wait, so your plan is just, stay here?

KEITH (as Fero): I still wanna escape!

JACK (as Lem): *[pause]* Is there a "but" at the end of that sentence? *[Austin laughs slightly]*

KEITH (as Fero): No, I just wanna escape. I think that we can do it.

JACK (as Lem): And leave Hella.

KEITH (as Fero): I don't know. She's here, she's not here. I mean, we should probably—

AUSTIN: Wow. *[Ali and Jack laugh]*

JACK (as Lem): I'm not as into that, as a plan.

KEITH (as Fero): She would be in this room if she didn't decide to *kill* the reason why we were here.

JACK (as Lem): Well—right, sure. That's—

KEITH (as Fero): I feel like I would like to understand why she killed Calhoun, but...so, you're right, we should at least go talk to her or something.

JACK (as Lem): We're adventurers. Like...did she ever tell you why her sword was being weird?

KEITH (as Fero): Mmm...I don't think so.

AUSTIN: I don't think that—I don't think—I mean, it came up, but I don't think you ever had that big conversation about what was happening with that thing.

JACK: Right, so like—

ALI: Yeah, no—

JACK: Lem could probably reasonably make an assumption that something weird's going on?

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah. Okay, hold on!

KEITH: And then I turn into a bird and I go fly back up to the tower.

JACK (as Lem): Oh— *[sighs]*

AUSTIN: Oh my god. *[Ali laughs]*

JACK: Lem just- Lem just like picks up his pen and puts it down again, *[Ali laughs]* and just like sits in the chair.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: Oh, god.

AUSTIN: Meanwhile.

KEITH: Yeah?

AUSTIN: *[pause]* Yeah, what happened, what do you do?

KEITH: I go back up to the tower, and I'm like,

KEITH (as Fero): Why'd you kill Calhoun?!

ALI (as Hella): I'm sorry, I—I had to.

KEITH (as Fero): What—how is that possible, that you had to?

ALI (as Hella): I—*[sighs]* you know, when I was fighting Brandish?

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah!

ALI (as Hella): And I...he hit me.

KEITH (as Fero): Uh huh.

ALI (as Hella): And I fell, and then I saw Tristero.

KEITH (as Fero): The dead guy?

ALI (as Hella): And—yeah, the dead guy, everyone's dead here!

KEITH (as Fero): No, but like the extra dead guy.

ALI (as Hella): I know, I know, I know he's extra- he's extra dead, you're right. And I—he told me if I killed his son, I wouldn't be dead. And I'm not, and that's the point, that's why I killed him.

KEITH (as Fero): But—

ALI (as Hella): I'm s—I—

KEITH (as Fero): But now, like right now?

ALI (as Hella): I just—I wouldn't have had any other chance. I—you heard me, I asked Calhoun! I—if we could—if he wanted us to save him, we could have, but he didn't!

KEITH (as Fero): I feel like we heard two different—I feel like he definitely was wanting us to save him. *[Austin laughs]*

ALI (as Hella): He—he hadn't made his choice, and while you were gone, I asked him. They—Fero, they're gonna kill him. They were gonna kill him anyway. Is that better?

KEITH (as Fero): Well, they were gonna kill him, or they were gonna make him a king, put his face on a coin, or we were gonna all escape! Like the thing that we were here for, is to escape!

ALI (as Hella): I just—I mean, you don't—if you guys can leave...I don't *[laughs, emotional]* I fucked up, I really fucked up here, so. I'm gonna be on trial tomorrow, I don't know. If you have an opening, you should take it? I don't...

KEITH (as Fero): I mean, I don't think that we have like a super good opening?

ALI (as Hella): *[sighs]* I just, I know.

KEITH (as Fero): There's the warships, and then there was the—I totally didn't understand what was going on with why that was a bad thing. *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

ALI (as Hella): There's the ships, I don't get that either. Did you—you didn't get any of that?

KEITH (as Fero): No, I didn't get any of that.

ALI (as Hella): It sounds bad, can you... We should—

KEITH (as Fero): Calhoun and Lem seemed to know what was going on.

ALI (as Hella): *[sighs]* Like they shouldn't come here, right?

KEITH (as Fero): I don't know, it seemed like a good idea.

ALI (as Hella): Is the takeaway from that?

KEITH (as Fero): That's what they said, but they're—I don't know. Calhoun was weird, and Lem's always weird.

ALI (as Hella): *[sighs] [quietly]* Yeah. I don't—you know what, Fero, I've had a long couple of days, and I don't understand a lot of this, and I don't...I wish I had more answers for you, and I wish there were things that we could do, but I don't know what they are any...

KEITH (as Fero): Okay, should I go talk to Lem?

AUSTIN: *[softly]* Oh my god.

ALI (as Hella): Like I said, I'm gonna be on trial tomorrow, so.

KEITH (as Fero): They're probably gonna want us around for that, like I don't know what the—

ALI (as Hella): Yeah.

KEITH (as Fero): I don't know like if we're gonna be able to escape by tomorrow morning. *[Austin laughs]*

ALI (as Hella): *[sighs]* Yeah. So, Fero, I—

KEITH (as Fero): Also, there's a thing in a couple months you're gonna need to be around for. *[Austin, Ali, and Jack laugh]*

ALI (as Hella): Fero, I will say that I have lived my way a certain life, and if you have an opening, you should take it. I would not hold it against you if you left without me.

KEITH (as Fero): Alright, got it. See ya. *[Austin ???]*

ALI (as Hella): Bye.

AUSTIN: Oh boy.

KEITH: I wanna go back to Lem.

ALI: Okay.

[TIMESTAMP: 0:45:15]

AUSTIN: Hella.

ALI: Yeah?

AUSTIN: Do you get any sleep that night, do you think?

ALI: Oh, god.

AUSTIN: None? Not even a minute?

ALI: I...I think she would try. I don't know. Maybe not. This storm is like really loud.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's really loud, it is.

ALI: So, I think that she like lays down—

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: But, yeah, it's not restful for her.

AUSTIN: Alright. I think that's fair, and you should take...take...hmm, take the "sick" debility, which is on your sheet. It lowers your constitution to 14, which I don't think actually changes anything for you. Oh, it does, it—yes.

ALI: It makes my constitution 0 instead of 1.

AUSTIN: That's fine. Instead of +1, yeah. You know, you gotta sleep. It's important to sleep.

ALI: Right. Yeah, I don't th—I mean.

AUSTIN: No, I understand.

ALI: I don't think yesterday she had a lot of sleep either—

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: —so she's probably...

AUSTIN: ??? 46:25

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Lem and Fero, unless there's something that you are ready to do tonight, I think we should advance to the next day.

JACK: Have you got any, Fero?

AUSTIN: But if there is, then we can do that, you know?

KEITH: The only thing that I can think of is- is like you guys were talking about—you guys were talking about maybe telling the Ordennan ships maybe to not come over here? Like I don't—I wasn't—I'll be honest, not following that whole thing. *[Ali and Jack laugh]*

ALI: I mean that—I don't—

JACK: All you need to know is: it's really bad if the Ordennan ships land.

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: How come? Okay, tell me why.

AUSTIN: Wait, wait, time out. Is this Keith doesn't know or Fero doesn't know?

KEITH: No, I just totally missed the one key thing that would make that the worst idea.

AUSTIN: Okay. The one key idea is, it might make them immortal.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: It might make this weird war group immortal and also carrying immortality everywhere they go.

KEITH: Okay, so that's the part, is that—I wasn't clear on whether or not them being immortal meant that as they went places it made those places immortal too.

AUSTIN: Once you are—once you're a citizen of Nacre, you carry Nacre with you.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: You become kind of a walking expeditionary force of Nacre.

JACK: Okay.

ALI: But I don't—

KEITH: So, if we left Nacre as we are now, would we—

AUSTIN: Yep! You'll never leave Nacre. I said it three months ago.

KEITH: Would we be infecting people?

AUSTIN: Everywhere you go will forever be Nacre, *[Ali gasps]* so long as the line of Tristero remains.

KEITH: Okay. So, well, we'll—

ALI: But like I don't get how it's being carried with you? 'Cause like, not everyone who Calhoun has come across—like, Velas isn't Nacre, right?

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: So how does Ordenna like—is it because...like if they were to...

AUSTIN: It's not—what I'll say is: the thing about Calhoun is that Calhoun is the exception, not that Ordenna is the exception.

KEITH: Okay. Well, he also killed his father, so that's some sort of [AUSTIN: Right] end to the line of Tristero.

AUSTIN: Well, there's still the line. Adelaide is still there.

KEITH: There's still the line. I don't know, maybe there was a break in the line when he left.

AUSTIN: It's not...

ALI: Oh, we just—we kill Adelaide and we're fine.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm! *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: Yeah, that's what I was gonna say, we gotta kill this queen. [Jack: Uh—] We gotta get your sword and kill this queen.

JACK: Yeah, murdering people has gone just fantastic for us this session. *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: I feel like this is different, she's clearly a villain... *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: Is she? Mmm. Maybe.

JACK: As opposed to Calhoun, who was only maybe.

KEITH: She wants to poison the entire world with unwanted immortality, that's kind of...

AUSTIN: It's rough.

ALI: Is the thinking about it as poison?

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: She is not—if—

ALI: Let's think about which faction here would be poisoning.

KEITH: She wants everyone to be immortal so that her tourists can be more comfortable.

AUSTIN: Well, she also thinks they'll be more comfortable.

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: She does—I want to be clear, like, that—

ALI: Yeah, no, I...

AUSTIN: She does think she is—

KEITH: Helping.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Austin. Have...how familiar, as a result of the Archives, who clearly doesn't know much about this place...

AUSTIN: No.

JACK: How familiar are the Archives with Nacre architecture?

AUSTIN: Un.

JACK: Not at all.

AUSTIN: Not at all.

JACK: Okay, right. I'm trying to work out whether or not there's something that I could gain with a combination of my poetry book and a discern realities check that might expose some weaknesses, at least in the room that we're in? If we wanted to think about making a move?

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: I could carry you out this window.

AUSTIN: Yeah, getting out of this room is not actually that hard.

JACK: Oh, really? I can get out the window? Okay, cool.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

JACK: Oh, well, fine, we don't need to do that, then.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you can just leave, but like—okay. Yep. You can just—if that's the thing you want to do, you can do that.

KEITH: When we leave, where are we going?

AUSTIN: That's my question.

JACK: We're gonna storm the Kingdom Come. No. We're gonna— *[pause, Ali laughs]* Okay. *[in character???* 50:0] So, we need to...what are they gonna do to us in the morning? *[Austin laughs]*

JACK (as Lem): Fero, how do you feel about just leaving Hella behind? *[ic?]*

KEITH (as Fero): Like, alright about it, kind of. *[ic?]*

JACK: Okay. Lem is not pro- that idea.

KEITH: Okay. I could go either way? And I think—but like, I could go either way.

JACK: Right.

KEITH: Right.

JACK: 'Cause I think that Lem definitely likes the idea of adventurers...

KEITH: Mmhmm.

JACK: ...sticking together, even though he doesn't have any idea why that's the case necessarily?

AUSTIN: He's heard lots of stories, you know?

KEITH: Mmhmm. Oh, I assume that I communicated—I'm sure that I communicated all the stuff from Hella with Lem as soon as I came back.

JACK: Right, yeah, but. I guess Lem doesn't know if Hella's in the position to make a decision like "leave me here" at the moment?

KEITH (as Fero): Right. Here's what I think. They're gonna have a trial. I think we're gonna be at the trial? Like they're probably gonna want us at the trial, right?

JACK (as Lem): Mmhmm.

KEITH (as Fero): I'm sure that in some way we are also on trial.

JACK: *[laughs]* Okay.

KEITH (as Fero): The queen will—the queen will probably be there, we can maybe kill her there? *[Austin, Jack, and Ali laugh quietly]*

JACK: Oh my god.

KEITH (as Fero): And then Hella would be able to help, maybe. Or, we could sneak into her castle and kill her that way.

JACK (as Lem): What if we try and steal back Hella's sword before the trial?

KEITH (as Fero): Well, Hella's sword is in that- is in her room.

JACK (as Lem): Yeah.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah. *[Ali laughs, muffled]*

JACK (as Lem): Hmm...

KEITH (as Fero): I can take that sword, I'm a bird. Although, but here's the thing, she always knows when I'm around.

JACK (as Lem): Yeah.

KEITH (as Fero): It's super annoying.

JACK (as Lem): And we're not allowed to leave this room, really, is the problem.

KEITH (as Fero): They're—yeah, but it doesn't seem like a hard and fast rule.

JACK: Let me look at all the skills I can do.

AUSTIN: Good call. Not because I have something in mind, but that's just a good idea. That's—you know.

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: Yeah. My skills are "hit something harder than usual".

AUSTIN: Uh huh. And you can heal sometimes.

KEITH: And heal people.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Mmm. I mean...whoops. Is there some sort of, like, whistle I can blow that will summon a pastry chef?

AUSTIN: No. No, there isn't.

KEITH: You want Emmanuel?

AUSTIN: You have no idea where Emmanuel is.

JACK: Look, Fero, if there's one person in Nacre that Lem at least still believes that he can turn to in a time of trial...

KEITH: I don't think that guy holds any clout with the...

JACK: Right, yeah, no, like...

KEITH: I think he's just a pirate.

JACK: No, I know.

KEITH: I asked him if he wanted to come help us, and he said no.

JACK: Yeah, like, no wonder. Okay. Sssso. No, I think we're stuck.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: At least for tomorrow.

KEITH: Oh, you wanna wait?

JACK: Yeah. I can't think of an action that will prove useful or bear fruit, at this stage.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Okay.

KEITH: Alright.

AUSTIN: You all get some sleep that night, except Hella, who does not. It rains through the night, and it—

JACK: How does the sleep affect our health? Or does it not?

AUSTIN: Oh, no, you can—you should have even been healed up from the last game, at this point.

JACK: Oh, alright.

AUSTIN: Yeah, let's just say you came into this with full health, because otherwise this is a mess. So...the next morning is much less—you know, the past morning you were woken up nicely with some breakfast, and some nice, you know, a nice morning. This morning, much less so. You are quickly hustled out of your cells, all of you, and down into the streets. There is a motley crew of people gathered there already. Let's see. Ventaro is there. William the guard, who let Hella do this, is there. Sh- Veneer, rather, Veneer the warden, is there. Brandish and Ginny are there, as are a number- a lot of people from the crew of the Kingdom Come.

ALI: *[laughs]* Great.

AUSTIN: Emmanuel is there. The boy who held the newspaper up, the broadsheet, is there. Who else have you spoken to? Or dealt with, in this city?

KEITH: Ted.

AUSTIN: Who's T—oh, Ted is—aw, Ted. I forgot about Ted. Ted used to have a head, he does not have a head anymore, right?

KEITH: Oh, no, Ted was not the decapitated one.

AUSTIN: Who's the decapitated one?

KEITH: Um, I can't remember- I can't remember the name.

AUSTIN: I have them written down. I have them written down. *[typing]* Somewhere, somewhere I have them written down. Yeah, Ted was the ghost, Deneer. Deneer was alive, once. Baladosh is just totally dead. Deneer is there, and he's a ghost.

JACK: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: Ted is there, Ted's a ghost. They're with Brandish and Ginny. I think that's everyone you know who's here. Is that right? That seems about right.

KEITH: Did you say the warden and the guard?

AUSTIN: Yeah, warden and the guard, yeah.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: And like a couple of other guards. Basically anyone you've ever had contact with.

KEITH: The guy that sold the concessions at the zoo.

AUSTIN: Yeah, there. Also there. You are...

KEITH: He was nice.

AUSTIN: You are— Also, there is like a seven-piece marching band there.

JACK: Oh god.

ALI: Hmm?

AUSTIN: Who are playing a thing that...you might call it a dirge, you might call it a dirge.

KEITH: Ghost taps?

AUSTIN: Yeah, sort of. And they are—as a group, everyone is walking towards—like through the city streets to the palace. It is a small group, and you three are in the center. Hella is in the center, Lem is in front of her, Fero is behind her. Emmanuel is to the front of Lem, Brandish is behind Fero. And it seems—and Ventaro is about the same, is about equidistance. The closer you are to someone, the closer they are to the center. And the further away, you kind of interacted with them, the further away they are here. But like everyone you've seen and had any even minor interaction with is in this group.

JACK: Hm.

AUSTIN: And you're being led towards the palace, and people are looking and gasping and whispering.

KEITH (as Fero): This is weird, right?

AUSTIN: It's weird.

ALI: Yeah...

JACK: Yeah, and we don't know why all these people are out.

KEITH: How come the concession guy is so far away? *[Austin, Ali, and Jack laugh]*

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's a good question.

JACK: I guess we just sort of have to go with it, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I guess, I mean...

JACK: Just keeping an eye open.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: I mean, Brandish is right behind me.

ALI: Oh, I'm not—no, we're walking, we're going.

JACK: Clearly he doesn't—he's not gonna harm us at this stage.

KEITH: No, but like if I tried anything.

AUSTIN: It would be—right, yeah.

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: I'm saying this out loud.

KEITH (as Fero): Like if I try anything, this guy is like right here. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: You are led to the palace. You're actually led to like the front steps of the palace, which is like on this terrace that goes up over the city. When Adelaide comes down the stairs, kind of with two guards on her wing, two like imperial guards who wear—I don't know if you remember this, there was the dude in the market in the first session that we were in Nacre? Who was like a...he was a ghost man, but he was like, a ghost man who was like the captain of the guard, basically?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: With his sort of like super royal armor situation happening.

JACK: Huh.

AUSTIN: So two of those, they kind of...what's the word I'm looking for. There's a word I'm looking for. But they're next to her. And she comes down. What's Hella's last name again...Varal.

ALI: Varal.

AUSTIN: Varel? Varal.

ALI: Varal. Varal.

AUSTIN: She nods to Ventaro, and Ventaro steps forward and stands by her side.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): We have all been called here for the trial of Hella Varal for the treasonous crime of killing Angelo Tristé, son of Tristero. *[sighs]* Do we have a defense?

AUSTIN: This is very confusing, no one's doing anything. Emmanuel like pinches on Lem.

AUSTIN (as Emmanuel): *[whispering]* Someone needs to defend her.

KEITH: *[whispering]* Oh my—

JACK (as Lem): *[whispering]* Ahh...

KEITH (as Fero): Ahh.

JACK (as Lem): Fero.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah?

JACK (as Lem): You talked to her for longer than I did, right?

KEITH (as Fero): Uh, yeah, but I'm also really mad at her. *[quiet laughter]*

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): If there's no defense, she will be—

KEITH (as Fero): *[louder]* I got it, no, I got it, I got it! *[Jack chuckles]*

ALI (as Hella): I can defend myself, like. Is that an option?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): It is not.

KEITH (as Fero): I got—no, I got it. I got it.

ALI (as Hella): Fero?

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah.

ALI (as Hella): Just— *[sighs, then laughs slightly]*

AUSTIN: Ventaro,

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Does our queen approve?

AUSTIN: The empress stares just daggers into your face, just like, she is not pleased with you, Hella!

AUSTIN (as Adelaide): I do.

KEITH: Oh, daggers into my face, or into her face?

AUSTIN: No, no, into Hella's face.

KEITH: Okay.

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AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Very well.

AUSTIN: She pulls Ventaro down and whispers. *[muffled whisper sound, pauses]*

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): *[quietly]* Good. *[normal volume]* The queen has chosen...Lem King to represent the state of Nacre.

KEITH: Oh, that's weird!

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): The trial will begin tomorrow afternoon.

ALI: What, tomorrow?

AUSTIN: These are just proceedings, you know.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Hella will be transferred to the palace jail. Lem King, you have full run of the Athenium. If you offer less than an adequate prosecution, *[Jack laughs softly]* you will be held in contempt.

ALI (as Hella): *[quietly]* This is bullshit!

KEITH (as Fero): Can I use the library, too?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): No.

KEITH (as Fero): Whaat?

ALI (as Hella): This is insane! We can just talk about this.

JACK (as Lem): Wha—um. *[Ali and Keith laugh]*

KEITH (as Fero): Hold on—

JACK (as Lem): Hang on a second.

KEITH (as Fero): Your honor, my client does not know what she's saying.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): The rest of you, we will be in touch.

JACK: Wha—who picked who picked...who picked me? *[laughs softly]*

AUSTIN: It seemed like Ventaro picked you.

JACK: Aah...

AUSTIN: It seemed like that.

JACK: Alright, okay.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): The rest of you, we will be in touch. As you know, some of you will be called on as witnesses to give testimony.

KEITH (as Fero): If I can't use the library, can I use any other buildings?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): You will continue to have a room provided for you in the Sable Spire.

ALI (as Hella): Can I talk to him?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Yes.

ALI (as Hella): *[quietly]* Ugh, good god

KEITH: Ugh ??? 1:02 *[laughs]*

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): You have until evening tonight to prepare.

JACK: Wait, we can't work through the night?

AUSTIN: Oh, she's talking to—or, Ventaro's talking to them. You have all night.

JACK: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: You represent the state, you have everything you need.

JACK: Well, yeah, clearly it's great.

ALI: Lord...

JACK: It's a fun situation I'm in.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): That will be all.

AUSTIN: The band starts playing up again. *[Ali chuckles]* And begins leading Fero and Hella towards like the palace—like the administrative section of the palace, which is this, like, southern spot. Lem, you just kind of have free range of whatever now.

JACK: Yeah. God, it would be really nice if I could have just gone to some nice cafés?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that would have been a cool vacation.

JACK: Or like...like gone and just like...

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: I don't know, drawn some waterways, but instead I'm. I'm a— Archivists are not lawyers?
[laughs]

AUSTIN: No, but. You know.

KEITH: I'm sure there are some Archivists that are basically lawyers.

AUSTIN: Ventaro, I think, after he deals with some stuff, comes over to you and says,

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Shall we go?

JACK (as Lem): Yeah, great.

KEITH: Oh, I got it. I know what's up.

JACK (as Lem): Yeah, let's go, yep.

AUSTIN: He takes you to the library and leads you up to the thirteenth floor, let's say, which is just filled with just tomes [*Jack chuckles*] on the history of law and the history of Nacre and the weird legal system here.

JACK: Mmhmm.

JACK (as Lem): Before you go...like, Hella is my friend. Is this not a problem for you?

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): Well...I think of myself as a very efficient man. You know, it's strange, I think a lot of people, uh...a lot of people, because we have the gift we have, waste their time. They think, "why do one thing all at once, when I can do a part of it today and a part of it tomorrow?" But...this trial must happen, and I know how it will go, I know how the queen will find it. But—

JACK (as Lem): How—

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): With you in this role, I get to see if you really could one day be my successor.

JACK (as Lem): Oh, g— [*sighs*] Oh.

AUSTIN: And, I think it—

JACK: Lem just sort of like nods at him. [*Austin laughs*] Really like steely-eyed.

AUSTIN (as Ventaro): If that's all, I'll be downstairs if you need anything.

JACK (as Lem): Great, thank you. Good.

JACK: [*laughs softly*] Yeah, okay, so. Could I do a...I'm trying to think about like, mechanically how I approach assembling a prosecution?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Well, it's—let's not think about it mechanically in terms of game mechanics, let's talk about it in terms of narrative. What are you doing?

JACK: Um...it's really hard, right? Because I sort of—I have to balance being held in contempt of court [AUSTIN: Mmhmm] with attempting to...if Ventaro thinks that the verdict is the case anyway...

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: It's really hard, 'cause I don't know enough about Nacre's legal system—

AUSTIN: *[crosstalk]* So like I think that this is—you know what, give me—

JACK: —to know whether or not I should be looking for loopholes, [AUSTIN: Right] or whether or not I should be assembling essentially a rhetorical case.

AUSTIN: Here's what I'll say. I think what you can do is roll spout lore here.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: And take a +1 on it, from that book.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or, not a +1, sorry, you get one of the questions from spout lore. Yeah.

JACK: I just get an extra one, or like.

AUSTIN: Yep.

JACK: Yep.

AUSTIN: So still give it the lore.

JACK: What's spout lore?

AUSTIN: It is intelligence, I think? Is that true, people?

KEITH: I thought it was intelligence, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's INT.

JACK: Alright, okay, here we go.

AUSTIN: Or, I'm sorry, I actually don't want you to do spout lore. I don't.

JACK: Oh.

AUSTIN: I think that this is, strangely, the thing I'm talking about—I said spout lore before. What I meant was discern realities, actually, for this case.

JACK: Yeah. It seems like—

AUSTIN: But I'll still give you the +1, but also roll it with INT. I mean, we're just modifying this move.

JACK: Okay. I got 11.

AUSTIN: Because, this is basically like, you're spending this day, you know, looking over all of this stuff.

JACK: Yeah. Just like, reading.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: And I think that, like, I don't know. He's super not a lawyer, but he spent most of his life reading?

AUSTIN: What are—right. Mmhmm.

JACK: And so I guess he's—what Ventaro said about—even if he's really cross with Ventaro, what Ventaro said about people wasting time [*Austin: ah*] by like doing a bit today and taking it tomorrow [AUSTIN: Yeah.] kind of struck a chord with him, [AUSTIN: Mmhmm.] so he's just like knuckling down and reading shit.

AUSTIN: So, you know, obviously the discern realities questions don't really work here.

JACK: No.

AUSTIN: But, ask me—ask me four questions about the situation, basically.

JACK: Okay. Yeah, alright. Um... Okay, I'm trying to ask questions that I can frame what I'm going to do next with, so.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: Based on precedent—we're assuming that it's like a legal system of precedent, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it is.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: It is a legal—that's not one of your questions, either.

JACK: No, no, no, no, like, that was just like...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Only because, like, I have no idea of how to conceive of a legal system without precedent without like a lot more prep time?

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: That's interesting, that's an interesting dilemma. *[Keith laughs]*

JACK: Okay, so, based on precedent that I can find, is the queen going to find Hella guilty and punish her for this trial? *[Austin hesitates]* Essentially, is Ventaro's—

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: Yeah. Okay, right.

AUSTIN: It's a very rare thing that anyone is murdered here.

JACK: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: Like, there are a couple of cases, there are some cases of it, right? But it is—and like the old laws still apply, like you can't just murder people. *[laughs slightly]* And...the cases that it happens are extra weird, because they're always—they do always have some sort of magical component. Like, someone uses a magical sword, or someone, you know, does some ancient ritual to briefly separate part of the world from Nacre so that the people—like, you know, something magical is happening to make this happen. And so, it's often kind of an open-and-shut case. No one is ever—there's no manslaughter in Nacre.

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: 'Cause to kill someone requires a lot of—

JACK: Requires a great deal of effort.

AUSTIN: A great deal of effort and forethought. With very rare exception. Like, "oh yeah, I also happened—this knife we had was magical, whoops, we didn't know".

JACK: Or like, I don't know, maybe like a machinery accident, right? What ??? massive 1:09

AUSTIN: No, because you wouldn't—you'd just be a ghost.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: You know what I mean, like that's the—you would become an insubstantial ghost, like you wouldn't die. So it's super rare that that happens.

JACK: Right. Okay.

AUSTIN: But yes, so that is true.

JACK: So she—okay.

AUSTIN: As the facts stand, as far as you know, it seems like she would be guilty.

JACK: Yeah. In comparison to other legal systems that I'm aware of...

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: Albeit, like, really—

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: Like, he's aware of these legal systems as much as I, Jack de Quidt, am aware of these legal systems, right? *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Mmhmm.

JACK: So like, not at all. In comparison to these other legal systems I'm aware of, is the Nacre system of justice one that is particularly concerned with nitty gritty and loopholes, or is it generally quite clean and clear-cut?

AUSTIN: Compared to most, it takes testimony at a higher level. Which makes the whole thing much more ambiguous and much more...It's not a very binary system, and it's very interested in circumstantial evidence and witness testimony, and not just eyewitness testimony but like character testimony?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: The whole system is built around...You know, the idea is, you parade through the streets with everyone anyone's ever touched in their lives. Because, in a world where no one dies, there's—the prosecution often says, "Look at all the people this person could harm. Look

at the negative effect that they could have on their community, look at how deep their reach goes.” And the defense says, “Yeah, but look at all these people who they knew who vouch for them.”

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And they make gestures to being fact-driven, but at the end of the day, whoever is— whoever judges a case, and in cases like this it’s almost always the queen, or whoever the regent is, whoever the ruler is, in these kind of big murder cases, when it’s not just a civil dispute. But they almost always side in favor of the community, right, because like...

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: There’s just—there’s so many people, and they’re not, like, you have to keep serving them. So they kind of, *almost* always but not always, side in that way.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: So that’s two, you have two more questions.

JACK: Yeah...how does the process of contempt of court work?

AUSTIN: Um... *[Keith laughs]* That’s a good question. The judge, whoever’s judging, has to deem it that, like, you’ve broken some important rule on purpose, that you are not in fact operating according to your court appointed duty, that you’re throwing it in some way, that you’re not respecting the judge or the opposition, or that you’ve introduced false evidence, or that you’ve—you know, just like don’t be a do—don’t be a dork, is what I almost said there. You know.

KEITH: Don’t be a total dweebo!

AUSTIN: Don’t be a dweebo.

JACK: Don’t be a murder dweeb.

AUSTIN: Don’t be— *[Austin and Keith laugh]* Hey kids. Don’t be a murder dweeb.

JACK: *[laughs lightly]* Okay. Right. So, I guess for my last question...um... *[pause]*

AUSTIN: Think big and small here, right, like you can ask whatever.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: You can ask, like, down to specifics about what you, you know. But whatever, yeah.

JACK: Well, I have to have the resources to answer the question, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah—

JACK: Like, I can't just pull these answers out of my ass.

AUSTIN: No, I mean, you can read, like—you know—

KEITH: You can always ask the question and then Austin will be like, “no, I won't answer”.

AUSTIN: Yeah, and I'll say like, “no, just ask me something else”, yeah, yeah. Ask me the things you want to ask, and I'll give you the answer, [JACK: Yeah] or say, “eh, something else”.

JACK: Okay. Okay...huh. Alright. Very late at night, with candles burning down and books and papers and stuff surrounding me...do I come to the conclusion that what I need to do, in order to get the best outcome, is legitimately prosecute Hella?

AUSTIN: *[sighs thoughtfully]* I think—like, so it depends on what you mean by “best outcome”.

JACK: 'Cause anything I do otherwise—right, okay, like. I have—

AUSTIN: Like, literally, what is the outcome you want?

JACK: Well, I want Hella to, I guess, not be killed, or not...

AUSTIN: Right, so—so what I think—I think you kind of feel that you have a few options. And I can kind of suggest—

JACK: Well, yeah, so I can—hang on, wait, so. It seems to me that either I prosecute deliberately badly?

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: In which case, I'm essentially just—

AUSTIN: You're probably held in contempt.

JACK: I'm held in contempt, and I'm essentially just constructing a defense?

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: Or, I prosecute effectively, and unfortunately the person that I'm then trusting to do the job, *[laughs]* is Fero.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* I think that there is—I think that that's a case—those are two options, I don't think those are the only two options.

KEITH: Listen, Fero was in mock trial. *[Jack laughs]*

AUSTIN: Rosemerrow mock trial, varsity.

KEITH: Yeah, Rosemerrow mock trial.

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AUSTIN: I think there are other options here. One of which is like, that what we mean when we say a good prosecution or a bad prosecution is very—based on how this system works, can mean a lot of different things.

JACK: Mm.

AUSTIN: Right, like. So here are two possible things you could do. You could make the case where you emphasize that she's a murderer, and that she doesn't have any deep ties to this community, so it's not like she can be—it's not like there's any reason for her to not do terrible things—again, and also who even has the power to hurt people here like that. She's super dangerous.

JACK: But that's a defense.

AUSTIN: No no no, this is an attack to her. Because like, now she's like, the person who's willing to kill people, and she doesn't even know anybody here, so like—

JACK: Oh, right, yes.

AUSTIN: And also she has weird magic that can kill people? What happened there, that's weird.

KEITH: In her hands?

AUSTIN: In her hands? Right, she doesn't use a magic sword, she choked a guy to death. That's crazy, that's weird! Or, you could do—you could say, you know, she killed this king, she killed this guy who was of great noble stature, blah blah blah. And that might hit a different chord with them.

JACK: Yeah...

AUSTIN: And depending on what Fero does, that could have a completely different outcome than just, “oh she’s dangerous and killed people”, do you know what I mean?

JACK: And I have no way to coordinate this with Fero whatsoever.

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: I mean, I have an open window.

AUSTIN: Right, he could fly to you in the middle of the night.

JACK: Right, but I reckon that Ventaro’s probably downstairs, and—

AUSTIN: He is.

JACK: Again, like, that would trip the contempt of court alarm?

AUSTIN: If he gets caught, it would. It wouldn’t be an automatic thing, it just would be a thing we could roll.

JACK: Which just ??? 1:16:10 plays the ode to joy?

AUSTIN: Yeah. *[laughs lightly]*

KEITH: I don’t know, this is a place with a lot of open windows, and I’m pretty sneaky.

AUSTIN: Okay, we could make that roll.

JACK: Um...yeah, it might actually be useful to have Fero here.

AUSTIN: I mean, let’s talk about Fero and Hella first, before we do anything.

JACK: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

KEITH: Hi.

AUSTIN: So, Fero and Hello. Fer—huh. Fero and Hella.

KEITH: Uh huh.

AUSTIN: How’s it going over there? Team best friends, team you’re not at all mad at each other.

KEITH: I feel like I— *[laughs]*

ALI: We're just like freaking out, right, is the thing?

KEITH: No, I've got this.

ALI: I just—

KEITH: Like, I'm not—like, I'm not so mad at Hella that I'm gonna throw my half of the thing.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: Right? Like I'm still, like, "ah", this is just like, "oh, this is a chance for all three of us to escape". It's weird that Lem is the prosecutor!

KEITH (as Fero): Hella, is there anything you didn't tell me about your thing? *[Ali sighs]*
Why did you see Tristero?

ALI (as Hella): I died, I guess?

KEITH (as Fero): Why did you believe your weird death vision?

ALI (as Hella): It felt real. It felt really real, there was just a white light, and then he spoke to me.

KEITH (as Fero): Do you think I should put the queen—is there a stand? I don't know how any of the rules work for this. *[Austin laughs]*

ALI (as Hella): I know, like I—

KEITH (as Fero): I feel like they're gonna get really mad at me for not following any of the rules, but they didn't let me learn any of the rules!

ALI (as Hella): Ugh, we're so fucked.

KEITH (as Fero): No, it'll be fine.

JACK: Friends at the Table: The Legal Process Edition. *[Austin, Keith, and Ali laugh]*

KEITH (as Fero): It'll be fine, I...

ALI (as Hella): I just—he's their king! Like, I—mm. I don't know. I don't know, I guess they're—

KEITH (as Fero): Well, he's their dead king.

ALI (as Hella): I know, I know, but I...

KEITH (as Fero): This is—

ALI (as Hella): I didn't realize I was the only person that he spoke to, so I don't know what to tell you, Fero!

KEITH (as Fero): *[angrier]* Oh, I thought you meant Calhoun, their *other* dead king! *[Ali and Austin laugh]*

ALI (as Hella): Oh. Right. Yeah. Well...they were gonna kill him, though, like, Fero, they were gonna kill him.

KEITH (as Fero): No, they didn't want to kill him. If they didn't want to kill him, they would've—I mean, if they wanted to kill him, they would've already killed him!

ALI (as Hella): A lot of them wanted to.

KEITH (as Fero): A lot of them wanted to kill you too, but they didn't, 'cause the queen wanted you alive.

ALI (as Hella): Mmm. His father wanted him dead.

KEITH (as Fero): I'm gonna go talk to Lem.

ALI (as Hella): Yeah. Oh, god, yeah. *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

KEITH (as Fero): Okay.

ALI (as Hella): See what he's doing, please.

KEITH: Okay. I'm gonna turn into a bird.

AUSTIN: Alright, we need a—

KEITH: I'm gonna fly very carefully, [AUSTIN: okay. uh huh] a very small bird, a very small black bird.

JACK: Oh my god.

ALI: No no no, a hummingbird.

JACK: I just have like this terrible vision of like, [AUSTIN: Uh huh?] we thought this episode has gone wrong up until this point...

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

KEITH: No, we've been going for three hours and six minutes, and I haven't made a roll yet. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: Well, you're about to!

KEITH: I'm about to. I'm—

JACK: You can fuck up plenty of stuff without rolling.

AUSTIN: I mean, first of all, I should have been making you—I've been letting you change *constantly* for free. Which is fine.

KEITH: Well, I haven't been- I haven't been doing any moves in—

AUSTIN: That's true, that's true.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Now I need you to make a transformation roll, [KEITH: Yeah] [JACK, quietly: *jesus christ*] because you are doing a move.

KEITH: I am doing a move. Oop, am I in the wrong spot, okay. It's a wisdom roll.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: That's a 9, so that's two or is that three?

AUSTIN: I don't have the book in front of me, 'cause I'm bad at this.

KEITH: It's been a while.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: I'll look at it, I'll look at it.

AUSTIN: I'll pull it up too. *[typing]*

KEITH: It's not opening? That's weird.

AUSTIN: I've got it. Druid.

KEITH: It's like opening, it's a little—oh, there we go, I got it.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: Is it not in here?

AUSTIN: It's two.

KEITH: It's two? Okay.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: Alright, so I am a tiny little baby bird, dark as night—

AUSTIN: Have we been doing this whole thing wrong? One second.

KEITH: What—

ALI: Ohh.

AUSTIN: We can come back to this. I think we've been playing druid wrong until—I think I'm only just now catching this.

KEITH: In a good way or in a bad way?

AUSTIN: In a...bad way.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: In a way that would make you way better.

KEITH: Oh, what can I do that would make me better?

AUSTIN: One second. Let me find an actual PDF and not just my—not just the website version of this.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: The thing that I think—the thing that I think we’re doing wrong is that you’re supposed to be getting a special move for whatever form you take.

JACK: Oh, whaaat.

KEITH: Oh, I’ve done those moves before.

AUSTIN: Have you?

KEITH: I have done those moves before. I know all about the moves.

JACK: Isn’t that where the like kickflip into a bear came from?

AUSTIN: No, I don’t think...

KEITH: No, that’s stuff I can—like if I’m a wolf, I can call a pack of wolves, if I’m a—yeah, if—

AUSTIN: Right, so that’s one thing. There’s a second part of this.

KEITH: I can stampede people.

AUSTIN: There’s a second part of this that we’ve been doing *completely* wrong.

KEITH: What? Okay.

AUSTIN: Which I’m going to share, and you and I have equal blame in this for not reading this more closely.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Uh, shapeshifter. Blah blah blah blah blah, you have any innate abilities and weaknesses of the form: claws, wings, gills, breathing water instead of air. You still use your normal stats, but some moves may be harder to trigger. A housecat will find it hard to do battle with an ogre, obviously.

KEITH: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: The GM will also tell you one or more moves associated with your new form. Spend one hold to make *that* move. Once you’re out of hold, you return to your natural form. It’s not spend one hold *whenever* you make a move, it’s spend one hold whenever you make your special animal move.

KEITH: Ohhhh, whoa!

ALI: Ohh!

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: Dang!

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yep!

KEITH: Dang, alright. Man. I've been playing with a limp this whole game.

AUSTIN: You've been playing with like a *deep* limp. And also, it means that we're gonna need to sit down and actually plan out exactly what moves you have available to you.

KEITH: Yeah. They give you—they give like a couple of moves, but yeah, we—

AUSTIN: Mmhhh. Yeah. I feel like—yeah, this was a big goof on our part, so.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: I mean, whatever, we'll live.

KEITH: I could've sworn that it was any move.

AUSTIN: Me too, I also thought that. Like badly, I really thought that.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But whatever. Now we know.

KEITH: Now we know.

AUSTIN: Next time that we play, you will be way more powerful suddenly.

KEITH: Yeah. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: On the plus side, our version of the rule was great, because it meant that, like, sometimes you would drop out of being a weird bird and fall into a pirate ship, you know?
[laughs]

KEITH: In the middle—yeah, yeah! Like that w—it's almost worth it to have that rule, *[Austin laughs]* but no, I would like to be a little more powerful.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's fine. Alright. So. Give me—

KEITH: Like, that might have already—'cause like, lifting someone up as a bird, probably would have maybe spent a hold anyway.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's true. That is definitely one of the things that would have been a move for that bird.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: For that cool bird.

KEITH: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: I don't know what bird you are now, we'll deal with this next time, but for now, just give me a...

KEITH: Ah, just a blackbird. Like a small—

AUSTIN: Okay, well then, give me a...a defy danger roll, which is, probably you're using defy danger dexterity.

KEITH: Um...my dex—alright, so I'm just gonna do that.

AUSTIN: Wuh oh!

KEITH: What's—hold on, plus my DEX bonus [AUSTIN: Oh, oh, oh] which is 2, I think? Hold on, let me look at it.

AUSTIN: No, you don't have a DEX bonus.

KEITH: I don't have a DEX bonus!

AUSTIN: You don't, so you failed that roll.

ALI: Mm... *[laughs]*

JACK: *[muffled laughter]* Uhhh.

KEITH: XP!

AUSTIN: That's true, mark XP.

JACK: Well, yeah, mmhmm.

ALI: Oh.

AUSTIN: Make sure everybody marks XP from when you failed rolls.

KEITH: Mmhmm.

ALI: Do I get that 2 XP from before?

AUSTIN: Which 2 XP?

ALI: I failed two rolls against Calhoun.

AUSTIN: No, no, no, you didn't fail.

KEITH: No, no, no, you—

ALI: No, those were damage rolls, okay.

AUSTIN: Those were damage, those were just low damage rolls, yeah, no.

KEITH: Yeah. Okay.

AUSTIN: *[sighs, Jack laughs softly]* You fly in, and...just as you, like, fly in—you're like gliding in through the overcast sky.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And you see Ventaro make eye contact with you.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then you get inside.

JACK: *[laughs]* Oh god. Oh, god. Keith, give me instructions.

KEITH: Okay, I'm gonna transform into a person. Transform into a person.

KEITH (as Fero): Hey, I'm just gonna grab a couple books, is that cool? If I just grab a couple books and then head out? *[Jack laughs slightly]*

JACK (as Lem): Yeah, um. Not that one. Or that one.

KEITH (as Fero): Okay.

JACK (as Lem): Don't take any of those. You can just take these ones.

KEITH (as Fero): Is that cool? I just wanted to make sure that was cool with everybody if I grabbed just a couple of these—

AUSTIN: Well, Ventaro is not in this room.

KEITH: Oh, okay, which room is he in?

AUSTIN: He's downstairs. Like, he was looking out the window of a lower thing.

KEITH: Okay. I shout down the balcony, the banister.

JACK: What the f—oh my god, I'm gonna take my headphones off, what are you doing. *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

KEITH: I shout down the banister,

KEITH (as Fero): *[faux shouting]* Ventaro, is it cool if I just grab a couple of these books to borrow so that I know what's going on tomorrow?

AUSTIN: You don't get a response.

JACK: Oh my god... *[Ali giggles]*

KEITH: *[chuckles]* I don't get any response?

AUSTIN: You get nothing.

KEITH: Nothing?

JACK: My favorite thing is Austin's NPCs just like, *[laughs]* completely blanking on Fero.

AUSTIN: Yeah. *[Keith and Ali laugh]* You know, you're making a mockery of this very beautiful thing. The legal system, this very beautiful thing. *[Keith and Jack laugh]*

KEITH: Well, I'm just covering my—I just wanted to —

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: I'm pretending, Fero is pretending as if it's cool that I'm here—

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: That he thinks it's cool—like I don't want anyone to think that I think that I'm sneaking around.

JACK: Wh—oh, god. Well, yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm!

KEITH (as Fero): *[faux shouting]* Okay, I'm just gonna like grab like a 101 book. *[Austin laughs quietly]* Hey, uh...

KEITH: And then I say loudly to Lem,

KEITH (as Fero): Hey, any like intro to law books?

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Not really!

KEITH (as Fero): That I can just grab? Something light?

JACK: I've spent like—like, Lem's got bags under his eyes. *[laughs]*

JACK (as Lem): Uh, like, you could probably just take, like...Grummen's Retroactive. That's what it's called.

AUSTIN: Yep, Grummen's Retroactive.

KEITH: *[laughing, distantly]* Grummen's Retroactive.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah, I'll just take Grummen's Retroactive, and, um...

JACK (as Lem): Make sure that you take the appendices, but the spine's broken, so you have to, [AUSTIN: mmhmm] you know, hold that inside.

KEITH (as Fero): I can't, I'm a bird. *[Jack laughs]*

AUSTIN: This was a mistake.

KEITH (as Fero): Yeah, I can't grab that as a bird. Like, I can have like a talon—like, one in one talon, one in the other, but if I have to make sure it doesn't fall apart, it's not gonna work.

JACK (as Lem): What are you doing here?

KEITH (as Fero): I just wanted to— *[shouting distantly]* I just wanted to grab a couple books! *[whispering]* I wanted to—are we—like what's going on? *[Ali and Austin laugh]*

JACK (as Lem): *[whispering]* What are you doing?

KEITH (as Fero): *[whispering]* So I have to like— I saw Ventaro saw me, and so I wanted— *[Austin laughs]* I was coming— *[laughing]* I thought I was being covert, but he just totally fuckin' saw me.

JACK (as Lem): *[whispering]* What—tomorrow, they're gonna know it's all a sham!

KEITH (as Fero): *[whispering]* It's not all a sham, just do as good a job—I've got it, you do a good job. *[Ali laughs]* I'll take them. You make them know that you fuckin' put the time in. It's fine, I've got this.

KEITH: And then I wink, and then I turn back into a bird, grab *[laughs]* Grummen's Retroactive, and fly out the—

AUSTIN: And the appendices! *[Ali laughs harder]*

KEITH: *[laughs]* And the appendices! And fly out the window.

AUSTIN: Ohhh.

ALI: At this point, you should become multiple birds and grab multiple books.

AUSTIN: You could have done that.

KEITH: No, those birds are small.

JACK: How is Fero the third act of a fucking Wes Anderson movie at this point? *[Austin, Ali, and Keith laugh]* Aw, geez. Right, well, I guess what I do is I just like- I just like pull reading glasses back down on my face again, and just like, "alright, okay, here we go". So, I guess I'm looking at- I'm looking at like a—like a hereditary argument?

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: Like a sort of an argument that it's a line of kings, she broke a line of kings.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: And that's super bad news. I know about her death vision, right?

AUSTIN: I think—did Fero tell you about that?

JACK: Oh fuck...

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah? Okay.

ALI: Yeah, no, that was like a—that was like, you tell Hella—I mean, you guys talk about that sort of thing, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah, that was—yeah, that was in the tower when she told me about that, and then I went back to the room and told Jack all of it.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Okay, cool.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: So, I guess—yeah, I guess that's what I'm researching, is I'm researching sort of essentially—

KEITH: Ghost visions?

JACK: Like, ghost visions, Tristero, the massive cock-up that is occurring, if—

AUSTIN: There is like *nothing* about the sort of ghost visions that she's having.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Here's the—um...okay, so like, if you're looking into that stuff, that's all on a different floor, obviously. That's kind of just on like a—that's in the religion and like local culture floor, where you're reading about Tristero and all of this. What it says is—

JACK: Remember when we were in a nice hotel?

AUSTIN: I do. It explains that Tristero used to come to lots of people in their dreams, before, in the old days, right?

KEITH: Before he was dead?

AUSTIN: Before he sacrificed himself to save Nacre and put Nacre in this kind of like bubble that protected it from the Erasure. And, when he did that, he kind of lost the ability to talk to people in their dreams, because they weren't—they kind of—you know, he interacted with people who could die, [JACK: Mmm] right? He could like reach in through the window of mortality. And when you are someone who can't die, he doesn't have that window to go in.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Hella had that window, that first day.

[TIMESTAMP: 1:30:01]

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: So he was able to communicate with her, you piece together.

KEITH: *[laughing]* Oh my god, I thought you were gonna call Jack a piece of shit!

AUSTIN: No! You piece—

JACK: "He was able to communicate with her..."

AUSTIN: "...You piece of shit." Yeah. *[Keith and Austin laugh]* You piece together that that's how Tristero was able to talk to her and why he can't contact anybody else here.

JACK: I've got like the vaguest...idea that maybe I could present a case...

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: That appeared watertight.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: With my limited knowledge.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: I'm an outsider, right?

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: Like, they know I'm an outsider. I've been assigned to this job. I'm not expected to know everything about their culture and their society, right?

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: What if I presented a case, that from my position appeared watertight, but was specifically designed to evoke something that they know and think I don't know that means that the case falls in Hella's favor? Does that make any sense, what I just said?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. Yeah, it makes lots of sense.

KEITH: You mean, revolve the case around that piece of information, that Tristero used to come to people in their dreams?

JACK: Well, but—well, but—like, that's presumably just in the religious section. Like, they would probably know that I researched that, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Probably.

JACK: Or would they know what I researched?

AUSTIN: Well, I think Ventaro would know that.

JACK: So I need to find something that would be very hard for me to find. Which I think is probably gonna be a discern—what's it called when you find cool stuff in...

AUSTIN: Discern reality. Er...you know, spout lore basically is that, kind of.

JACK: Yeah, I'm essentially going right down to the wire and looking at the citations in the encyclopedia entries.

AUSTIN: Sure, sure.

JACK: And then looking at their citations and then looking at their citations.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

JACK: So, to be clear, I'm trying to find something that I shouldn't know about.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: That makes it look like I don't know about it, but I know that what I'm saying is going to evoke that for them.

AUSTIN: Sure.

JACK: What do you want me to roll?

AUSTIN: Do a spout lore on that.

JACK: Which is intelligence.

AUSTIN: Which is intelligence, yeah.

JACK: Watch this, Keith. This is how you do a critical roll. *[pause]* Yeah, alright. That wasn't too bad.

AUSTIN: Yeah, a 9, so...that means I tell you something interesting but not useful, on spout lore.

JACK: Oh, for— *[laughs]* Oh, great, yeah, cool.

AUSTIN: Alright, an interesting thing about all of this, but not useful. I have to be careful, because it's so easy to just give something that's useful anyway.

JACK: Right.

KEITH: The last time someone rolled a 9 on discern realities, it was supposed to be—oh, no, on a spout lore.

AUSTIN: A spout lore, yeah.

KEITH: The thing that you told us that was interesting but not useful was "It's a bomb". *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

AUSTIN: Right, well that wasn't very useful, was it? Like, that bomb still went off. So, for me, for this, the idea is you can make it useful, but I'm not going to make it useful for you, do you know what I mean?

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: So, let's say that a thing that is interesting here is: this is not the first time that a member of royalty was killed. This has happened twice before, hundreds of years ago, on two different cases. And in both cases, the killer was not found guilty, because they were acting in the best interests of Nacre.

JACK: Okay.

AUSTIN: Let's get some names real quick. What are the names of the two cases... *[typing]*

JACK: Also, listeners, please be aware that Austin is asking me to assemble a legal trial and I didn't get any sleep last night, if I sound a little... *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* We can also wrap very soon.

JACK: I mean, like, it depends on how you want to pace this.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I understand. Okay. Philomena Tristé—

JACK: Oh, great name.

AUSTIN: Killed her father, who had been the king, and managed to not go to—not to be killed, not to be found guilty, because she proved that her father had been developing a way to take away people's immortality? Which kind of goes against the whole- the whole of everything. It was kind of like—

JACK: *[laughs]* It goes against Nacre's whole deal.

KEITH: Just, the point. It kind of goes against the point.

AUSTIN: It kind of, you know. The whole thing was like he was developing this in secret, so that he could attack his political enemies.

KEITH: Oh, so it's for murder.

AUSTIN: It was for murder. She murdered him to prevent murder, right. And then Nicolo, who was not in fact a royal member, but Nicolo—that's the only name that they have for him. He killed Nicodemo, who was a different member of the Tristé family, because...why did he kill him. I'm imagining Nicolo as a—or, Nicola as kind of a butler or a maid or some sort of servant in the palace who wandered into something truly terrible.

JACK: Right.

AUSTIN: That Nicodemo was doing, Nicodemo. Oh, Nicodemo had been...Nicodemo had been doing—had been in talks with, secretly in talks with a nearby—with one of the nearby settlements at the time. This was years before Velas kind of became this kind of central human power. A different power had once been in this distr—or, in this like quadrant of Hieron. And Nicodemo had reached out through the veil to them, to kind of open up borders a little bit? Which the courts found was a kind of a heresy, that like, you know. Tristero sacrificed his life so

that we may live forever in peace, and Nicodemo Tristé was going to destroy that protection to open the world up to trade with them.

JACK: Huh. Okay. Right.

KEITH: Which is why the queen now thinks that she needs to conquer everything in order to—

AUSTIN: Right, the key difference there is that, you know, there's—

KEITH: Expanding the borders versus opening the borders.

AUSTIN: Right. Versus opening the borders, right. 'Cause if someone comes for the day, like someone just shows up with goods and leaves, they don't carry out the curse, right?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: They have to spend the night there. Which most people would not do, right? He was going to be very open about that.

JACK: I think I've just had an idea. I just—I'm writing this down otherwise I'll forget it.

AUSTIN: That's fair.

KEITH: I bet a lot of people also would stay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, some definitely would, right?

KEITH: Yeah, people don't give a lot of thought when they hear "immortality", [AUSTIN: Right] they don't like weigh the...

AUSTIN: Yes, yes. *[Ali laughs]* And also, you know, there's a limited amount of resources, like that's, it's tough to do that. To, you know, support that many people.

KEITH: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: Alright, I think we should move forward, just a little bit, before we wrap up.

JACK: Yeah. Okay, I've—yeah, I've got the idea.

AUSTIN: Okay. Do you—how are we feeling, do you want to go into that thing? Or do you want to wait until next time?

JACK: I think probably- probably wait until next time.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Because what's probably going to happen is I'm going to wake up tomorrow and look at it and go, "that doesn't make any kind of sense at all". *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

AUSTIN: That's fair. Alright, so. Let's leave with the image of everyone convening in the royal hall—oh, wait, there is one more thing. One more thing. Hella, do you sleep tonight?

ALI: *[pause]* No.

AUSTIN: You don't think you get *any* sleep?

ALI: I mean, like an hour or two?

AUSTIN: Okay. That's fine, I just needed to know if you fell asleep at all. I'm not saying, like— So you can get rid of that one, you can get rid of that sick.

ALI: *[suspicious]* Why are you asking me this?

AUSTIN: 'Cause you have a—'cause you gotta have this dream, huh?

ALI: Mmmm...okay. *[Jack laughs]* I mean, at this point she's like exhausted, so.

AUSTIN: Right. Alright, so. Do you remember what the area where you met Tristero looked like?

ALI: Um, well, it was just white, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I remember it being white and vaguely like the throne room in construction.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It's been three months since we talked about this, and I didn't— I don't think I have notes on this, *[ALI: Yeah]* 'cause that was like completely off the dome at the time. *[Ali laughs]* Like, "oh, wait, uh oh, someone died, I didn't anticipate this". So, you drift off to sleep finally, finally. And when you open your eyes, you're back in that space. You're back in Tristero's throne room. And there's Calhoun, on the throne.

ALI: Oh my god. *[Ali and Jack laugh]* Fuck you.

KEITH: You fucked up.

ALI: Fuck you, Austin.

AUSTIN: Listen.

ALI: *[laughing]* Fuck you. Right, no, that's what he wanted.

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

ALI: Like he...he said something like that, didn't he?

KEITH: *[laughing]* No, no, he super didn't!

ALI: No, Tristero was definitely like, "yeah, I want my son to take my place".

KEITH: Oh, I thought you said Calhoun wanted to die—

AUSTIN: No, no, no, Tristero.

KEITH: I thought you were still going on that "he said sure!"

ALI: Oh, no, no, no. *[laughs]* No, no, no.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* No, Tristero.

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): *[sighs]* Well. *[laughs softly]* I don't even know what to say.

ALI (as Hella): I don't either.

AUSTIN (as Calhoun): Well done, and good luck. Hopefully we never have to see each other again.

KEITH: Wait, is he mad? He didn't sound mad.

AUSTIN: Oh, he's mad. He's, like, smile mad, you know?

KEITH: He's smile mad?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah, and when the actual personification of death is smile mad...

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: He is also now sitting in like, he has on the sort of armor plus skirt situation that the warden had on before. Like you've never seen him look as clean-cut and, like, put together as he does now? And it's almost a little creepy. *[Ali laughs]* Right, like, part of his charm was that he was dishevelled.

KEITH: Ali, think of what you did. Hella sentenced him to a lifetime of administration. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: And—

JACK: *[laughs]* Yeah. A lifetime so boring that his predecessor built a new town.

KEITH: An *eternity* of administration.

AUSTIN: No, like, here's the thing. A lifetime of the worst middling—it's the worst. Because, you know, okay. So, Tristero used to be—

KEITH: He's not even like the top of it.

AUSTIN: He used to be the god of the dead everywhere, right?

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: He gave that up to protect this one little bit of land mass. And is now the god of dead there—of just there. And no one ever dies there.

KEITH: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: He's like just in solitary confinement indefinitely. *[Ali laughs quietly]*

KEITH: Well, he gets to hang out with his dad that he killed.

AUSTIN: No, his dad is gone, dawg!

KEITH: His dad's gone?

AUSTIN: His dad got to die!

KEITH: Oh, that's why he wanted—aw, fuckin'—Hella, you're the worst!

ALI: *[laughs]* I am the worst!

KEITH: Oh, I know what we have to do, we have to solve—we have to solve this place's...immortality problem.

AUSTIN: Oh, that's all. *[Jack laughs]*

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: So, that's it. Like, you wake up from that. There's no more words, there's no exchange.

ALI: Right. Yeah, I mean, I guess if I come back you're not gonna give me the same deal your dad gave me. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* We'll see. We'll see how that goes. We'll see if that ever happens, what happens there, as the world changes, you know?

ALI: "Hey buddy."

AUSTIN: So, it's the next morning, and everyone gets moved over into the palace, and there is lots of administrative stuff, lots of signing paperwork, which is strange, and eventually you are—everyone gets kind of put into place. The palace is filled with all of the people who were in the little parade before, plus a lot of new onlookers, lots of witnesses who are interested in seeing what's going to happen. Meanwhile, about a half day away, that Ordennan war fleet is getting closer and closer and closer.

JACK: Ahh, this is so good.

AUSTIN: And up in Adelaide's office, the sword hums, "Tristero, Tristero, Tristero". *[pause]* XP!

ALI: Oh.

KEITH: Blugh.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm! Let's—

KEITH: I got one. *[Austin and Jack laugh]*

AUSTIN: From failing that time.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Wait, so we get ??? 1:42:55

AUSTIN: It is—

KEITH: It'll be fine. That guy knows that I had that ring, it'll be fine.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm...

JACK: How does the list go?

AUSTIN: I'm looking for it now, because I don't have my thing that normally has the PDFs on it.
Uh boy, that was a game!

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: We played a- we played a game.

JACK: Yeah, uh huh.

ALI: It was! Sure was an episode.

AUSTIN: It was. There was some combat...

KEITH: That was two, potentially three episodes.

AUSTIN: That was *maybe*—yeah, two, yeah.

KEITH: That was three and a half hours, and I like to keep 'em between one and one-and-a-half hours.

AUSTIN: I bet we'll keep—yeah, I bet we'll cut thirty minutes of this, but...

KEITH: Yeah.

ALI: Yeah, there is a lot of breaks. We took way too really long breaks.

AUSTIN: We did, we did. Part of that was me being, "aaah, I don't know what to do, let me figure something out!" *[Ali laughs]*

JACK: Yeah, so. *[laughs]*

ALI: I told you you were ??? 1:43

AUSTIN: Yeah, I just repurposed other stuff, it's fine. Okay, let's see.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Okay.

ALI: There was gonna be a trial anyway.

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. *[Ali laughs]* Level... *[typing]*

ALI: What a fun variable.

KEITH: *[whispering]* This was supposed to be Calhoun's trial.

ALI: I know, yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: *[whispering]* You're a jerk. *[Jack and Ali laugh]*

AUSTIN: Mmhm! There's Make Camp, okay. End of session. "When you reach the end of a session, choose one of your bonds that you feel is resolved, completely explored, no longer relevant, or otherwise. Ask the player of the character you have the bond with if they agree. If they do, mark XP and write a new bond with whomever you wish." I'm curious about what the bonds are like right now.

KEITH: I have a bond that is... *[clears throat]* I actually...yeah. I have a bond that says, "Hella cannot be relied upon in combat and cares only about her interests."

AUSTIN: Uh huh!

KEITH: And I'd like to resolve that and say, "Hella is a villain, and we are travelling with a person who puts her needs at the risk of people's lives."

AUSTIN: Sure, as long as Hella agrees.

ALI: ...I mean, I believe that you feel that way.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Okay.

ALI: *[laughs]* Is that fair?

KEITH: *[typing]* Okay, "Hella is a villain..."

ALI: I'm not a villain. That's not...mmm.

[TIMESTAMP: 1:45:00]

AUSTIN: Lem, how are you feeling? You still need a new bond. You're back a bond right now.

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: Oh, I also need a bond. I'm also back one bond, but I don't have anything else to fill it with.

ALI: How many bonds are we supposed to have?

AUSTIN: You should have at least three. At least.

ALI: Okay.

JACK: So, I think—so, my Hella bond is “I resent the fact that Hella thinks I'm naive.”

AUSTIN: Mmhmm!

JACK: Which, I don't think has played out in this episode at all.

AUSTIN: No.

JACK: I want to do a new one for Fero.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JACK: Because... 'cause I think—Fero and Lem didn't have a very good episode together.

AUSTIN: No.

KEITH: No, I thought that the central conflict was gonna be us two, and that totally got overshadowed. *[Ali laughs]*

JACK: Yeah! Like...they are old buds, right, as well, like. They've known each other for a long time.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: Yeah, my bond still says that we are, quote, “like brothers”. *[Austin laughs]* But I felt that that was less important to change, because we just had—we like barely fought at the beginning.

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: But there's like—yeah, so there's like two...

ALI: No, I mean there's been a lot of tension between you guys this whole episode. You had like two big arguments.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That did happen. That is true.

KEITH: I thought it was just one. What was the second one?

ALI: No, no, no. So, the first one was that you didn't want him to tell...

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Oh, well then we had three big arguments.

ALI: About the ships. Yeah.

JACK: We had the ships.

KEITH: Okay.

ALI: And then you left him—

JACK: We had him leaving me in the room, [ALI: Yeah.] and then we had him busting into the library.

KEITH: *[crosstalk]* That was an argument?

AUSTIN: That was an argument.

ALI: I think for Lem's side he was pretty upset about that.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

KEITH: I offered to stay.

AUSTIN: Mmm.

ALI: Mm.

AUSTIN: That sounds like a fight. Whatever. I think— *[laughs slightly]* If either of you wants to change that bond, that seems fine with me. I don't know if either of you does.

JACK: I think I'm gonna add one that says something like...um... *[laughs]* Can I make a bond that is just something like "Fero's desire for heroics is hurtful"? *[Keith laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yeah! Absolutely. As long as—yeah, I mean, no, he can just make that. I think he can just make that, I don't think it's—let me see...do do do do do...

JACK: I want to say "can be hurtful".

KEITH: Can you have two bonds with one person?

JACK: I only have one with you.

AUSTIN: No, he only has one bond with—this is his first, this will be his first one with you.

KEITH: Oh, okay. I could—

JACK: I'm saying "can be hurtful" instead of "is hurtful". *[pause]* Hello?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'm here.

KEITH: Hello, hi. Oh, I didn't know that you asked a question.

AUSTIN: Yeah, what did you say? Sorry. *[pause]* Jack?

JACK: Oh, me?

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: Oh. Oh, I just said "Fero's desire for heroics [AUSTIN: Yeah] *can be* hurtful" as opposed to "is hurtful".

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah, that's fine.

KEITH: Yeah.

JACK: Cool.

AUSTIN: Or "is dangerous"? What about "is dangerous"? I like using just like, "is adjective".

JACK: Well—no, well, I mean hurtful.

AUSTIN: Oh, okay, you do. Okay.

KEITH: Aww.

JACK: Well, yeah, I mean it like in the sense of, like, that was a hurtful choice that you made.

AUSTIN: Well, then I think you should say “is hurtful”, I really do.

JACK: Okay. Yeah. Okay.

AUSTIN: Or even, “has hurt me”, you know.

JACK: Oops. *[laughs]* I typed it in wrong, and now it just says, “Fero’s desire for heroics is hurtful hurtful.”

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Aw. It’s double hurtful!

KEITH: *[laughs]* Aww.

AUSTIN: Ali, what about you? Is Hella keeping...

ALI: I don’t know. I have like...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: I have weird bonds with the two of you.

AUSTIN: You have weird bonds.

ALI: I have “Fero is more useful than I originally thought.”

KEITH: I’m about to save your ass *again*, so.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

ALI: ??? 1:48:25 This was a really weird Hella-Fero episode.

AUSTIN: It was, wasn’t it?

ALI: To be fair. *[laughs]* ‘Cause I feel like it should change to something. ‘Cause, like, she told him to go, pretty much.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm. That's true.

ALI: And now he's defending her in this case?

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.

ALI: So, I don't know what like the wording on it would be, but I feel like it should be something like, I—

KEITH: Oh, and as far as she knows, it looked like I *jumped* to volunteer.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* That is true. *[Ali and Keith laugh]*

ALI: It should be like, "I don't understand Fero's motivations, [AUSTIN: mmhmm] but he's pretty dependable"?

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think that's good.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: So take one. If you changed one, mark XP.

ALI: Okay. Yeah.

AUSTIN: And then, did you learn something new and important about the world? I'm gonna say yes. So, take one. *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: And that's it. You did not defeat a notable monster or enemy, you did not loot a memorable treasure. So everybody take a total...

KEITH: I—oh.

ALI: Do I get an—do I get an XP for acting on my...

AUSTIN: Right.

ALI: My evil?

AUSTIN: One second. *[typing]* Yes. "Once bonds have been updated, look at your alignment. If you fulfilled that alignment at least once this session, mark XP." Yes. I think you do.

ALI: Okay, so I get two...

AUSTIN: Because your alignment is, of course, “to destroy something rather than try to understand it”.

ALI: Right. *[sing-songy voice]* And I destroyed someone today.

AUSTIN: Yep.

ALI: *[sighs]* Oh boy. What a mess.

KEITH: Can—

JACK: Mine is “avoid a conflict or defuse a tense situation”, which I don’t think I did.

AUSTIN: Not yet. You’re working on it.

JACK: Yeah. *[Ali laughs]* I gotta plan.

AUSTIN: You gotta plan.

KEITH: Can you do multiple bonds? It’s just one bond per thing, right?

AUSTIN: I think it’s one bond per person, yeah.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Because you should be working that—whatever that bond is, should be what you have in mind as you interact with a person, you know?

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: It’s like the thematic core of that interaction.

KEITH: Mmhmm.

AUSTIN: Not always, but sometimes, you know, that should be where to look.

KEITH: Yeah. Yeah, I don’t think—I think that we’re still, like, an episode away from [AUSTIN: Yes] Lem changing—Fero changing the Lem bond.

AUSTIN: Yes, agreed. Yep. Yeah, as things kick off. So, yeah, I think that that’s where we’re gonna leave off.

JACK: Wait, so...I got no XP in that whole s—well, I got one.

AUSTIN: No, you got one.

JACK: For writing a poem.

KEITH: You got one.

ALI: Yeah, you got one.

AUSTIN: No, no, and you got two, you got two.

ALI: You got two!

AUSTIN: From learning something new about the world.

JACK: Oh, yeah. Yep.

AUSTIN: One more, so. Yep.

JACK: Cool.

KEITH: Yep. And, I'm gonna have to—I'm gonna have to listen back on the previous episode to see how many XP I had at the end of that.

AUSTIN: *[laughs lightly]* Okay.

KEITH: 'Cause I have no idea if I gained a level or not. What level is everybody at?

ALI: I'm at three?

JACK: I'm at...

AUSTIN: I think everyone's at three.

KEITH: I'm at—

JACK: Yeah, three.

ALI: I think I leveled at the end of last episode.

AUSTIN: Did you not take a move? Let's figure this out off stream. Or off—

KEITH: Yeah.

ALI: No, I took merciless.

AUSTIN: Oh, right, okay.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Alright, let's, uh...actually do an actual outro, huh? Or are we just gonna—

KEITH: Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: Yeah. We didn't do like a proper intro, I guess people know who we are.

AUSTIN: No, we didn't, so let's make sure we do an—

KEITH: No, no, we did, we did a proper intro.

AUSTIN: No, we super didn't.

ALI: No, we didn't.

AUSTIN: I meant to, and then I completely got caught up.

ALI: We didn't introduce ourselves, right?

AUSTIN: No, we super didn't.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN: Thanks for listening. I'm Austin Walker, you can find me on twitter @austin_walker. We stream stuff on twitch at Stream Friends, twitch.tv/streamfriends. You can also find me on twitch at thecalcutec. You can read the things I write at clockworkworlds.com. I've started writing for GameSpot as a freelancer since we started doing this, I've been reviewing games there. And since this episode will actually go up in like a month, there might—I guess like that might still be relevant.

KEITH: No, this will be up in—oh yeah, this will be up in a month, you're right.

AUSTIN: This part will be up in a month.

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: But I've been reviewing games there. I reviewed Code Name S.T.E.A.M. and I reviewed Grow Home, and as always you can find my writing also at pastemagazine.com/games. Where can people find you, Jack?

JACK: My name is Jack de Quidt. You can find me on twitch and twitter @notquitereal, and my games studio's website thetalltreesgames.co.uk. And at the weekly—not this week, not this last week, but coming—okay, this is meaningless, 'cause we don't know when it's gonna release. Coming generally—

AUSTIN: This will be out in either one month from today... *[laughs]*

JACK: Generally on fridays, you can get a brand new piece of writing and roundup of what's been happening in the wide world of the internet by going to tinyletter.com/notquitereal.

AUSTIN: It's very good. Jack's writing is great.

JACK: Thank you.

AUSTIN: You might notice that, because you heard a poem he wrote in twenty minutes earlier.

JACK: *[laughs]* Thank you.

AUSTIN: Ali? Where can people find you?

ALI: Yeah, I am Alicia Acampora, you can find me @ali_west on twitter. If you haven't yet, you can go to friendsatthetable.net to look at maps and some cool stuff from this podcast.

AUSTIN: Mmhm. I should put this Nacre map up there.

ALI: Yeah.

JACK: We should persuade our map—our cartographer, to...

AUSTIN: Our cartographer, yeah. Agreed. And Keith, where can people find you?

["Autumn Not Winter" begins playing in the background]

KEITH: You can find me on twitter @keithjcarberry, you can find the let's plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton or runbutton.net. And if you've got, you know, money, you can go to contentburger.biz and watch another let's play of Shenmue that I do that only is for money.

AUSTIN: Oh, I should also shout that out for me, because I'm greedy and I need to make rent.

KEITH: Oh, yeah.

AUSTIN: I started a patreon *[laughs]* since last time we recorded this. You can find that at patreon.com/austinwalker, one word. It is not for this, technically, it's for the games criticism I write. But, you know. You know. *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Having that money so I can get like, rent and a hamburger, helps a lot [KEITH: mmhmm] for me being able to do prep work for this, you know?

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: So that things aren't a mess.

KEITH: You cannot find a Shenmue let's play there.

AUSTIN: You can. And that Shenmue let's play *[Ali laughs]* is great and you should go watch it 'cause it's really good. For realsies.

KEITH: And the hamburgers that Austin eats are great, so you should get him a hamburger.

AUSTIN: I had a good burger today, it was really good.

KEITH: Where was it from?

ALI: Ohh.

AUSTIN: It was from that place, The Root Cellar, down the block.

KEITH: Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: It was really good. Water buffalo burger.

[music plays out to the end]

ALI: Uhhh, I really didn't think that she was gonna kill him, and then he was like, "sure".

KEITH: He didn't really want you to!

ALI: So she did. Well, he was like, “sure”!

KEITH: He said “sure” in the way that like, when you had a really bad day and then you drop—like something falls on your car, and you’re like, *[annoyed tone]* “Yeah, of course. Of course it falls on me that day.”

ALI: I know. I know, but. He said okay.

JACK: Yeah. And I mean, like...I don’t know. I think he was so completely thrown by you—by the fact that you had met— *[Ali laughs]* met Tristero. *[laughs]*

ALI: That was a really good conversation.

JACK: Yeah, it was a super good conversation! It went really well.

ALI: I...I think that this is the only time I’ve been good at, like, voicing Hella?

JACK: Yeah.

ALI: Which is, a good time to get good at it.

JACK: No, you fucking nailed it. Yeah. *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: Well, now the complicated—now the complicated thing is like, how are we going to make sense of the holiday episodes, when Fero kills Hella for doing this? *[Ali and Jack laugh]*

JACK: Aw, man. Yeah, like...

ALI: She just—under her like, festival garment, there’s a lot of like, cougar wounds that she was covering. *[Jack laughs]* But, otherwise she’s fine.

JACK: Yeah, like, “Oh, I just killed Calhoun”, *[animal foley]* arrrrr.

ALI: *[laughs]* Oh, the guards are gonna come in, huh?

JACK: Mmhmm.

ALI: Mmhmm!

JACK: Yeah. This is—yeah, we were talking about John Darnielle, this is a fucking Mountain Goats song. *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: I bet—here's—I mean, Austin's not here, so I can talk about this without having it influence him at all. I imagine that what's about to happen is that you're gonna have to roll a whole new character *[laughs]* because they're gonna execute you! *[Jack laughs]*

ALI: Oh, no, no. I mean, I have like—I know—

JACK: Or she'll make another deal with death, but this time she'll have to kill *Fero*.

ALI: *[laughs]* I mean, I know exactly what Hella's next move is.

JACK: Oh, that's cool.

ALI: Whether they'll listen to her is a whole other thing, but. I mean, she has leverage here now, that she was ??? 1:57

KEITH: The weird thing is that we're all safe until the holiday episode.

ALI: Right.

JACK: Well—

KEITH: That makes things very confusing.

ALI: Austin has to, like, deal with that however he'd like to deal with that, but.

KEITH: Yeah, mmhmm.

ALI: *[laughs]* Oh my god. That was...

JACK: That was pretty intense.

KEITH: He can just—I mean, you know, worst case scenario, we can just call that non-canonical.

JACK: Canonical.

KEITH: Hmm?

JACK: You said canonical?

KEITH: No, non-canonical.

ALI: No, I think—I mean, I think it's really in—I think it's very important for the universe that this story takes place in that the holiday episode happened.

JACK: Yeah. I think so.

ALI: Like, way.

JACK: Also, I think that it makes a really nice sort of like, narrative counterpoint with Hadrian in the christmas episode?

KEITH: Yeah, but the weird thing is that between the time—between the time that we recorded the holiday episode and now, I have changed my bonds from liking Hella to not liking Hella, and then I'm gonna have to change it again from not liking Hella to hating Hella. *[laughs]*

JACK: *[laughs]* Aw, man.

ALI: *[laughs]* Aw, my bond with you is that I find you useful, so, that's great.

JACK: I super love—

KEITH: Mine right now is “Hella cannot be relied upon in combat and cares only about her interests.”

ALI: Mmhmm! Yeah, well, hmm. *[laughs]* My bond with you is “Fero's more useful than I originally thought”. And then my Lem bond is “I don't fear Lem, but I should keep my distance”.

JACK: *[laughs]* Yeah, like that's worked out really well for you, really, hasn't it?

ALI: *[laughs]* I mean...

JACK: We'll see.

ALI: It's not gonna—it's probably not gonna change after this recording. *[laughs]*

JACK: No, I can't see it changing. I have no idea how—yeah, I'm sure...I have no idea how [ALI: I mean it—] Lem is going to react to...

ALI: The fun thing about this is that Hella's gonna be just as distraught, [AUSTIN: I'm back] if not more so, [KEITH: mmhmm] than the two of you are gonna be.

JACK: Right. Yeah, definitely.

ALI: So. Like...

KEITH: Because—

AUSTIN: What have I missed?

ALI: We just had a minute.

KEITH: We were just talking about how the holiday episode is gonna make any sense once Fero kills Hella.

AUSTIN: *[laughs loudly]* Oh no, I clipped real bad on the audio.

KEITH: No, it's fine.

AUSTIN: Mmhmm.