

## SPRING IN HIERON 25: THE SECOND SUN

Transcriber: Cole

(Recap)

**Austin:** As you look up, your face gets hotter and hotter, and you see that the sun is being blocked out by two gigantic wings. The wings of a dragon that is drawing closer and closer. It is this... strange thing, translucent in places as if made by a sort of, kind of semi-translucent flesh and in other places, filled with the black fire of the Heat and the Dark. Its jaw is snapping as it- as it kind of gets closer, like a wild beast, and its eyes are- are empty. And on its back, it carries a knight, or something greater. Clad in gold armor with a red cape. And behind his head, the- the golden ring of Samoths.

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

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**Jack (as Lem):** Ok, are we dreaming now?

**Janine (Adaire):** No, cause this seems normal.

**Ali (as Hella):** Yeah, I fucking hope not.

**Jack (as Lem):** Except the sun.

**Janine (Adaire):** That is a kind of normal. We've seen that before.

**Ali (as Hella):** Yeah, that what the- that's literally what that ring does.

**Jack (as Lem):** Did we see the same thing? I saw like, everything was on fire. Everybody was on a boat.

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

**Jack (as Lem):** Ok, that's not normal.

**Ali (as Hella):** There was like, voices, the singing. Was that a thing that you all experienced?

**Jack (as Lem):** Yeah.

**Janine (Adaire):** Yeah, like child singing? Yeah.

**Jack (as Lem):** Hey, why are we in the cemetery?

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**Austin (as Red Jack):** I have heard my children speaking their names. Talking about an advocate. A rumor spreading through the camps. Someone who-

**Austin:** And I think he kind of like, looks away from Corsica a little bit.

**Austin (as Red Jack):** -will attend to their needs in a more direct way than the current leadership.

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**Austin (as Sunder):** Tel may have had some dealings with the cult. I don't know who he was speaking with, but you would have to ask him. That is all I know. We need to make a decision on Tel, and I need to immediately begin to research what they could be doing with a second sun. Do you have any other information?

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**Austin (as Exarch Braeven):** We have nearly all we need already. We have a sun, disposable. We have raw body, shapeable into its perfect form. We have our Solarch who will give it wisdom and direction. Now all we need is life, and thankfully, we have someone who has eagerly copied it down for us. Word by word from an old text he was given access to.

[Music finishes playing]

**Austin (as The Lardwulf):** So, yeah. We meet in the Outhouse every Wednesday night.

**Janine (as Adaire):** God, that's a bad sentence. Um- [**Austin** laughs]

**Austin:** It is.

**Janine (as Adaire):** Cool. Alright. I think I'll- I'll try and make the next meeting.

**Austin:** He nods, and says,

**Austin (as The Lardwulf):** Look, I hope I see you there.

**Janine** (as **Adaire**): Yeah.

**Austin** (as **The Lardwulf**): Good luck. I hope you don't uh, disappear for a decade again.

**Janine** (as **Adaire**): Um, me too. That- Yeah. Well, actually I don't know. It had ups and downs. You take c- Hey, maybe like, [sighs] could you like, get your hands on some lemons of something? I feel like lemons might help you out.

**Austin** (as **The Lardwulf**): Oh, I mean, I'll see what I can do, but yuck.

**Janine** (as **Adaire**): Well, you don't have to like it. You just have to tell other people to like it.

**Austin** (as **The Lardwulf**): I would never lie to a client.

**Austin**: Taps his head three times. And then a fourth. [light laugh]

**Janine**: I think Adaire makes a face.

**Austin**: Uh huh. Alright.

**Janine**: Doesn't know what that one means. [laughs]

**Austin**: Mmm. I'm not sure he does. Uh, Lem and Hella, what are you gettin' up to?

**Jack**: Is-

**Ali**: Oh, um- what do you post-talking to a body? I guess um-

**Ali** (as **Hella**): Lem, do you want take talking to Sunder and Red Jack about the new stuff while I work on housing logistics or should we do that together?

**Jack** (as **Lem**): I was thinking about going and seeing Tel maybe.

**Ali**: Oh. Like, just go to him straight?

**Jack**: Well- [sighs]

**Janine**: Who were all the notebook people again? Sorry. I feel like I'm missing one on my notes.

**Austin:** Lardwulf, Espandare the Great and Eclectic-

**Jack:** Fuck that guy.

**Austin:** Uh, Elan Showman, um, Uklan Tel were the names I gave you.

**Janine:** Ok.

**Austin:** I- You know there are probably other names there that I don't know who they are. They're just like-

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** -John Johnstonton is on-

**Janine:** [laughs lightly] John Johnstonton.

**Ali:** Mm.

**Austin:** John Johnstonton, uh huh.

**Janine:** John Johnstontine. I love that- that comic.

**Austin:** Uh huh. He's great. Can't wait for them to- Keanu.

**Ali:** Is it worth trying to cross reference those names? Right?

**Austin:** In what way?

**Ali:** Like if- if Adaire sees a name- a list of names she doesn't recognize or is like, 'these are cult people' being like, 'Ok, who is this person? And what did they do?'

**Austin:** Yeah, you can just do that. Like, that's not a roll or anything.

**Ali:** Ok. Ok.

**Austin:** Like, you have a list of people who have done business with the cult. Straight up. And it's like, dozens of people probably.

**Jack:** Mm.

**Ali:** Um, anyway, regardless... I don't-

**Austin:** Like if- In other words, really what I would need is what do you want to do to those people or with those people or about those people?

**Ali:** Right. Yeah.

**Austin:** And you could start processing that, you know?

**Ali:** Right. Um, back to the current conversation,

**Ali (as Hella):** Lem- I- I wouldn't talk to him without talking to at least Sunder first, but-

**Jack (as Lem):** No, you're right.

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

**Jack (as Lem):** We should- we should- we got a lot then. And we should compare notes first.

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

**Austin:** Um, Hella, how do you go about doing this job of like, [Ali quietly laughs] setting up- figuring out who gets houses?

**Ali:** Um, I think that she goes to the like, five people who are kind of charge of their settlements, right? So, she reaches out to Chatterchin and the moth lady and-

**Austin:** These are not those people.

**Ali:** Oh, these are just-

**Austin:** The new people have come over from-

**Ali:** Ok.

**Austin:** -all over the- the continent. From Marielda. From uh, the area like, the- the- what were the Archives. Um, from Velas and like, that general direction. From where the snow elves were. Like, this is a weird, huge- like, word spread that this was a big, safe place. And so, it's families

from all over the place, and like, yes there are some like, I'd say like, if you go to the south, you'll probably find more Marieldan people there.

**Ali:** Right. Yeah, yeah. Um-

**Austin:** But like, I don't even know that they have like, an official leader with them.

**Ali:** God. Right, yeah. Ok. Um, god. I- My first idea is like, a long one, which is like, 'Oh, do a census', right?

**Austin:** Yeah, uh huh.

**Ali:** Like, try to get a sense of the people who are here. Cause I feel like the- I mean, the easy answer is that she would be like, 'ok, we are gonna prioritize like, twenty percent of these- or whatever- twenty percent of these rooms to people who have families and who are like, a family unit. Um, and then like, another twenty percent goes to people who are like, sick or injured in some way. And then the rest is like, a lottery?' But lotteries suck. But also that's just like, an easy way to do that.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Ali:** And yeah, I don't- [laughing] I mean, she's not very like-

**Austin:** Yeah, what's your intelligence? What's Hella's intelligence?

**Ali:** Am I still stunned or was that just dream stunning?

**Austin:** Oh, you're still stunned.

**Ali:** Ok.

**Austin:** You're still stunned.

**Ali:** Sure.

**Austin:** And you're shaky. So, you're at negative-

**Ali:** I was shaken.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Ali:** Um, so yeah.

**Austin:** You're shaky because of- We talked about this off-mic that like, you healed- you're- Dungeon World is weird cause it's D&D, right? They're trying to do D&D shit, and so, in D&D, one HP and 30HP are the same. You're not any worse off. And so, it's- We felt it was kind of silly that like, Hella got stabbed in the chest by a dragon, but because she slept in a bed for a day, she is ok. She is at hit points completely full. [light laugh] Um, shook it off. And so like, shaky for another day is probably fair.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And then the intelligence 'stunned' is from looking into the eyes of- of the um, the dragon and the Solarch.

**Ali:** Cool. Um, yeah I-

**Austin:** The dragon is the- I want to be like, clear just for record keeping sense. The dragon is the Advocate, right? They're building the Advocate, and the dragon is the Advocate. Um, so yeah.

**Ali:** Yeah. Um, yeah. Yeah-

**Austin:** So, yeah, right? Like, that's a real question is like, [exhales] does she do it right? I think like that- the policy you just laid out is as good of a policy as like, someone is gonna come up with by themselves in this way.

**Ali:** Right, yeah.

**Austin:** But it's also a- it's a toughy, you know? [light laugh]

**Ali:** Right. But it's like, you know? 'Hey, this is the way that we're doing this now. We're still in the process of building these houses. My heart's in the right place.' [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, it is. But like if this is-

**Ali:** [overlapped] I simply prioritized. Like, no. I know. Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, it's like, it this is the game where I'm gonna make you to roll to see if you know how to big a dam, then I'm absolutely going to make you-

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** -roll to see if you know how to do a census right. [Ali laughs] Like, across cultures.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Across languages, presumably. You know, like? [light laugh] There's all sorts of stuff that's like, a toughy here, so I think this is a Defy Danger intelligence roll.

**Ali:** Right. Can I- Well, in that case, instead of asking like- instead of going to Chatterchin and to the moth lady and being like-

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Ali:** -'Hey, you tell me what to do.' Is there a way that I could be like, 'Hey, you are the four people who are gonna help issue this with me cause you presumably have made these decisions in your life before'? Um-

**Austin:** Sure, so in other words like, you're almost like, uh, either- There's two ways to frame this, I think. One is um, what's the word I'm looking for? Uh, delegating. [Ali laughs] Or passing-passing the buck.

**Ali:** No. No. No. I believe what I am doing is assembling a team of people- [laughs]

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Ali:** -which to do this with.

**Austin:** Sure. Alright.

**Ali:** Because you know, Hella still wants to be involved in the process, but like, is obviously going to people who are more experienced.

**Austin:** Sure.

**Ali:** She's- she's never like, even been a manager. [laughs]

**Austin:** That's true. That's true. She did work retail that time, but that's it.

**Ali:** [laughing] I know, but- Yeah.



**Austin:** She was working actually in management, I don't think.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Though I think this is actually then a Defy Danger charisma, right?

**Ali:** Ok.

**Austin:** Um, and I want to abstract it out because we already have been going for quite some time, and I think it's- it- we don't have the time to get into the partic- the like, deep particulars of what governance looks like tonight. [Ali laughs] But I do like the idea of it being like, 'hey.' You are trying to work as a leader and facilitator as much as an ideas person.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So, it's you. It's Rosetta, who is- or Rosette, the mothkin leader.

**Ali:** Uh hm.

**Austin:** It's Chatterchin who is like, kind of the de facto leader of the gno- of the gnolls. Um, who else is involved? Who are the other big names at this point for the various cultures? Who are still here.

**Ali:** Um, there was \*Jeroz. (Ali means Jerod)

**Austin:** Yeah, but she- Jerod's gone, or dead unfortunately.

**Ali:** Do you- Yeah. Do you still have the list of-

**Austin:** Somewhere. Yeah.

**Ali:** -from-? Yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, from- from Cold Winter or whatever?

**Ali:** Right cause that was like, it, right? Cause everybody had like, an assigned-?

**Austin:** Basically, yeah. But like, a lot of them are just gone.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Like, Rosana was one of them.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** She's not around anymore. Carrot, the squirrel. Gone.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Mee Kosh. Gone. Corsica, but that's like a different thing, obviously. But Corsica was one of them.

**Ali:** Damn.

**Austin:** Blake Bromley is gone. Mor- Morbash is gone. Bailon Wythe is gone. Dead. Um, so yeah. Like, of the remaining true capital 'L' leaders from those various groups, most of them are gone. Uh, [thinking noises] chu-chu-chu-

**Ali:** It might just be the three of us then. Like-

**Austin:** Devar is probably around.

**Ali:** [enthusiastic] Oh.

**Austin:** Uh, and he's cool.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Jack:** He's great.

**Austin:** Trying to think who else would be around. Yeah, we haven't had him on screen yet this year.

**Jack:** Be interesting to see how Devar has changed in ten years.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah. I think he's probably- I think part of it is that he has, and this could be contradicting a thing that I said earlier this season cause it's been six months since we started, but regardless, at this point, he is starting to settle down as the rest of the Archives begin to spread out. As the Archives have kind of lost their single- singular home, he has decided to make the Last University his. And I think the big thing is he has given up completely on the old

archivist dream of collecting everything and instead is doubling down on like, collecting things he likes.

I think he's opened a bookstore and has become like, an expert in archival texts because this place has a great library, and he's always been someone who loves um, writing and reading. He's like been a fiction writer since he's been on screen, and so between that and just like, his general love of the- of texts, this has been like, a really good way for him to focus down and become the adult he- he's wanted to be, you know? Um, he has nicer glasses now. [Ali laughs] So yeah, him and then- I'm tryin' to think who else has been like, a leader in any of these communities or I'm trying to think if anybody else has arrived who would have been a leader. No. So, probably somebody else. Someone from one of these refugee groups presumably.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Right? Like, Samot, uh, is a leader, [laughs] I guess.

**Ali:** Oh yeah.

**Austin:** If you wanted to involve Samot in this?

**Ali:** I mean, he would a good person to ask, but maybe not. Um-

**Austin:** It's up to you. Um-

**Ali:** He had some bad ideas.

**Austin:** I wanted to- I needed to say it out loud so that people listening weren't like, 'Samot is a leader' Like, yeah, of course, but-

**Ali:** Yeah, fair.

**Austin:** I get why players are like, 'mmm, is this the thing I want to cash in that chip for?'

**Ali:** Yeah. I do need to talk to Samot, but not to be like, 'Hey, help me with this thing.'

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Unless he'd be into it. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know Samot. Um, he's probably going through a rough time.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Ali:** But there's no other like- [exhales] Who are the people who are like, handing out soup? Or like, usually making these requests on behalf of uh-?

**[0:15:00]**

**Austin:** The- So the thing that we've said on screen is like, these are the people who work for Ephrim and for-

**Ali:** Right. Ok.

**Austin:** -um, so you know who it probably is? It's probably one of the retainers who didn't go. That makes sense to me.

**Ali:** Oh ok. Yeah.

**Austin:** So, let me look at Ephrim's list of retainers. Um, [thinking noise] ba-ba-bahh- Because not all of them went with him.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** [thinking noise] chu- Let me find that list. Uh, what a fuckin' list of people here. Alright, so Highwater and Marigold went with him, which means he left behind Summit who is a halfling guard, the most fearsome of his retainers.

**Ali:** Oh.

**Austin:** And Brother Hugh, the most cunning, a priest.

**Ali:** Oh... Is cunning the thing that I want? Um, oh. I don't know that this priest is [laughing] joining this meeting actually. [Austin laughs] Um, no. Yeah, I'm good actually.

**Austin:** No? You don't want-

**Ali:** Uh, I think-

**Austin:** -to roll the dice on that one?

**Ali:** You know what? I think the four people that I have, we're each gonna-

**Austin:** So, you're-

**Ali:** -take a quadrant. [laughs]

**Austin:** Uh huh. You're one of the four, and you're gonna break it down. Ok, that makes sense.

**Ali:** Uh huh.

**Austin:** Alright. Give me a- give me a Defy Danger charisma.

**Ali:** Oh boy howdy. Um, what if this goes really badly?

**Austin:** Yeah, we'll see. Hey, it's an eight.

**Ali:** Ok. Yeah.

**Austin:** That's an eight. Um, so let's see. Uh, alright. So here is the thing that's gonna happen is you- you succeed, which means the thing that- Tell me again the thing you were trying to achieve. That way I don't- I don't want to undercut that thing. Do you know what I mean?

**Ali:** The starting goal is to like, understand how many people are even here and understanding that and where they're from, right?

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Ali:** Which is why there's like, collection getting. But then it's like, having that information and then prioritizing it.

**Austin:** Right.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Um, so I think- So- [exhales] You- It's in the middle of this process that you hear the sound of horses arriving. And the complication here is even more people show up. On the plus side, this includes the convoy of medicine from the Isles of Flight. Also on the plus side is that one of these figures, the figure at the front of this huge group of horses arriving, is Severe. [Ali laughs] Um, [typing] on the other hand, [exhales a laugh] there are a lot more people than you even anticipated. And I think part of the complication here- Well, maybe this is a good thing in some ways. God, I- I'm gonna say it happens in- What- So, you're- Let's say you're- Pick a north- northwest or northeast quadrant. Which one are you in?

**Ali:** Um, I'm not looking at the university map, so I'm just gonna say-

**Austin:** Oh, I'm sorry

**Ali:** -east.

**Austin:** I'll move back over. Yeah, that's-

**Ali:** That's fine. That's the one with like, the tower that she hangs out at and then the meeting house. And yeah, east is fine.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah. That totally makes sense. So, I think while you're doing the count, it's been going pretty well. You're doing the census. You're interviewing like, local um, you know, leaders in the smaller communities, and blah, blah, blah. That's when you start to hear the- the sound of the footsteps bas- er the- not the footsteps. The um, the hoof- hoof steps? The hoof- prints?

**Jack:** Beats.

**Austin:** What am I- What's-

**Jack:** Hoof beats.

**Austin:** Feet. Yeah, hoof beats. Is that- is that a word? Is that a phrase?

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Ye- yeah.

**Austin:** That has to be it, right? Ok. Um, [light laugh] Listen, it's been- it's been one of those days. Um, and then you- you see that like- So, it's not the thousand, thousand hooves of the Grand Tour, which is strange because the Grand Tour has been running these hills for as long as there have been hills, right? Or not that long, I guess- so since Marielda. Since the end of Marielda and the realization that the Heat and the Dark was starting to like, fuck up the entire world, the Grand Tour has been running.

And if Severea is arriving here, and if she is alone, Galenica is not- is not with her, then that means something's up with the Grand Tour. [light laugh] Um, but what has arrived is Severea plus a great number of mystral. And some other refugees from the northern part of the

continent, who are coming down here and I think- You didn't- you never met Severeaa, right? But you did meet Lauranee, her um, one of her priestesses at the-

**Ali:** Oh yeah.

**Austin:** -right?

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** So, I think she literally just rides right up to you and like, hard stops the way a horse in a video game can hard stop, but a real horse never could. **[Ali laughs quietly]** And just like, pops down and like, hands the reins of her horse to an attendant who then just like, immediately walks the horse in past the guards who are very confused by the arrival of like, a thousand new people. **[light laugh]** And she says,

**Austin (as Severeaa):** Hella Varal.

**Ali (as Hella):** Speaking. Hi.

**Austin (as Severeaa):** Hello. I'm familiar with your work. You do good things.

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

**Austin (as Severeaa):** Is... Samot here?

**Ali (as Hella):** Um, yeah.

**Austin (as Severeaa):** As I've heard.

**Ali (as Hella):** Who- who are you?

**Austin:** She bows her head, and as she does like, her- So, I think in this case, she's not wearing her like- I- There are times when she's been wearing like, dresses, but she's wearing like, silver armor with a long, blue cape behind her and like, as she moves she- she continually looks like she's underwater. And so the cap moves with this kind of like, slow, flowy, floating quality to it. She is dark skinned and has like, fin-like ears and is bald um, and bright white eyes. And I mean, you recog- You actually recognize her from like, depictions of her, right?

**Ali:** Yeah. **[laughs]**

**Austin:** But- but she says- and she says with a smirk, and she like- like- She like, fake rolls her eyes at you and smirks at you and goes,

**Austin (as Severeia):** You know who I am.

**Ali (as Hella):** [stammers lightly] I just wanted to conf- There's been a lot of weird- Um, I just wanted to confirm. It's a pleasure meeting you.

**Austin (as Severeia):** You, too. I've heard good things.

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

**Austin (as Severeia):** You've lots of people here, huh?

**Ali (as Hella):** So many.

**Austin (as Severeia):** We should speak, but I need to speak with Samot first. Could you show me the way?

**Ali (as Hella):** [squeaks hesitantly] I was kind of in the- But yes. Yes, I will. Sure Yeah. Just follow me. Yeah.

**Ali:** Um, and I think Hella starts walking towards the central tower?

**Austin:** As you do, someone shouts out at you and is like,

**Austin (as unnamed civilian):** We'd better get a house before these people! They just showed up.

**Ali (as Hella):** Yep. [Austin laughs] First in, first out. It's- You're- Yep.

**Jack:** [laughs] Don't ask what out means.

**Ali (as Hella):** That's not the plan. That's not the full- It's just- Group A. Group B. It's fine.  
[Austin and Janine laugh]

**Austin:** And you- I guess, you lead her there to Samot. I'm guessing?

**Ali:** Um-

**Austin:** Like over to his quarters or do you- What do you do?



**Ali:** I- I think that I- I think that I half walk the path.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Ali:** And then as soon as I like, see someone who's like, 'oh, they're real- they're like, a delegate actually' and be like-

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Ali (as Hella):** You just go in there, and then go see him.

**Ali:** Cause I don't think that Hella wants to be there for like, their conversation.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah. No, totally.

**Ali:** Um, yeah.

**Austin:** She- she nods to you and says- before she leaves, she says,

**Austin (as Severeaa):** So, you're handling all of the refugees?

**Ali (as Hella):** I'm attempting to. There's been such an influx that um, we- Yes. Yeah.

**Austin:** She nods, and she says,

**Austin (as Severeaa):** When I'm done speaking with Samot, we should sit down and go over some things. There is- there is a chance that I could take some of these people off your hands.

**Ali (as Hella):** Oh- oh. In what way?

**Austin (as Severeaa):** There is a new opportunity, and if we move quickly we could hopefully settle some people in the north.

**Ali (as Hella):** Yeah, I- These people are just looking for a safe space. There's some things you should- We'll talk later.

**Austin (as Severeaa):** We'll talk.

**Austin:** Um, she moves with like, the- the capability of someone who has been doing this for a very long time. [Ali laughs] Ya know? Just like, supreme confidence. I'm- I made this character

years ago, and then I had the boss I had for the last few years which was this really great woman named Ciel, who has since left the company to go like, on nature walks is my understanding. [Ali laughs lightly] And like, more fuckin' power to her. But I have such a better idea of who Severeia is now after working under my boss for the last few years who is the most capable human being I've ever met in my life. Who is just like, moves at a thousand miles an hour and constantly is thinking of a half dozen things at once and like- So. That is- that is shoutouts- Shoutouts to you, Ciel. Um, you're probably not listening to this.

**Jack:** This is the best because it's like- it's- it's also the- It's like, two stylistic depictions of the ocean as a figure, right?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** One's this like, very ethereal, very light like- kind of like, um, fey.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** And the other one's just like, 'No, look. It comes in. [Austin laughs lightly] It goes out. There are waves.'

**Austin:** Uh huh. Which she has the appearance of the former, right?

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** She- she knows how to wield that as a way of- as like, being attention getting and being seeming um, grander in some way than- than you or I, with our dirty fuckin' feet.

**Jack:** But she's like, 'look we've got an opportunity and it's called rivers. [Austin laughs] They get you down to the ocean.' [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Ugh. Well, like, I mean, the very particular thing here is- the thing that she's gesturing at is Del fell into the water, and you could go live on Del.

**Jack:** [laughing] Oh my god.

**Ali:** Wait. Is it like, floating?

[crosstalking]

**Jack:** That's- Oh, geez.

**Austin:** It's in the water.

**Jack:** Look at the map.

**Austin:** It's crashed into the planet. Look at the map. [light laugh]

**Ali:** Oh, where on the-

**Austin:** I'll move you- I will move you back over to the map.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Look at the north end of the map.

**Ali:** Oh, hey.

**Austin:** There's a moon up there now. [light laugh]

**Ali:** Sure is.

**Austin:** Um, and it like, goes off the side of the map. So...[Ali laughs] take that flat earth theory. I don't know what's goin' on up there, but there's land up there now beyond the Isles of Flight. There is new land from where the mystral had previously colonized. And I bet it's not in the best of shape, having crashed into Hieron. But it's also not the Heat and the Dark yet. So, we'll see. Um, [exhales] Lem, you were going to talk to Uklan Tel.

**Jack:** Uh, no I was gonna talk to Sunder.

**Austin:** Oh, Sunder. Right, right, right. Yes.

**Jack:** I was gonna- I was gonna brief everybody on what we-

**Austin:** Yeah. Ok. So, you find Sunder and Red Jack in a library. In one of the many libraries. I think this is like a um- This is a historical library. This is about like, history of civilizations.

**Jack (as Lem):** Hi, how's it going?

**Austin:** And Sunder leans close to you and says,

**Austin (as Sunder):** I've never seen him like this.

**Austin:** And Red Jack has- Red Jack has like, a bunch of his children around. So, Red Jack- Blue J has been the child we've been focusing on [Jack makes affirming noise 'mm'] because Blue J is the oldest of Red Jack's children. They are like, moving into maturity. A few others are- are like, low teens still. As a reminder, Red Jack's children grow up by way of interacting with strangers and being put into like, crisis- crisis-mode. Um, and he has been doing his best actually to protect them here.

There's been lots of stranger interaction and like, learning about the world, but not a lot of like- He's been shielding them as best as he can from like, combat encounters. Um, and- and has also not been particularly- [thought noise] He's allowed them to kind of live with other communities as best as he can, as Blue J gets older and older, and that becomes a stressor for him. Um, but also a thing that like, he needs to make sure that they grow up responsibly, and also hope that they don't turn into a person who will kill him, which is what happened in the past for Blue J- er for Red Jack, um, over and over and over again.

And so like, that has been where his attention is. But he does still spend time with his many offspring. His many spore offspring. And in this case, he has them running around the library collecting books for him and putting them on like, little carts and carting them over to him, and like, um, he's- They all have really bad bowl cuts. They're not very fashionable children. But he's like,

**Austin (as Red Jack):** No, I said volume seventeen.

**Austin:** [laughs] Uh, and one of his kids goes,

**Austin (as unnamed oni child):** Alright. I'll be right back!

**Austin:** And runs off. Um-

**Jack:** Patter, patter, patter, patter.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. Um, and yeah, Sunder's like,

**Austin (as Sunder):** I've never him like this before. He says he knows about Marielda first hand.

**Austin:** Or I guess she says,

**Austin (as Sunder):** -the City of First Light.

**Jack (as Lem):** Yeah. I got that impression. Like, he spent time there or- Must be a strange time for him.

**Austin (as Sunder):** [sighs] What have you learned?

**Jack (as Lem):** We spoke to the corpse. It- it was- I didn't like it, but we got some really-

**Austin (as Sunder):** You don't need to rationalize. I know how magic works. I know the costs. What did you learn?

**Jack (as Lem):** Ok, we actually- we learned a lot really. Um, but... they're engaged in a ritual. They're trying to summon this figure that they call the Advocate. And- and they have- They basically have all the pieces, Sunder. Like- all the pi- It sounded like a fucking pattern. Um-

**Austin:** Her eyes start to go wide, and she nods.

**Jack (as Lem):** They want um- They want a- a- [sighs] They call it like, a disposable sun, which is just horrible. Just a horrible sentence. Uh, they- they want um- Like, they want like, [exhales] I don't know if the word she used was flesh. Like, they want something they can mold to make a thing. I don't know what that is, but she seemed like she had it.

**Austin:** She says,

**Austin (as Sunder):** The alloy. It's what Uklan made.

**Jack:** Jesus.

**Jack (as Lem):** Ok. Great. Ok, so he's building them their Advocate. And- and they- they just need life. They need something to give it life. But they were- they were super confident about that because apparently someone's been writing up the Book of Life, just- just writing it all up. And then when they've got that-

**Austin (as Sunder):** He wouldn't- No, he knows how- We have to move immediately. Jack!

**Austin:** And Red Jack is like, already stepping towards you, and he's like, um- [light laugh] I think he's like- He looks over to one of his- his children, and he says,

**Austin (as Red Jack):** Produce my weapon.

**Jack:** [laughs] Patter, patter, patter, patter, patter.

**Austin:** Uh huh. Yeah, and then like, two of them come back holding this like, giant odachi that is- that is his sword. And like, holding it in [light laugh] their hands. And um, Sunder says like,

**Austin (as Sunder):** If he has copied that book- [exhales] He is maybe the only one in the world who could do that.

**Jack:** Is that it? Did they- did they have anything else? I'm just speaking out of character here, like-

**Austin:** No. That was-

**Jack:** -was there something else on the list?

**Austin:** It's the ring, the dragonbone- the, Samol's bones. Samol's bones, the ring, the alloy that he's made them-

**Jack:** And they want the book.

**[0:30:00]**

**Austin:** -and now this copy of the book that- that he is apparently making them or has made them. Which he has had access to because he gained access to it when he was repairing the Blade in the Dark because it was going to make it easier for him to do that.

**Jack:** Incredible. So, and I think we just like, snap-cut to like, the- the feet of these three people like, Lem running alongside Sunder, who's like striding ahead and like, Red Jack's massive um, like the odachi like, trailing behind him.

**Austin:** Uh hm. Uh hm.

**Jack:** Um, and Lem's just saying like,

**Jack (as Lem):** And look, I know in this moment of crisis, it doesn't seem like the most important thing, but they mark each other with-

**Jack:** And he holds out his arm like a circle and points to it.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Jack (as Lem):** So like, we can- You know, if we need to- to- They have a mark.

**Austin:** They nod and just keep walking right? Like-

**Jack:** Yeah, this is like- this is a problem for tomorrow if we get there.

**Austin:** Uh huh. You- And you get there. You get to his lab which is in the central tower. And the door is already open. And inside is Callowkeen who just looks up to you and says,

**Austin (as Callowkeen):** He's gone.

**Jack (as Lem):** Shit. Where? Are you tracking him?

**Austin (as Callowkeen):** I just tossed the place.

**Jack (as Lem):** Any sign?

**Austin:** He like lay- he like, tosses a journal on the ground and- er not on the- on a table, and he says,

**Austin (as Callowkeen):** It looks like today's the delivery date.

**Jack (as Lem):** Jesus.

**Austin (as Callowkeen):** They didn't leave a big window.

**Jack (as Lem):** Oh my god. Um, Red Jack, get Ace. Callowkeen, can you take to the sky? We need to find him.

**Austin:** Uh, they both just move, right? They don't waste a moment.

**Jack:** Yeah, there's just- there's just like, 'alright, here we go.'

**Jack (as Lem):** Ok, Sunder. What's the next step?

**Austin:** She looks at you, and she says like,

**Austin** (as **Sunder**): Lem, I've just learned- [pause] I've just learned that my... oldest living friend is working with a cult dedicated to the destruction of everything. You tell me. I wish Fantasma was here. [**Jack** laughs lightly]

**Jack** (as **Lem**): Ok. Do what you can and no more.

**Austin**: And she nods.

**Austin** (as **Sunder**): I will try something. I- [pauses] I'll be in the garden.

**Austin**: And she like, steps away to go to like, the basement that connects down to the garden, the underground garden. Um, Adaire and Hella, I think you probably like, in your walking around, see Callowkeen like, leap up into the sky, and you probably see Red Jack calling for- [light laugh] Everyone hears Red Jack call for Ace in the entire university. And Ace is loud. [Jack laughs lightly] Like thunderous sound as he- as he catches up with Red Jack.

**Jack**: What's Ace been doing? Does Ace hang out inside the kind of wall or does he just sort of like, walk around and graze and-?

**Austin**: I think he grazes and walks around, right? I think he's a pretty free range type of horse.

**Jack**: Hangs out on cemetery hill. Red Jack is loud enough to be able to summon him from anywhere.

**Austin**: From anywhere. [overlapping] Yeah, he has that late game upgrade.

**Jack**: [overlapping] None of this fuckin' Breath of the Wild bullshit. [light laugh]

**Austin**: Uh huh. Yes, a hundred percent. [light laugh]

**Jack**: So, does-

**Austin**: It doesn't do the teleport though. It does like, the loud rumbly [foley] ba-boom, ba-boom, ba-boom, ba-boom, ba-boom.

**Jack**: Oh, yeah. Ace is great. I'm a big Ace fan.

**Austin**: Love- Love the- Love the horse, yeah. Um, I think Barbelo howls also.

**Jack**: The fuckin' emu- the emu's-



**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** -terrified flapping, stepping out of-

**Austin:** Yeah. [Austin and Ali laugh] Ugh. God. I wish it was an ostrich so it could hide its head in the sand. Um, fucked up there. Uh, yeah. So, there is action. People are moving. And [exhales] like, I'm gonna add a clock to the- to the world here, in a sense. Uh, I think this is probably when all of you, you're moving into action or like- I don't know. Adaire and Hella, what are you two up to at this point in the- this like, late afternoon?

**Janine:** I just got a cool idea, but I don't know if I can actually pull it off. I don't know if the moving pieces move in the right way.

**Austin:** What's your cool idea? Let's see- we'll see where the pieces are.

**Janine:** Uh, I wanted to get something for Barbelo to smell, but I also-

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Janine:** -wanted to uh, somehow encourage Barbelo to do that thing. The thing he does.

**Austin:** Which thing? The-

**Janine:** Where he makes folks invisible.

**Austin:** Uh huh. Yeah, totally.

**Janine:** And be invisible [whispers] and go with Barbelo.

**Austin:** Uh huh. Yeah, no. I think that's a totally fine thing.

**Janine:** That sounds really fun.

**Austin:** Part of why I put Barbelo in the mix cause-

**Janine:** [laughs lightly] Good.

**Austin:** -when I first did prep for this, I was like, 'Oh, and they'll- they'll find Barbelo, and blah, blah, blah.' This was like, supposed to happen last session, and I just forgot that Barbelo was supposed to show up.

**Janine:** Get me some fuckin' Uklan Tel smell on stuff, and let's-

**Austin:** Uh huh. Yeah, so you just like, get some of Uklan Tel's stuff to smell. Great. Um, so y'all are prepped there. Hella, what are you up to?

**Ali:** Hella's busy, right? Like- [laughs]

**Austin:** You just- You're- So, you're staying. You're not going aft- You're not- You hear all this activity, and we- Do we get- So, what is the shot that we get that communicates that Hella is making sure people get homes instead of chasing after Uklan Tel? **[Ali exhales]** Or actually, let's get that on screen in a conversational sense. Like, Lem- Lem and Adaire like- the three of you cross paths at this moment, right? Like Hella-

**Janine:** Can she even hear shit over the crowd of people trying to get her attention?

**Austin:** Yeah. No, at this point- she just- if she walked um, Severe to like- to somebody else, that's close enough for where like, you heard Red Jack yell for Ace. You heard Ace [light laugh] thunder his way across the campus. What I mostly want is this conversation to happen on screen because it shouldn't- I mean, it can just be a couple of shots that show what you're indicating, but like, in the spirit of last season's 'no alibis', **[Ali laughs]** what I want is for Hella to enunciate that what her priorities are. Do you know what I mean?

Or to- or to actively- I mean, I guess we don't need to- we don't need to have it be a conversation. It really depends on what you, Ali, think is most interesting. Do you think it's more interesting for Hella to be like, 'I'm spending time doing this, and so I didn't even know this stuff was happening' which is a sort of like, dramatic irony? Or do you like it to be that she's making a con- a concerted decision not to go investigate what's happening and to like, stay here and like, focus on making sure people get homes?

**Ali:** It's tough cause I think the point at which Lem and Adaire would be like, 'hey, you should come with us'-

**Austin:** She would come.

**Ali:** She would drop everything, right?

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Ali:** Um, but I think she does see them- I- I mean, I think it is the thing Janine was saying, where like, she sees them running off and kind of, her eye like, follows them across whatever, and then someone's like, 'hey, excuse me.'

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** 'Excuse me.' Um, and she's like, 'Yeah. Yeah, what do you need?' And like, just gives them [Austin laughs lightly] her full attention again. Right?

**Austin:** Right.

**Ali:** Um-

**Austin:** I mean, on that note, there is another conversation here which is- Lem, what are you- Are you prepping to leave also?

**Jack:** Um, I- I just so that it's on screen, I've got Tel's journal-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -that Callowkeen mentioned. Um, it's rough, right? Because like, to say, 'ah, no. I'm gonna stay because I want to be able to be in the same place as Emmanuel, except for emergencies' is like, 'alright, well, when are these characters not considered to be-?'

**Austin:** Totally.

**Jack:** If- if we said 'except for emergencies', like, there's a situation in which Lem would just say, 'ah, no. It's always an emergency.' Or 'I'm- I'm off. I'm out.' Um, and I think that that is a mode that Lem operates in and has operated in very regularly. But when we last saw Emmanuel, there was a sense that both parties were gonna try and make a good faith effort to be like-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -'Alright, let's see. Let's see- let's see what happens here.' Um, so I think Lem is going to try and make that effort. But I don't think that that is inaction. I just think that that is- that's not being the away team. So, I think Lem is going to hold himself up in Tel's place and work on the journal and try and coordinate things with Callowkeen-

**Austin:** And so, he's not leaving.

**Jack:** No.

**Austin:** Um, do we get a scene of like, of Emmanuel recognizing this moment? Like, is this Emmanuel coming in to Uklan Tel's place and being like,

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** I heard- I heard things were going on. Are you ok? Do you need anything?

**Jack (as Lem):** Um, water, if you can spare it. It's- it's so hot in here. I'm gonna try and get as much of the windows open. Time mostly. I- I'm not going. I can't go.

**Austin:** He hands you a canteen and puts his hand on your face. And like, says,

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** It is so hot.

**Austin:** And I think at that moment, the same like, shade that covered you in the dream, covers you again as one of the two suns slowly begins to be blotted out. And I- this is a hard thing to imagine, but it is as if the sun is filling with blood. And you hear the rumble of thunder. And clouds start to form over head. And this one sun becomes this sickly red. I also think we probably get like, the great montage shot of- just like we saw the legs of people running across the campus before-

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** -we get that again for- for Callowkeen, kind of lifting up off the ground- the kind of shot. We get you know, Ace breaking into a full gallop. We get the legs of Adaire and Barbelo as they run through the woods and then disappear from sight. But you still see like, the leaves on the ground ruffled under them as they move past. You know, we get a lot of people moving into action, basically.

**Jack:** And then just like, a snap. Like-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -you know the way True Detective or Fargo have those- and um, Hereditary have those-

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** -snapshots that are so startling in their stillness?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Just this like, high crane shot of the university with these tiny figures moving.

**Austin:** Yeah. And it's in there that we see the sun. And it is maybe hard to imagine this, but it is as if this new, second sun begins to fill with blood. And I think outside, Hella, [light laugh] um, everyone I think reacts to this, not all at once, but there is this like, murmur that rises into yelling as people are pointing up at the sun and [light laugh] you see also that the second sun is filling with blood. And that's weird. What do you do?

**Ali:** I don't know. [laughing] I don't know what you do in this situation. Um-

**Austin:** Me, either.

**Ali:** Cause that's- Uh, that's really scary. Um-

**Austin:** It's certainly not comforting. [Ali laughs]

**Ali:** Yeah, it's- it's um- It's difficult to think of Hella as a comforting presence sometimes. [Austin laughs lightly] And when you think of just like, the scale of everything- I think she tries though, right? Like she- she recognizes that she's an authority.

**Austin:** Right. I mean I think specifically some guards will look at you at this moment, right? [Ali laughs] Like, 'what are we supposed to do, commander?'

**Ali:** God. Um, I- I mean, I think the first thing is like, just trying to get people to calm down. Um, and I don't know that like, shouting over a bunch of people to be like, 'hey, relax. We'll figure it out' is the best-

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Ali:** -thing to do. But like, what else do you do at that point? Um, yeah.

**Austin:** I think you hear someone like- I mean, I guess it's- it's one of those things where it's hard to understand the scale of this. Like, have you ever been in a city for like, a blackout or a-

**Ali:** Oh, yeah. Dude, I um-

**Austin:** Were you in-

**Ali:** -was at the Lord and Taylor where the-

**Austin:** Oh my god.

**Ali:** -Boston Marathon bombing happening. [light laugh]

**Austin:** Jesus Christ.

**Ali:** And I was at work when it happened, so yeah.

**Austin:** Wow.

**Ali:** Uh-

**Austin:** So, it's- but it's that feeling of like- it's- It isn't twenty people who are scared. [light laugh]

**Ali:** Yeah, no.

**Austin:** You know what I mean?

**Ali:** No, no, no.

**Austin:** Like, everyone is shook, and so you might have- you might be around- There might be forty people who you can see here, in the kind of courtyard below the central tower of the university. You know, there are people who are working out in the quad and people who are carrying stuff between different locations. And people were already a little shook because of the- Not a little shook. People are already very shook because of the second sun. Um, but now this is like- I think you probably hear one person tell another person like,

**Austin (as unnamed civilian):** This is- this is what I heard happened ten years ago.

**Austin:** You know? Someone who obviously did not see the sun disappear or- or who doesn't know what the fuck happened actually, but in their mind, they have- they heard it. This is it. This is definitely it. Um, and so there's lots of rumors that begin to spread. But the thing I'm trying to call attention to is just like, how could you even begin to address, not just the people inside the walls, but outside in all the refugee camps everywhere? How do you begin to get a message out that's about calming people down?

**Ali:** Um-

**Austin:** Or do you leave that to somebody else to do?

**Ali:** Well, I think that it's- it's kind of the same thing with- that she did before which is kind of like, find people who can help me and then spread it out.

**Austin:** Right.

**Ali:** Which is like, if guards are looking to her for answers-

**Austin:** Which they are.

**Ali:** -then she's gonna tell them, 'Each of you spread out and you know, try to reach out to people. Um, or just try to tell them that we're gonna take care of it. We're gonna find a place to put them, I guess.' [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah, they-

**Ali:** Is there like, space to put people inside, if they just needed to be inside at this point. Like, are there empty-

**Austin:** It would be-

**Ali:** -homes or buildings or like, things that are not used to put people in, but that you could just-

**Austin:** Not all- Again, the question would be like, who gets to come inside?

**Ali:** Right. Yeah.

**Austin:** Like, yes. There are- there are room- And I- One of things that you started doing um, before was that like, besides building completely new homes, it was like, converting parts of like, parts of classrooms that were completely filled with debris or that were just, you know, dusty and blocked off and unused into new dormitory space, and stuff like that. Like all that's ongoing, but like-

**Ali:** Right.

**Austin:** -that's not ready to happen. Like, you could pile more people into the city walls or into the star wall. Maybe that's the thing that- that Hella would know is like, anyone who's outside of the wall of stars could come inside the wall of stars, and it would be more cramped, but it wouldn't be that much more cramped.

**[0:45:00]**

**Ali:** Right.

**Austin:** You know? Um-

**Ali:** And then that's at least a layer of safety.

**Austin:** Yeah, even if it's bullshit. [Austin laughs lightly, while **Ali** laughs] Right? Like, even if whatever this is can pierce the star wall, it's still a very visible symbol of power and safety that-

**Ali:** Uh hm.

**Austin:** -the people outside might- When people inside are like, 'oh, they're bringing more people in here-' I mean, maybe they'll be mad because it's like, we- there's not enough space as it is, but maybe they'll also be like, 'oh, that means this wall is safer- [light laugh] is safe' [**Ali** laughs] you know? So, I think-

**Ali:** Yeah. I guess that's-

**Austin:** Go ahead.

**Ali:** -the order then which is like, you know, yell 'spread out and make a like, perimeter around the- the star wall, but let people in.'

**Austin:** Right. As you like, you know, you tell that to a couple of guards, and- and they disperse to go spread that word. You get- there's like, a messenger appears for you. I think it's probably actually Brother Hugh, one of Ephrim's retainers that he left behind. Um, and he's like,

**Austin (as Brother Hugh):** Uh, Ma'am? The lord Samot is calling for you. [Ali laughs]  
Should I send word that you're busy?

**Ali (as Hella):** Um, I- No, I should talk to- Uh, he- I should talk to him right now, if he knows about the sun thing.



**Austin:** [laughs lightly] If he knows about the sun thing, yeah. Um, great. Good. Brother Hugh, I'll let Sylvia<sup>1</sup> describe, but in my mind, the one thing I think is true about Brother Hu- Brother Hugh is that he- he's big. He got a big belly.

**Ali:** Ok.

**Austin:** He looks like he could like, take a hit and throw a hit. [Ali laughs] I think he has like a- I think he has bad facial hair. That's the other thing I know about Brother Hugh, and that's the only stuff I'm gonna tell Sylvia that they have to- that they have to stick to. [Ali laughs again] Otherwise, so- so Brother Hugh leads you- leads you inside and up the- up the stairs to the room that Samot has been living at- in, which does have a balcony facing to the north.

**Ali:** Mm.

**Austin:** And so, I think in there- one, there are- Like, you go into that room and there are- there's like, tea out. Um, but it's like, two tea cups because Severeas was here talking to Samot. But both of those are unattended as the two of them are both outside on the balcony, looking up at the sun. And Samot turns to you, and I don't- When was the last time you saw him in person?

**Ali:** I don't know that it-

**Austin:** Like, do you see him regularly or do you not see him like, ever?

**Ali:** I feel like I don't see him ever.

**Austin:** Ok, well then like, I think it's probably pretty striking to see the stars in him. And like, to see those like- the flash of that light, especially in his eyes as he turns around and faces you. And his hair is still fairly short. It's starting to grow back a little bit, but he looks like, ragged and scary in a way that does not line up with the kind of popular depiction of him inside of like, the- the religious depictions. Um, and I think he just says straight up like,

**Austin (as Samot):** What have you people been keeping from me? [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** And we'll come back to that in a second.

**Ali:** That's rich. [laughs]

**Austin:** Uh huh.

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

**Ali:** [laughing] God.

**Austin:** Yeah. Um, where do we go from here? Adaire. You are- you and Barbelo are invisible in the woods. I'm gonna move us back over to the- to the bigger map. Um, and I'm gonna say you got like, a head start on Red Jack, but Red Jack is on Ace and Callowkeen can fly. Um, so they're probably gonna beat you to the direction you're going, right? Does that seem fair?

**Janine:** Probably, yeah.

**Austin:** Um, but- but maybe they are- I think they're probably both professionals enough to know like, 'hey, we shouldn't just charge in.' [light laugh] 'We should make sure that like-' In fact, maybe at one point, Red Jack like- like, screams past you and is like,

**Austin (as Red Jack):** I will wait outside.

**Janine:** He's got a horse, so, yeah.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. Exactly. That's what I mean. Yeah. But he does tell you he will wait outside. He will not- you know.

**Austin (as Red Jack):** But hurry.

**Austin:** Or whatever. And so you do. You find- you find Red Jack and Callowkeen at the tree that Callowkeen- er- or you know, near the grove where the tree that Callowkeen talked about having seen Uklan Tel- or not Uklan Tel, the- the dragonbone flee to a few episodes ago. A few sessions ago. Um, I don't know if you remember this, but Lem was like, trying to press Callowkeen on- on what he knew from having flown around, and Callowkeen was the one who had said like, 'Oh, yeah. There's this tree. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.' And Red Jack is also just like, tracking Uklan Tel by being a good tracker, and that's what Barbelo is doing, too. And so, y'all end up I think like, in a little um, not a ditch- What's the right word? Like-

**Jack:** Creek. Hollow.

**Austin:** Creek is close. Hollow is what I'm looking for. Yeah, like a little- a little hollow. Overlooking this tree and then bey- behon- beyond that tree is like, another set of- just another treeline outside of that kind of um, break in the trees. What's the- what's the word I'm looking for now? I kept- I said alcove before, but that's wrong.

**Janine:** Clearing?

**Austin:** Like a clearing, yeah. There's like, a clearing with just this one tree in the middle that is very distinct. And then there, beyond that clearing is another set of trees and then some hills. And from here, I think maybe Callowkeen is the one who easily points this out. I think he says like,

**Austin (as Callowkeen):** There's a cave there.

**Austin:** And you can see that there is in fact, a small kind of shielded cave entrance that is- is kind of purposefully hidden behind some trees that- you know, you can't just move a tree, but it's- it's almost as if you can recognize that those trees were not- those trees are in an arrangement that had to be planted to grow in that way. They are like, a little too symmetrical. A little too like, aligned to try to break line of sight. But then yeah, there's the- the four of you, if you count Barbelo. [light laugh] Uh, hanging out. Just hanging out. You know, hanging out on a hollow, gettin' ready to storm a- the- a cult's regional office.

**Janine:** Yeah. Ugh. Um-

**Austin:** Also, you're invisible, if you want to be invisible because of Barbelo. Um-

**Janine:** Yeah, that was- that was the whole thing with bringing Barbelo. [laughs]

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Janine:** Was being able to have a good moment where I like, scruff his head around and be like, 'Hey, remember that last time when I tricked you with the dirt?'

**Austin:** This time I-

**Janine:** 'Let's do that again, but good this time.' [laughs]

**Austin:** [light laugh] Yeah. Uh huh. Yeah, no. I- That's just an ability that you can- you can have at this moment in- in this moment of peace. Or you could be visible for these other two people to see you. It's up to you in this part of the moment. Like, are you gonna like, compare notes first or are you gonna-?

**Janine:** Do you mean Red Jack and Callowkeen?

**Austin:** Red Jack and- Yeah, yeah, yeah. And Callowkeen.

**Janine:** Um, I imagine that yes, we should probably [laughing] compare notes for a second-

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Janine:** -before being invisible. Yeah, the- So, I- [laughs] I want to do the thing I like- [something digital goes off in background briefly] Oops. The thing that I never fuckin' do anymore cause I keep forgetting it's an option.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine:** I want to like, take a minute to fuckin' check stuff out and Discern Realities.

**Austin:** Good call.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Give me a roll for that. Give me your Discern Realities. What's that look like? You just kind of like, peering over the edg- the ridge and trying to piece some things together?

**Janine:** Yeah. I imagine that the big thing is like, Adaire notices the trees and like, having drawn a bunch of bad maps-

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine:** -realizes like, 'That's some weird shit.'

**Austin:** Yeah. Totally.

**Janine:** 'We need to take a second.'

**Austin:** Totally. For this answer, too, depending on how you- Let's see how you roll. And then I'll talk. [light laugh] That's an eight, so you get one of these questions. If you want to be like, 'I got this by invisibly sneaking up a little bit,' we can also- you can also do that, so, don't just think about questions that you could only answer from this distance is what I'll say.

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You know?

**Janine:** Um, ok. So, I get one question for an eight, don't I?

**Austin:** Yeah. Unless you have another move that gives you bonuses, but I don't think you do.

**Janine:** I don't think I do. Cause this isn't really a heist, and I'm not doing like, that kind of thing. So-

**Austin:** No. No.

**Janine:** Um, yeah. I don't think I have anything that- Ummm, let's see. I'm gonna say, 'What should I be on the lookout for?'

**Austin:** Um, boy. [exhales] Uh, alright so-

**Janine:** Could be there's like, a bone dragon, I don't know. [laughs]

**Austin:** I- I mean, so the thing that you- A couple of things. One, there is a lot of people in there. You're not the ranger, but you know how to count footprints in the dirt. A lot of people have gone in, and not a lot have come out. Two, you don't see another way out, which is always one of the first things you probably look for, especially if you were doing a heist-

**Janine:** Uh hm.

**Austin:** -is like, 'hey, my- my path of entry may be compromised. How do I have another path- path of egress or whatever?' And in this case like, as far as you can tell, you kind of walk the perimeter of this hill system, you don't see any other way out. And so, that's a little scary. So, it's- I mean, I can actually give you a number of how many people are in there based on counting footprints and assuming um- it's somewhere between ten and twenty people inside this place. I would probably- And- and it's a little confused because-

So, one, you definitely see that s- Mmm- You definitely see that someone was dragged in. At least one pair of- of feet were dragged in. Um, but you would know that those are not orcish feet, so they were- Uklan Tel was not dragged in here. They're smaller feet than that. Or they're different feet than that. I don't know how halfling feet look, but they're halfling feet like, sized drag marks and stomps. So, a halfling has been dragged in here at some point. And then there are just a mix of other like- You know, there are wharvers who are probably inside. There are probably a couple of elves inside. Some humans. Etcetera.

**Janine:** Ok.

**Austin:** You report that back to Callowkeen and Red Jack?

**Janine:** Yeah. Yeah, for sure.

**Austin:** I think Red Jack just like, you know, rests his hand on his giant sword and is like, you know, um,

**Austin (as Red Jack):** What is a dozen men?

**Austin:** He's not bothered by this number. Callowkeen is maybe a little more cautious. [Austin and **Janine** laugh quietly] Um, and is like- [pause] I think he's just like,

**Austin (as Callowkeen):** I'm gonna give this place one more pass in the sky. See if there's anything else.

**Austin:** And you can tell that that's one of those like, 'I hope that there's something else. I hope there's something else we can use to our advantage.' And he lifts off into the air. **Ali** in the chat, 'Me immediately: which draggable halfling do we know?'

**Janine:** We know too many is the thing.

**Austin:** [quietly] Uh hm.

**Jack:** We know- Yeah. I mean- [Ali laughs]

**Janine:** We know so many- Name a halfling we know that isn't draggable.

**Ali:** Hmm.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Hmm. There was that- Um, who was the like, terrifying zombie lady deep beneath Rosemerrow?

**Austin:** Oh, Rosemer- Uh, Rosalind Marrow- Marroweater?

**Jack:** Probably tricky to drag.

**Austin:** Probably tricky to drag, yeah. Uh hm.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Uh, Marisol Sweetwater, makes the newspaper. She seems nice.

**Ali:** Oh.

**Jack:** Easy to drag.

**Austin:** Easy to drag though. Yeah, true.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Different sort of draggable.

**Jack:** You know who a primo- primo-dragging candidate is?

**Austin:** Who's that?

**Jack:** Fuckin' Isaac.

**Austin:** Could be Isaac. Who could say? [Janine laughs]

**Ali:** Oh.

**Austin:** Draggable in every possible way.

**Jack:** [laughing] Yeah.

**Ali:** Uh oh.

**Jack:** When is he not being dragged?

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Jack:** Oh! Uh, real quick. I- I want to like- When we're talking about the- the sun filling with blood-

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** -are we talking about the- the color of the sun gradually becoming more blood red?

**Austin:** No, there's a liquid-

**Jack:** Or is there some change in viscosity? Or-

**Austin:** There is a- there is- It is as if- So, I imagine the sun as big and orange here. The sort of like, late afternoon sun you can actually look at at a distance.

**Jack:** Like, in winter.

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Exactly. Without it hurting your eyes, um, even just from the periphery. And it is as if there is a drip like- as if it is um- [exhales] as if it- as if you attached a straw- you pushed a straw into a glass bottle-

**Jack:** Aw, geez.

**Austin:** You know what I mean? And ran liquid through it.

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And it was like, running along the- the orb itself. Right? Like, and maybe that's part of that's-

**Jack:** Like, dripping down the edges and-

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, it's like, you can actually see the roundness in a way that it's- it's not just a disc because of the way it fills. It is-

**Jack:** So, even for communities who would have seen like, eclipses-

**Austin:** This is different.

**Jack:** -or you know, weird stuff with the-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -duel moons.

**Austin:** No, this is not-

**Jack:** This is like, deeply concerning.

**Austin:** This is extremely concerning. There is no doubt that this is bad. [Jack and Austin laugh lightly] And that other sun was- just happened. Like, today. This is all moving very quickly.

**Ali:** Uh hm. Uh hm. Uh hm.



**Austin:** They are not fucking around.

**Jack:** And this is a community that already you know, believes that the world is ending in some capacity.

**Austin:** Um, because it is, is the thing. [Austin laughs lightly, Ali starts laughing] Yes, they're accurate-

**Jack:** Right. [Janine and Jack laugh] Yes, it is.

**Austin:** -in some capacity, you know? Sure. Totally. For the record, Janine, I think that you're out like, here-ish. I'm gonna move this weird 'x' over to like, there. Can you see that kind of deep into the woods to the west-

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** -between the university and Wharfhurst?

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Cool. Alright. Um, let's talk about Lem real quick. Lem.

**Jack:** Hi.

**Austin:** We last left you in your studies, and Emmanuel having- you know, with Emmanuel. I imagine Emmanuel probably you know, gives you a kiss and a- like, a hug as like, 'I have to go help people.' Um, but not in a way that's like, judgy or like- He understands you are working on something important at this moment, you know? And that you're-

**Jack:** Right. And like-

**Austin:** -doing it safely from here.

**Jack:** -possibly he has also received a message from-

**Austin:** Oh yeah.

**Jack:** -one of the guards who Hella communicated-

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** Like, someone comes in and says like, 'Oh, Emmanuel, we need you-'

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** '-out- out cooking' or-

**Austin:** Yeah, I actually think one of the things that they've done is like- I bet that there was a moment today in the morning that was like, should we open up our like, extra water stores? And was like, 'no, we should-'

**[1:00:00]**

**Jack:** Mm.

**Austin:** 'Maybe this will all go away tomorrow. It's fine.' [Jack laughs lightly] And this is like, 'Open 'em up.' Like- [Austin and **Ali** laugh] ya know what?

**Jack:** Yeah, one hundred percent.

**Austin:** 'Let's make sure people are comfortable.'

**Jack:** I also think that like, with a character like Emmanuel, with- with someone who has- I mean, not in a narrative sense- With someone who has the character of Emmanuel-

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Jack:** -acting as a source of food and as a- as a cook in this community, in like, a precarious-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -circumstance, presumably seeing a cook working, even if they're not like, working-

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** -in the kitchen would be like, a calming- In the same way that when weird stuff is happening on a flight, and the flight attendants look chill-

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** -that's a good sign.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** Um, so like, having Emmanuel out there is probably the best place for him to be.

**Austin:** Yeah. Lots of people know him from this, you know? He has gained a re- not like a reputation in like the- not like, 'ah, yes. World class chef, Emmanuel,' but like-

**Jack:** He's like, the kind cook.

**Austin:** Yeah, exactly. People like him for that reason. People like to eat. Um, and that's especially for people inside of the walls. But I'm sure he's actually-

**Jack:** Uh hm.

**Austin:** -he's probably made an effort to go to the various refugee camps, too. And so, I think he begins kind of a tour of people, starting inside and then working his way out. And like, overseeing best practices and stuff like that. Um-

**Jack:** Right. Yeah.

**Austin:** What are you doing? So, you're still in Uklan Tel's place.

**Jack:** Yeah. Um, I think I'm trying to- I'm trying to find some kind of like, um avenue to pursue.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Jack:** To be like, 'alright, fine. We know he's fled.'

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** 'We know he is- [laughs] We know he's not here. We know he's working with the cult in some way.' And I think it's just this kind of like- Lem is trying really hard not to panic.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** But the panic is kind of building inside him as he's trying to do the deeply unpleasant task-

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** -of trying to find a consistent throughline in another researcher's work.

**Austin:** Right. And so I think you- you have a couple of things here. Like, wha- Oh, just as a reminder, Sunder was here with you also, but then she left to go to the- the underground-

**Jack:** Uh hm.

**Austin:** -garden to- to try to do something. We don't know what yet. And then-

**Jack:** Yeah, she was just like, 'Alright. Peace. I've got work to do,' right?

**Austin:** Yeah, or uh- I- She said she had an idea. So, she is like- she is working on a specific thing. It's not just- She's not just like, 'well, time to go you know, [light laugh] catch up on my to-do list,' [Ali and Jack laugh] She is- Yeah, she is off doing something and maybe we'll find out.

**Jack:** She's also feels deeply betrayed right now, right?

**Austin:** Betrayed and also just like, bummed. Ya know? Just bummed.

**Jack:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Austin:** Uh, but you- you also- So, you have some of her notes and some of her things here that she left behind for you. You also have Red Jack's stuff that he was looking at, including whatever it was that made him like, jet away. And then you have um- you have all of Uklan Tel's stuff here, too. So you have lots of books and lots of notebooks and paperwork and sketches and formulae and stuff like that. And you also have the entire library of this university at your disposal. So, you have a lot to work with in terms of pure info.

**Jack:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Austin:** Do you want to do something to like, look at that stuff and try to piece some stuff together and then see if there's like, a thread to pull on?

**Jack:** Yeah, I- I think I'd like to start with what Red Jack saw.

**Austin:** Sure. Um-

**Jack:** To just be like, when something terrifies Red Jack-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -that is a cause for concern, even for Lem who hasn't really spent a lot of time with Red Jack.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** I assume that Lem knows like- knows the unique characteristics of Red Jack that would mean that he is not predisposed to fear.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Um, and so when that is experienced, I think Lem kind of just like, gets up from the desk where he was sitting and goes over to where Red Jack was working. I mean, what am I- what am I ro- What would I be-?

**Austin:** So, for this, I don't think you're gonna roll anything cause I think it's easy to see where-

**Jack:** Oh, hell yeah.

**Austin:** -Red Jack left his book open, right? Um, and it might not be a thing that means anything to you actually. Uh, yeah. It's an account- it's an account- it's one of Uklan Tel's books that is about post-Marielda history. It's like, one of a handful of things that includes- and when I say one of his books, I don't mean one he wrote. Um, though actually maybe it is, 'cause he wrote the definitive Marielda history. So maybe it is a manuscript that he was working on, and it's about post-Marielda history.

**Jack:** Like, the Illustrated Concordance Two

**Austin:** Yes.

**Jack:** Beyond an Illustrated Condorance.

**Austin:** Yeah. Exactly. Exactly that. And he's had trouble with it because the Erasure quote, unquote has made it really hard to get first hand accounts and actually accurate information. And also because he has not like, toured the world and gone to a lot of these places-

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** -to do firsthand you know, archaeology and stuff like that. But there is an account that is like, about the southwest of the continent. South of where you see Kanton marked on the map here, if we're- Are we still on the university? We are still on the university. We moved back here.

**Jack:** Uh hm.

**Austin:** Um, like to the west of- of Marielda, in between the kind of island where I've written Dark Son question mark, where the lighthouse is all the way on the far west, south of Kanton, there's this big like, sub-continent. And there is something called like, 'The Scorching of the Sub-continent'. Um, and it's Uklan Tel trying to piece together what happened that turned the soil there black permanently and made it a place where very little grew. That just like, devastated that part of the continent in terms of its fertility, not in terms of like, life in the- Like, it's not- the- the Heat and the Dark didn't destroy it in the way that say the- the beach on- in Rosemerrow did. But something happened here, and-

**Jack:** Mmm.

**Austin:** -and I think the thing that Uklan Tel doesn't understand is why it stopped happening. It's like, 'and then one day, it seemed to have stopped. It didn't spread further north. Who knows?' And you know, that seems to be the section that Red Jack hit that clicked things into place for him a little bit.

**Jack:** Do I know anything about- We've talked in the past about how like, it's very difficult for citizens of Hieron to know a lot about bits of Hieron that are far away-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -because they're- comparatively really far. What do I know about what is south, down there where Kanton question mark is kind of-

**Austin:** I don't- I think like-

**Jack:** -mapped?

**Austin:** Kanton is a place that you should- you know is a big like, Wharven-

**Jack:** Wharven hub?

**Austin:** -hub. Yeah. And that like- but even there, you're like, 'is it caves? Is it-? Do they have big tents? Is it underground?'

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** You don't know.

**Jack:** Right. It's- it's- like, definitely something I've seen like-

**Austin:** Or, that's not fair.

**Jack:** -four drawings of and each one was different.

**Austin:** Sorry, you can Spout Lore is the actual answer to this. This is how this game works is you can roll Spout Lore-

**Jack:** Oh right. Yeah, sure.

**Austin:** -and you can tell me what you know. [light laugh] Or we can talk about what you know. Um, so that's when you consult your accumulated knowledge about something, roll plus INT.

**Jack:** Yeah, I'm gonna do that because there's this huge empty space down there that like-

**Austin:** There really is. That we've never been to. One of the four corners of this world.

**Jack:** Apparently it's bad.

**Austin:** Yeah. Or it was at least then, right?

**Jack:** Uh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Ok. So, Spout Lore.

**Austin:** That's a four.

**Jack:** Oh my god.

**Austin:** Oh, buddy.

**Jack:** The land remains a mystery.

**Austin:** Wow. Wow. Wow, you got a four on that roll, huh? Um-

**Jack:** It's hard move time, right?

**Austin:** It is. So, I mean, I think this is- [exhales] You don't know. And I think maybe part of this ends up being like, you realizing how little you know about this-

**Jack:** Mm.

**Austin:** -and about- So, I think like the immediate negative you're gonna take here is you're gonna take 'stunned' the- the intelligence debility.

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** So, hit that. Which is really gonna make all this other research you do just fantastic. [light laugh] It ends up-

**Jack:** Holy hell, that was even with a plus one forward.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah, you rolled a one and a one.

**Jack:** I [laughs] rolled a one and a one.

**Austin:** Plus one for your intelligence plus one forward is a four.

**Jack:** That's literally the worst roll I could make.

**Austin:** The- It is. And I- I think I like this a lot because like, I don't know. Lem is an archivist, and we often talk about archivists as like, um, iconographers or explorers or archaeologists and very hands-on ways, but we don't really get that from Lem that often. Um, we get-

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** -we've gotten, especially lately, a lot of librarian Lem. A lot of like, 'I understand how the Archive works or how you know, the library works or where to find the books so I can study old things,' but like, I think this is you hitting the limits of that. Red Jack can put something-

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** -together here that you never can because you've never experienced this. And then this spreads.



**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** This feeling begins to chase you as you try to put together other stuff, right? You're- you're looking through all of these notes over the next hour or two, and you're like, 'I don't have the experience [exhaled light laugh] firsthand. I'm missing this.'

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** If only you could go. If only etcetera, etcetera, but you can't. So.

**Jack:** Like, Lem is very much a northwesterner. Um-

**Austin:** Right. [laughs]

**Jack:** Like, he knows Velas. He knows Nacre. He knows the university and the Archives and the Isles of Flight. And like, maybe down to Wharfhurst.

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** And like, it's very startling. It's this- it's this real like, kind of yawning moment of- of concern for Lem to like, feel the scale of the continent-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -um, and how much of it he hasn't- he just straight up hasn't seen. And I think there's a bit of panic there because he's also like, 'it's going to go'.

**Austin:** Right. Well, also, I want to be clear- it can also be- it's also- I think you're right, it's the scale of the continent, and it's also the scale of time. Like, in two different ways. You've been around a substantial amount of time in your life at this point. And it becomes very clear to you that if things had gone differently, you only ever would have known the northwest. You would have never-

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** -even thought to ask, 'what goes on down in Kanton or below that?' And also, now that you've been to lower strata, now that you know what the lamina are, like-

**Jack:** Oh jeez.

**Austin:** -how do you even begin to know the world from just a library, you know?

**Jack:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Austin:** And you know, not to put too fine a point on it, but there is a degree to which this feels a little bit like the speech that Fero gives to Uklan Tel, which is like, 'you gotta get out in the world somehow. You can't solve it in here.' [Jack laughs quietly] And to that end, I want you to take-

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** -plus one forward on the next reckless thing you do. [Ali and Janine laugh quietly]

**Jack:** Oh damn. [laughs] Ok.

**Austin:** So.

**Jack:** Alright. Yeah. I'm gonna write this in my look box just so it's the first thing I see-

**Austin:** Totally. Totally.

**Jack:** -when I open my character sheet. Um, plus one forward on next reckless action.

**Austin:** Uh huh. Do you know what that is or do you want to come back?

**Jack:** I think I want to come back to that.

**Austin:** Ok. Hella.

**Ali:** Hey.

**Austin:** I think Severeas immediately is like,

**Austin (as Severeas):** Woah, slow down.

**Austin:** To Samot, but uh, I think he like, walks back into the room and like, he- When he comes back into the room, he like, effortlessly, and I don't even know where it was, but like, picks up a cape and puts it on. [Austin and Ali laugh lightly] Like, you don't- It was hanging on something, but it was- then it was on his neck. Then it was around his neck, and he's like, getting ready to do shit. And is still wounded, to be clear. But um, there is this like, sense of anger that you see on his face. It's the same look of resolution that Hadrian saw you know, months ago at this point.

But you've never seen that on his face before. And also, now he has glowy, yellow eyes. Like, star eyes. So.

**Ali:** Mmm. Well. Um, I don't know. I think Hella's mad in this moment. I don't know if- [laughs] I don't know if she would say it right here. Um, but I think Hella's kind of attitude about this has been like, 'well, Samot can decide when he gets out of bed.' [laughs] Um-

**Austin:** Mm. Uh hm.

**Ali:** But I don't know. As offended as she is, I don't know that she would be snide-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** -if he is like, immediately going into like, you know, action mode to begin with.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Ali:** Um, so I think she does try to fill- fill him in, and be like,

**Ali (as Hella):** There was this dragon the other day. [Ali laughs] They took this ring. We've been dealing with something called the Dark Sun. Um, I don't know- I don't know how much you know. I-

**Austin:** His- I think like, [exhales] he halts in place and says,

**Austin (as Samot):** It is not your fault, but [exhales] if I had known, I could have gotten involved and could have helped. Where are- [pauses] Do we know where they are?

**Ali (as Hella):** The cult? Or-

**Austin (as Samot):** The cult.

**Ali (as Hella):** A lot of them are here. Um-

**Austin (as Samot):** Are here. In this- [pauses] I see.

**Ali (as Hella):** They've been appealing to our people, residents.

**Austin:** He nods. I think Severeas says,

**Austin (as Severeas):** If we have a location, we can move troops there fairly quickly.

**Ali (as Hella):** I know- I know Adaire and Red Jack just headed off somewhere and could probably use the backup while- while my men are dealing with- with everyone else.

**Austin:** Samot says,

**Austin (as Samot):** While we're at it, are there other things that [pauses] require attention?

**Ali (as Hella):** The sun is really a priority. Um- [Ali laughs] We just don't have enough to- to do anything quickly. So, it just needs to get fixed.

**Austin:** Um, I think he nods and says,

**Austin (as Samot):** Alright. Severea, can you find a lead?

**Austin:** And she says,

**Austin (as Severea):** I've already sent my people. Don't worry about it.

**[1:15:00]**

**Austin:** And she has like, you know- there are a handful of her guards who have already begun combing the woods, but they don't know exactly where- where people are going. So, it's like, 'alright. Is this- is this Ace's hooves? Like, 'is this the direction we should go in? What's going on?' Um, and I think we like, get- Samot calls in one of Ephrim's other retainers to help put on real-ass plate armor and like, he says,

**Austin (as Samot):** I should be ready soon. Would you prefer to attend to things here or come with me?

**Austin:** And he's talking both to you and Severea.

**Ali:** [laughs] I- I think Hella like, looks at Severea.

**Austin:** She looks at you and like, is restraining an eye roll. [Ali laughs] Um, like, you know that picture of two women touching hands [Ali laughs again] and being like, 'Uh hm.'

**Ali:** I do know that picture.

**Austin:** 'Uh hm.' It's that moment. Uh huh. [laughs lightly] I don't know how you find that picture. I don't- [laughs] [typing] [Ali laughs] Uh- Oh! Do-

**Ali:** Um, go on Austin Walker's twitter.com and scroll through media for long enough. [Austin and **Janine** laugh]

**Austin:** It is uh- it is- I did a search. It's- There's a tweet from Kristen Arnette on Twitter. [Ali laughs] [Kristen\\_Arnette](#). [laughing throughout] 'Gently touching your friend's hand because you've spotted someone acting like a asshole, and you want to talk about it later.' [Ali laughs quietly] Great tweet. A tier tw- A tier- S tier tweet, honestly. [Ali laughs again] God.

**Ali:** I'm glad I get to have this moment because I think Hella's [laughing] super lost.

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Ali:** I- Uh, well, I think the thing that she does ask, which- cause she doesn't care, um,

**Ali (as Hella):** Are- are you sure you're able to fight? I'm- I could certainly go, [Austin exhales a short laugh] if you stayed here instead. Or-

**Austin:** Wow. [laughs] [Ali and Janine laugh] Extremely good. I think he says- How does he frame this? He says, um,

**Austin (as Samot):** The Cult of the Dark Son is less than an echo of- of someone I defeated a long time ago. On my worst day, I would need no assistance ruining them. And now?

**Austin:** And his eyes flare.

**Austin (as Samot):** There will be no contest.

**Ali:** Great. [Austin and Janine laugh lightly]

**Austin:** And you can tell like, part of his anger is absolutely that like, he knows Maelgwyn is dead twice, right?

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And the idea of like- I mean, you can't tell this, but the reader can- the listener can. You, **Ali**, can know that like, that anger comes from- I mean, I guess Hella knows bits of this certainly, you know? Knows-

**Ali:** Uh hm.

**Austin:** -knows the broad strokes that like, at least they could have fuckin' done him the justice of like, dispersing after his son was killed a second time. [Ali laughs] You know?

**Ali:** Oh, villainous cults. They're so inconsiderate.

**Austin:** Seriously. [**Austin** and **Ali** laugh] Um, and I think Severeas says like,

**Austin** (as **Severea**): As soon as my people are back, I'll tell you where to go.

**Austin:** And he shoots her a glance, and she's like- does like a little shug- like a like a mean-ish glance, and she does like, a little shrug and heads out the door. Like, 'what more do you fuckin' want from me, bro?' [Ali laughs] 'Come the fuck on.' And heads out and begins to like, have the the smaller- I mean, she didn't come with like, the whole squad, right? Um, and so I think she like- but she does do- help you with some logistics stuff. And uh, continues to kind of just like, support and wait for news on exactly where to send Samot, apparently.

**Ali:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Um, but we know where that is. And Adaire, what are you doing there at this point? I think Callowkeen will have come back down, and I think he actually tells you- you and Red Jack like,

**Austin** (as **Callowkeen**): There is a weird lookin' hilltop. It looks- it looks fake to me. Something uh, something about the way the light is hittin' it. Not quite- not quite the way uh- the rest of the hills look right now.

**Janine** (as **Adaire**): Hmm. Ok.

**Austin** (as **Callowkeen**): Not helpful, I know.

**Janine** (as **Adaire**): [light laugh] Well, you know, it's um- Hmm. Red Jack, I'd be open to some feedback here. We're kind of operating on an hourglass, and the hourglass is the

sun filling up with blood. [Austin laughs] Do you want to- [exhales] Should- should we go in on this-

**Austin:** [overlapping I think he stands up.

**Janine** (as **Adaire**): -or should we scope out that hill?

**Austin:** I think he stands up, and he says,

**Austin** (as **Red Jack**): You're right. We've taken too long as it is.

**Janine** (as **Adaire**): [hesitation noise and then laughing] Ok. [Jack laughs] That's not what I was asking, but um-

**Austin** (as **Red Jack**): If you wish to climb the hill and see if there is an alternative entrance, then very well. But we do not know what they do. Nor if-

**Austin:** And he kind of looks up vaguely at the sun, and says like,

**Austin** (as **Red Jack**): -if the blood dripping now will turn to pour soon enough. Rituals like this are not symmetrical. They do not follow along cleanly. Sometimes things speed up. I prefer that it is I who does that.

**Janine** (as **Adaire**): That's fair. Oooook.

**Janine:** Um, mmm. [laughing] Ok.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine:** Ok. Alright. I really want to- I really want to check out that hill.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine:** I also am concerned about being the person who gets Red Jack murdered.

**Austin:** Fair. [laughs lightly]

**Janine:** Ya know, I got a pretty thin reputation as it is. That's a big hit to take. [Austin and Janine laugh]

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Janine:** I don't suppose he's gonna let me borrow his horse, huh?

**Austin:** You make the ask?

**Janine:** Would speed things up. Um-

**Jack:** Ace seems like they - they could- they could understand-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -the situation demanded another rider.

**Janine:** Ok. I'm gonna ask about- Yeah, I think Adaire uh- I think you know, checking out a hill is way easier if you can just ride-

**Austin:** [overlapping] Ride to the hill. Yeah. Uh hm.

**Janine:** -up, circle around it, and- and get the hell back. Um, and scope shit out, if that's cool.

**Austin:** Um, he says like,

**Austin (as Red Jack):** Very well, but you take care of Ace.

**Austin:** And then he like, puts his head- his forehead on Ace's forehead- or nose or big mouth. And- and Ace goes like, [horse foley] 'mmrrrr' or whatever horses do. And then like, clops over to you and is like, 'Alright. Hi.' [Janine laughs] Barbelo looks up at you and goes like, [foley of dog whining].

**Janine:** Can I hold Barbelo in one arm and the reins in the other arm and be a cool dog and horse lady?

**Austin:** Is that a thing? It's a pretty-

**Janine:** I don't know.

**Austin:** It's not a tiny dog.

**Janine:** Oh, is- I thought Barbelo was like a- like a terrier or something.

**Austin:** No. No.



**Jack:** [laughs] What? No. [Ali laughs]

**Janine:** Why did I think that?

**Jack:** Barbelo's like an Irish Wolfhound, right?

**Janine:** Oh.

**Austin:** That's not- that's not what I was thinking either.

**Janine:** No?

**Austin:** Er actually, yes it was. That's exactly what I was thinking. That's what that is. Yes, an Irish wolfhound. A white Irish wolfhound is one hundred percent what I'm thinking.

**Janine (as Adaire):** Ok. I mean, Barbelo, you have legs. You can keep up.

**Austin (as Barbelo):** [makes sad whining noise]

**Janine (as Adaire):** I've seen you book it.

**Austin (as Barbelo):** [makes sad whining noise]

**Austin:** And he goes,

**Austin (as Barbelo):** Rrr.

**Janine (as Adaire):** Are you tired? Are you getting old- gettin' old?

**Austin:** And then like, he goes,

**Austin (as Barbelo):** Rrr.

**Austin:** And then turns invisible.

**Janine:** [laughs] Ok.

**Austin:** And then you see the footprints go over to- to the uh- the horse.

**Janine:** Ok.

**Austin:** So, he'll follow along.

**Janine:** He could- he could hang out with Red Jack, too, if he wants.

**Austin:** Um, no. No. It's fine.

**Janine:** But it's- I appreciate it.

**Austin:** You take off on this horse and begin to like- I guess Callowkeen- Oo, Callowkeen's kind of torn here.

**Janine:** I have an idea to propose to Callowkeen about this-

**Austin:** Please.

**Janine:** -process. One- I was thinking if Callowkeen was at the entrance to take advantage of the bottleneck, which we may not actually have a bottleneck, but uh- if we end up having a bottleneck, rather than Callowkeen like, diving in-

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine:** -if Red Jack's taking people head on, Adaire is invisibly backstabbing-

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine:** -and Callowkeen picks off the- the people who try and slip out.

**Austin:** Mm. Yeah.

**Janine:** Callowkeen can also fuckin' fly so...

**Jack:** Oh, like from above?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** You know.

**Austin:** And presumably has a gun we haven't seen yet.

**Janine:** Yeah. So, I mean that seems like a good way to take care of some stragglers.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Maybe accidentally kill an innocent person, [laughing] but hopefully that won't come up.

**Austin:** Uh huh. I think he's down with that plan, yeah.

**Jack:** Do Golden Lance members have like, unique weapons? Remind- is- Was that only the Marielda characters?

**Austin:** No, the- I guess they do have- They- Mmm. All of the ones we've seen here have that type of gun, basically.

[crosstalking]

**Jack:** The like-

**Austin:** With the note that-

**Jack:** -awful like, laser blaster.

**Austin:** -Throndir's is different, which suggests that yes, there is still some degree of specialization. Or like- or like-

**Jack:** Ok.

**Austin:** -unique version, you know? But they are all still based on whatever that core technology is or magic, so that- which only they have access to. Um, so you know, maybe his is different. Did you have like- were you like, 'oh, I wonder if it's like this for him?' Or you're just curious.

**Jack:** No, I was just wondering what like, what like, Callowkeen-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** I mean, what's- what does uh- He's Columbo, right?

**Austin:** He's like, Columbo who paints and is a- is like, a flying fox slash gnoll.

**Jack:** Is Columbo armed?

**Austin:** Columbo probably has a gun, right?

**Jack:** I'm gonna google Columbo gun. [typing] Columbo gun. Um-

**Austin:** Yes, he has- In fact, he carries a-

**Jack:** He rarely carries a gun, apparently.

**Austin:** Yeah, it's a specific thing though, I think... Mm.

**Jack:** Did Columbo ever carry a gun?

**Austin:** Internet?

**Jack:** Columbo hates guns.

**Austin:** Nice.

**Jack:** Doesn't carry one and gets a colleague to take his gun test on his behalf-

**Austin:** Oh, that's very- [laughs]

**Jack:** -in 'Forgotten Lady.'

**Austin:** That's very good. [Janine laughs]

**Janine:** I need to watch Columbo.

**Austin:** Yeah. Um, which I do think fits here? With Callowkeen's entire vibe. But also, it's the end of the world, and I imagine-

**Jack:** And the Golden Lance are cops.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Janine:** Yeah, Columbo wasn't like a-

**Jack:** Yeah, like-

**Janine:** -wasn't like a magic cop. He was just a normal cop.

**Austin:** I don't know. I've seen-

**Janine:** He just had to deal with normal things.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Janine:** It wasn't the end of the world, and there wasn't a Dark Son cult.

**Austin:** Yeah, fair.

**Jack:** Golden Lance bowcaster.

**Austin:** [light laugh] Yeah, basically.

**Janine:** He was living a life where he could-

**Jack:** [overlapping] Golden Lance bowcaster-

**Janine:** -be married to Kate Mulgrew, so he- you know.

**Austin:** Uh hm. Uh hm. I actually do- I like- I like the idea of it being- Bowcasters are cool, first and foremost. [Ali laughs quietly in back] Chewbacca already knows what the fuck it is.

**Jack:** We should-

**Austin:** But I actually like the idea of it being a sort of thing where it is like a crossbow-y type thing where he's loading different types of-

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** -ammunition, you know? Maybe it'll come up. Maybe it won't. Who knows? We'll see. But he's willing to guard the- the entrance here and kind of keep an eye on things from above. He does like-

**Janine (as Adaire):** Um, can we- can we agree on a symbol, just in case- in case for instance, there is a captive or something who I have to tell, 'get the hell out of here before you get murdered.'

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh uh.

**Janine (as Adaire):** That if someone like, runs out with um- maybe with like, one arm behind their back-

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine (as Adaire):** -in a way that's like, really awkward looking, then that person's cool.

**Austin:** Yeah. sure.

**Janine:** Ok. [laughs] I just-

**Austin:** He says,

**Austin (as Callowkeen):** Yeah, that sounds good.

**Janine:** Ok.

**Austin:** Uh, yeah. Totally. Something weird is happening in this moment which is the- the original sun is setting all the way, but the second sun is not.

**Janine:** Ok.

**Austin:** The second sun is like, still holding in place-

**Janine:** Oh, great.

**Austin:** -as it fills with blood. You ride a horse up a hill.

**Janine:** Yay. [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Um, and you get to the part where Callowkeen explains where it is, and you see that like, the- the hill is flat actually. Like it's- it- There is like, a- I don't think tarps have been invented in the way we think of tarps, but a tarp- a tarpaulin like sheet has been laid on top of it. Uh, it's a tarp. It's a tarp, but there's-

**Janine:** Probably a canvas. It'd be a canvas. [inaudible]

**Austin:** But there is-

**Jack:** It's canvas.

**Austin:** It is canvas, but it's not just painted. It has like- there is an illusion magic on this that would make it from a long distance- it like, projects up a hill, if you're looking at it from another hill, from the side. It's only when you get close to it that you can see that it is fake. Um, so yeah. There this huge- it's huge. Like, it's the top of a hill. It's like, you know, acres? It's like an acre big or something. A square acre. Or I guess a circular acre in this case. Um, and it is- it is a canvas. Totally.

**Janine:** And it's just like, laid out on the ground?

**Austin:** It is the ground. It's like someone chopped the top of this hill off.

**Janine:** Ok.

**Austin:** And like, if you- you go up- You go to ride up a little bit more, and the horse knows. Like, 'no, I will fall through this canvas.'

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** And stops. And then you look at it and can see that it is just like canvas that has been enchanted with illusion magic or- or apparative magic. To use the word we use in our fiction. So, yeah. And from this distance, we can hear people chanting below- from below this canvas, uh tarp.

**Janine:** Right. Ok.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine:** Cool. Uh, fantastic. I'm gonna go back, [laughs] I think.

**Austin:** Oh yeah? You're not gonna like, try to peek? You're not gonna try to-

**Janine:** No, I figure this is some kind of weird, fake tarp ceiling so they can pray to their blood sun or whatever.

**Austin:** Yeah, you got it. Uh huh.

**Janine:** [Janine and Ali laugh] And I don't want to like, peek in and be like, 'hey, ritual. What's up?'

**Austin:** [laughs] Ok. Ok. Alright.

**Janine:** 'My name's Adaire. I left my dog back there. One second.' Um-

**Austin:** But I want to give you- You don't want to- you don't want to do- I guess, are you afraid of rolling because of what could happen if you roll bad here?

**[1:30:00]**

**Janine:** [laughing] I just- I just feel like there's- there is- Maybe I'm taking for granted that there's a kind of clarity to what this giant tarp is for.

**Austin:** No, you got the basics. But like-

**Janine:** But it seems- it- Yeah.

**Austin:** You got the- Yeah, no. You got it. You are a hundred percent.

**Janine:** It seems very silly for Adaire to be like, 'well, they went in this cave in this tree or whatever-'

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Janine:** '-and I don't know where they are. And there's this big tarp-'

**Austin:** Totally.

**Janine:** '-and they're doing something with the sky, but they're not looking at the sky. That's very strange.'

**Austin:** Totally.

**Janine:** Like, it seems- I just- I want to get this going [laughs] is the thing.

**Austin:** Ok. Alright. I didn't know if you were gonna try to get it going from here or if you wanted to go through the front entrance. That's really what it came down to.

**Janine:** I don't have my invis- Oh, wait. I do have the invisibility dog.

**Austin:** You do have the invisibility dog.

**Janine:** Right.

**Austin:** Yes.

**Janine:** I still have to give Red Jack the signal though.



**Austin:** Fair.

**Janine:** Red Jack's waiting, right? Like, I'm not just gonna dive in and hope that he intuit's that I'm in a fuckin' fracas.

**Austin:** No, yeah. Totally. Um-

**Janine:** He's cool, but he's not like, a psychic.

**Austin:** No, he is not a psychic.

**Janine:** He's an oni.

**Austin:** No, oni. Yeah, no. Um, alright. So, you want to ride back?

**Janine:** Yeah.

**Austin:** Ok. [Austin and Janine laugh lightly] That's what's goin' on in there. It's one of those places. You know, cult chamber.

**Janine:** Yeah, they- Yeah. I'm gonna report back and mention like, 'I don't know what the depth of the walls are. Maybe they can climb out of that. Maybe they can't, but-'

**Austin:** Uh, you do know the depth because you climbed it from the outside, right? It's pret- You were pretty high up. You were storeys and storeys up. It would be hard for them to climb up it.

**Janine:** Ok.

**Austin:** Unless there were-

**Janine:** Maybe they have ladders. I don't know.

**Austin:** Right. I was gonna say-

**Janine:** I didn't peek.

**Austin:** -unless they have specific ladders. I know you didn't peek. I know. [Janine laughs] Well- I would have given you some more.

**Janine:** I'm just opening that- Yeah. I'm just- I'm just laying the groundwork there of like, 'be prepared-'

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine:** '-there was- it's gonna be weird in there.'

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Janine:** Callowkeen, maybe keep an eye.

**Austin:** Yeah. Um, at this moment, the sun- the second sun does begin to set. Wait. No. Only the bottom half does. The top half stays where it is. Which means that it slowly changes its shape until it is no longer a sun filling with blood, but an egg filling with blood.

**Ali:** Uh oh. Nope. [laughs]

**Janine:** Ok.

**Jack:** Uh oh.

**Ali:** Excuse me.

**Jack:** Uh oh.

**Austin:** Uh, Lem.

**Jack:** Uh oh.

**Austin:** How are your studies goin', bud?

**Jack:** Uh, the sun turned into one of the worst things that a sun can be.

**Austin:** [laughing] Uh hm.

**Jack:** [laughs] I think that- I think- So, I think what actually happens is like, Lem is- is stunned and frustrated by what he saw-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -and by his inability to kind of make any sense of it.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** And- but he has learned from the time he spent in Aubade and from the kind of- the mistakes he made during his research in Aubade, so he's like, 'I'm gonna stand out- up. I'm gonna go outside.'

**Austin:** Uh hm. Uh hm.

**Jack:** 'I'm gonna get some fresh air. I'm gonna like, take a break.' And he goes outside and the sun is an egg now. [Austin laughs] And that's just like- that's just like-

**Austin:** Ugh, that's so good.

**Jack:** -the exact opposite of what he wanted. We just get this shot of like, Lem going outside and like, stretching and looking up at the sky and going like, 'oh!' [Austin and Jack laugh] Uh, and so I think I'm gonna- I think I'm gonna try and [laughs slightly] do something reckless.

**Austin:** Oh, good. You have a plus one forward when you do something reckless by the way.

**Jack:** Yeah. Absol- I mean, how is this narrativized in terms of like, what Lem is feeling? How does Lem get a- Does Lem just get a sense that like- I- I'm curious about what-

**Austin:** I think it's-

**Jack:** I'm curious about what having a plus one forward on a reckless action feels like.

**Austin:** You remember when you got a plus one for- boyfriend forward, where you were just like, filled with like, a little extra energy? When you're like, 'you know what? I'm in a good mood.' This is not the good mood.

**Jack:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Austin:** This is the like, grit your teeth, 'huh, you know what?'

**Jack:** The only way out is through.

**Austin:** Yeah. 'I have to do better.' Like, 'I have to.'

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** 'I have to figure this out.'

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** 'And this way is not working.'

**Jack:** Right.

**Austin:** 'I have to try something new.'

**Jack:** So, I'm gonna go to- I gonna ask- [exhales] I think we get a montage of Lem kind of like, turning over Uklan Tel's place.

**Austin:** Mm.

**Jack:** And you know, opening cupboards and boxes and- and like, knocking over Uklan Tel's shit.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Partly out of frustration and partly out of like, clumsiness.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Jack:** And then rushing to the- the university library- the like, Archive Trading House, which we know is a library, not just of books, but of-

**Austin:** Right. Of stuff. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** -objects. Um, and I think what Lem is looking for, albeit kind of like, aimlessly and recklessly-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -is some kind of means to... a book is not giving Lem what he wants.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** And documents are not giving Lem what he wants. And the specific frustration that he felt on recognizing that some kind of lived experience-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -was what was missing, um, Lem is looking for something that will be a shortcut for him.

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** Of lived experience. A shortcut that will either physically or- or spiritually put him in the place he needs to be.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Jack:** Some kind of artifact.

**Austin:** Hm.

**Jack:** And he's doing this in a kind of- in a kind of panicked rush.

**Austin:** Yeah. Give me a second to find a thing. Um-

**Jack:** I think what we're experiencing here is the person who has tried over and over again to uh, bake a cake-

**Austin:** Uh hm. [Ali laughs]

**Jack:** -going, 'ah, fuck it!' and running into the pre- the like- [laughs] pre-packaged cake mix-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -section of the supermarket, but is also in their panic, going like, 'this box of rice looks a bit like the cake package thing,' you know? 'This is pasta. That's similar, right?'

**Austin:** Yeah. Um, alright. So, I think- [exhales] I do want you to use your Researcher move here, which is 'when you spend at least a full day researching old tomes, dusty maps, and bits of lore,' but you're not doing- you're not just looking at those things. You're going a little bit broader here, but I like the- I like the- some of the detail options on choices here that I think will line up here. Like, it's not- it's not- Or actually, you know what? Maybe it's Defy Danger wisdom cause you're just like, looking through shit, right? And wisdom is mental fortitude which is maybe what you're describing here actually. Cause it's not just Discern Realities, right? Like, you're not- you're not trying to find out what happened recently or what's about to happen or you know what I mean?

**Jack:** Right. This is very much-

**Austin:** [overlapping] You're- Are- Yeah, I guess this is the question, are you- are you trying to closely study a situation or person or are you acting despite an imminent threat or suffering a calamity [Austin quietly laughs, and Jack laughs] and trying to Defy Danger to get through that?

**Jack:** Yeah, I mean I think that I would probably have said the former had our situation not become like-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -incredibly pressing. A thing I think that it is important to keep in mind is the specific situation that Lem can hear around him and see in the university and outside the walls. And also the knowledge that his friends have like- might be- His friends- For as far as Lem knows, his friends might be like, literally fighting right now.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Um, like time is absolutely of the essence and- and I think that Lem is feeling that danger.

**Austin:** Ok. Give me a Defy Danger wisdom. Not a roll we get a lot of. Plus one forward.

**Jack:** With a plus one forward.

**Austin:** So, a 2d6 plus two.

**Jack:** Ok. Um, wisdom.

**Austin:** Yeah. Alright. That's an eight. Is that including the plus one forward? Yes.

**Jack:** Yep.

**Austin:** Alright. Uh, so on a Defy Danger on a 7-9, 'you stumble, hesitate or flinch, the GM will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.' So, I found something. You found something. You found something. It's something you don't have a lot of expertise with. It's something that's gonna be hard to use and where it's not gonna be safe to use in some ways. Like, you're not confident in it. But you find an alchemical recipe. It's ancient. It's like- it's pre-Erasure. It's something called Dream Essence. Uh, it was made by [Jack laughs quietly] someone who eventually grow to prominence as like, an alchemist of the immediate like, post-Marielda age. Like, pre-Erasure, but- but post civil war. Um, and you've never made anything like it before in your life. Have you done alchemy ever?

**Jack:** N- Uh, yes. I have actually. I have done alchemy in the same way that you take a- like a single class for extra credit.

**Austin:** Uh hm. [laughs]

**Jack:** Like a long time ago. Like, you know, 'have you done pottery?' 'Yes. [Austin laughs] For a cumulative total of four hours in like, a research career that spans thousands of hours.' It's like, 'uh, yeah. I like, vaguely remember pottery.' Lem took an alchemy class like-

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** I think everybody had to. I think that the like, training for archivists is very um- it's a broad church.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Jack:** [laughs] Um, you are asked to do a lot of different things, and then the more you specialize, the more time you spend on individual like, components. But it was like, 'yeah, it's an alchemy class-'

**Austin:** Yeah. So, I think-

**Jack:** -'go along.'

**Austin:** -the thought that comes to Lem's mind is like, 'I know. I can go back into that dream I had. [Jack laughs] And start piecing things together. Like, that's when this all started.' And so, you learn how to make the Dream Essence that was originally conceived of by Aubrey Zo-Zosim [zoh-seem]? Is that right?

**Jack:** I think so. Zosim.

**Austin:** Zosim. Zo- Zosim? [typing] Aubrey Zosim. I put it into Twitter. Yep, that's right. Or Zo-Zosim [zoh-sihm] I don't know how- the pronunciation.

**Jack:** Is Aubrey's name just like, actually on the recipe? Uh, like-

**Austin:** I think there's probably like A. Zosim. Or A.Z. you know? [Ali laughs lightly] Or like, a brand or a mark.

**Jack:** And- and like, Lem is just like, 'ok.'

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** Like, this- that name holds no val-

**Austin:** I mean you know who Aubrey is. You know the story. You do know the story.

**Jack:** Oh! Oh! Oh yeah, I do.

**Austin:** So, maybe that's actually part of the problem here in a sense, which is you're like, 'Oh, Aubrey! Aubrey's great!' [laughs]

**Jack:** Well like, it's hard to- Like, we didn't get like- Probably the Illustrated Concordance doesn't show us these characters like, joking around-

[crosstalking]

**Austin:** No. Or no, no, no. You caught- Wait.

**Jack:** -or like, I don't know that you come out the Illustrated-

**Austin:** Remember, you heard part of that story via Samol, who definitely tells you about them joking around, right?

**Jack:** Oh, yeah. Absolutely. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. So, I think that [laughs] that's it exactly. This is very much Lem's character, right? It's Lem just being like, [airily] 'Oh, yeah. I know the person who made that.' [Ali laughs]

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Jack:** 'I'll be fine.'

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Jack:** 'Yeah.' It's like, has Lem ever met, spoke to-

**Austin:** No.

**Jack:** -or seen-?

**Austin:** But-



**Jack:** Lem's like, [same airy tone as before] 'oh, they were an elf, right? Were they the elf?'  
[Austin laughs] This is just-

**Austin:** [laughing] Which no, but that's great. Um, it is silvery-

**Jack:** What is-

**Austin:** -mercury like liquid.

**Jack:** How do you make it?

**Austin:** You tell me. You have to ask Sylvia, I think.

**Jack:** Aw, Jesus.

**Austin:** Um, here is what we explained it back then. Uh, I go- Sylvia goes, 'I think my first big downtime thing is a long term project. A new alchemical solution, Dream Essence.'

**Jack:** This takes Aubrey like, weeks to make-

**Austin:** Uh huh.

**Jack:** -and Lem is like, 'Going to make it fast.'

**Austin:** Uh huh. Yep. Dream Essence is what it's called. 'A distillation of vivid, lucid dream perfectly recreated for the user. A swirling, iridescent vapor.' Um, so that's great. I don't know that we get like, how it's made specifically. Oh, here we go. Here we go. Here we go. Uh, I go through the questions and Sylvia thankfully answers them. I say, 'How is it delivered?' They say, 'Through any sort of ingestion into your bloodstream.'

So, you need to- to drink it where it takes a little longer or inject it directly. It lasts a couple of hours. You're basically in a trance for an hour or two depending on how much you take. And it's harmful to consume. It- it gives you, in- in Blades terms, level one harm. That is like, dazed afterward. You're already stunned, so I'm actually gonna just like- [Jack laughs] I have to give you another debility and probably take some hit points after you use this. Pretty common material. Here's common for Marielda, not common for the world. Like, ok. Here we go. 'Chips of obsidian.' [laughs]

**Jack:** Jesus.

**Austin:** Uh, I guess I don't have anything else here.

**Jack:** [laughing] Write this down.

**Austin:** But this does mean- I- I think it is like- it's stuff that is fairly rare for the university. But you can find at the university cause it is the university. If you were in Velas, you probably-

**Jack:** Uh hm.

**Austin:** -couldn't make this. You'd have to import stuff, you know?

**Jack:** Yeah. Yeah. Uh, so I think like, we just get like, just scattered shots of like, Lem picking up a sculpture, an obsidian sculpture, [Austin exhales] just like, hitting it against a table. And like-

**Austin:** Yeah. Uh-

**Janine:** That works really well with obsidian. [Austin laughs]

**Jack:** Oh yeah. Absolutely. Well, so this is Lem picking up an obsidian sculpture, hitting against a table, nothing happening, Lem coming back with a hammer. [laughs] Just like-

**Janine:** Well, the recipe called for chips of table, so you're fine. [Austin laughs]

**Jack:** Yeah, absolutely. And I can use appartive magic to-

**Austin:** Mmm.

**Jack:** There's definitely some apparative magic-

**Austin:** Oh yeah.

**Jack:** -goes on.

**Austin:** Oh yeah.

**Jack:** Like, a hundred percent. Like-

**Austin:** So, that's my- that's-

**Jack:** Lem just-

**Austin:** That's my other half this question is like, are you also just doing- Are you like, 'alchemy's just a pattern. I can just fake it.'

**Jack:** Yeah. Oh, yeah. One hundred percent. [Austin sighs] And that's why Lem failed the alchemy class.

**Austin:** Right.

**Jack:** Like, ages ago. Um, not because that's like a particularly- I don't mean that in the sense that that is a huge alchemy faux pas.

**Austin:** No.

**Jack:** Or like a big failing. Like a- 'Lem, you are cast out for using- treating it like a pattern.' Lem failed the alchemy class by treating it like a pattern in the same way someone fails an English class by being just like, 'oh, I can just apply this style of critical thinking.'

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** 'I don't really have to do any of the work.'

**Austin:** Totally.

**Jack:** Um, it's like- it's like, fine. But yeah, the- I'm turning ingredients into other ingredients. At one point, I try and turn a- a premade potion straight into the Dream Essence. [Austin exhales] And it just doesn't- [Austin laughs] like, it just straight up like-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -it's just like, nope. That's not gonna work.

**Austin:** I mean, listen. I think we still have to do this roll. I think we have to have you roll- This is probably intelligence again to craft this thing.

**Jack:** Uh hm. And I'm- I'm stunned.

**Austin:** And you're stunned, so you don't get your normal plus one bonus. So, it's just a flat 2d6.

**Jack:** It's not a plus one forward recurrently, right?

**Austin:** [overlapping] No. It's just the first reckless action.

**Jack:** It's just the first reckless action?

**Austin:** You spent it.

**Jack:** Hm. [laughs]

**Austin:** Hey, that's a seven. That's a seven. How does it- what's it look like as you start to build this? And- and we'll talk about this- how this is a seven in a second.

**Jack:** I think I'm in Uklan Tel's workshop. Cause he has a lot more stuff for making things than I do in my office or in the library. But I'm like, taking stuff backwards and forwards from the library. It's so hot, and the light is really weird.

**[1:45:00]**

And like, guards are moving around, but like, presumably they have- it's been communicated to them that like, 'oh the- the archivist is working on something to try and like, help.' And so Lem is kind of- It just feels like an impossibly hot day. Even with one sun set.

And I think that we just get the end of the day, and it's like- it's like uh, Uklan Tel's desk- Uklan Tel's whole space is a complete mess. It's- it's- There's- There are components everywhere. There's stuff on the floor. Like, um, there's shattered bottles. It's just be- it's been a complete nightmare. And in the middle of Uklan Tel's desk is- in a uh- In a mortar and pestle, which is the bowl and which is the- the thing?

**Austin:** The-

**Jack:** The pestle is the-?

**Austin:** Ooo, I thought I knew this. I think the mortar is the bowl. Right?

**Janine:** I believe the mortar is the bowl. And the pestle is the- the tappy, crunchy part.

**Jack:** The hitting thing.

**Austin:** Yes. It is.

**Jack:** Yeah, there's just like- there's a mortar like, the size of your palm filled with like- I don't know- like, two tablespoons of liquid.

**Austin:** Yeah. Yeah, there's not much.

**Jack:** That's like- that's like it.

**Austin:** That's the other thing. I don't think you make- you don't make- Aubrey made a bunch of it and could just make it. You are not-

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** You made- you're like, 'oh, boy. I made it,' you know? And you have like, a dosage of it.  
[**Jack** laughs] So, how do you- Do you just drink it?

**Jack:** I think I- [exhales] I mean I- I think I tell Emmanuel what I'm doing.

**Austin:** Uh hm. Yeah.

**Jack:** Um, I think I say like,

**Jack (as Lem):** Look.

**Jack:** It's clear Lem is just like- like, completely burnt out, right?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Like, Emmanuel has probably been checking with Lem while Lem was being like- car-getting stuff from the kitchen-

**Austin:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Jack:** -and like, carrying it out.

**Jack (as Lem):** Ok, I've worked something out. I'm gonna- It's- it's- it's- It produces- It lasts about an hour. Maybe two. Um, and it- Remember I told you about that dream? It's apparently something. It was made by this alchemist from Marielda-

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** An alchemist.

**Jack (as Lem):** - a long, long time ago. Yeah, I know. I failed my alchemy- [Austin laughs hard] I mean- I've done alchemy.

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** You should have asked me for help. Alchemy is recipes and uh, amounts and- [exhales] You know I would- a- a natural alchemist.

**Jack (as Lem):** You were busy. You were busy. Um, and- and I was- I did a class.

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** Is it safe?

**Jack (as Lem):** Um, I don't think it is. [Austin laughs again] I mean- the- The one that- that the recipe speaks about a- [exhales] You can inject it to make it kind of work faster, and I'm not going to do that cause that's horrible. That sounds awful.

**Austin:** He nods and says,

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** Good.

**Jack (as Lem):** But I am- but I am going to drink it. And it says that, uh you know, an hour or two hours, and you'll just be in a- like a trance. You'll be like, asleep during that time.

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** Is this-

**Jack (as Lem):** I'm- I'm going to go to my-

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** -necessary?

**Jack (as Lem):** Yes.

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** Alright.

**Jack (as Lem):** What am I gonna-?

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** No, no, no. It's fine.

**Jack (as Lem):** What am I gonna do?

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** I just needed to know. I- I needed to hear you say that it was necessary. Come to my room.

**Jack (as Lem):** It is.

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** Rest on my bed. And I will check in on you and watch you. And then I will know that you are safe. And if anything goes wrong, I will be there.

**Jack (as Lem):** Thank you, Emmanuel. I was gonna write a note that just said, 'I'm not dead' [**Austin** laughs] and put it next to me, but I thought that this wasn't the time for that.

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** No. [laughs lightly] It's- I cannot imagine a time when it would be the time for that. Always tell me.

**Jack:** Lem has clearly done- like, done this before.

**Austin:** Uh hm.

**Jack:** So is just like,

**Jack (as Lem):** Ok. Ok.

**Austin:** [imitating Lem's thoughts] 'Oh shit. Did I fuck up before? Oh no.'

**Jack:** [laughing] Yeah, exactly. Yeah, exactly like, 'Oh, that's not the thing to do?'

**Austin:** Lessons learned. Bit by bit.

**Jack:** And- and so goes off to uh, Uklan Tel's thing-

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** -to get the- the little pestle, carries it very carefully like- carries it in one hand with his other hand just like, over the top of it.

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** Uh, in case it falls or- or drops.

**Austin:** And I think when you get to Emmanuel's place, Emmanuel's there with like, a wash basin with like, water and a cloth and a chair nex- set up next to the bed. Just in case.

**Jack (as Lem):** Great. Ok.

**Austin (as Emmanuel):** Bottoms up.

**Jack (as Lem):** Let's go.

**Austin:** And you drink it-

**Jack:** Yeah.

**Austin:** -and lay down. And I think he takes your hand. And you're- I mean here is the other thing that happens is just like, you're exhausted. [light laugh] So-

**Jack:** Right. Yes. There's part of- there's part of me that's just like, uh yeah. I'm just like- I'm- I'm relishing the chance to be still, right?

**Austin:** Yeah.

**Jack:** And lay down.

**Austin:** And you slip away. You slip into a dream. Um, and I think the first thing you see is an attic. You are- [exhales] You are looking into an attic. You've crept into an attic. Into one of the attics of one of the grand residences in the northeast of the City of Light. This is before it becomes um, Marielda. This is- this is you know, during Samoths- soon after Samoths led his people here to kind of set a new capital city, after the war broke out between he and Samot.

And you are a gangly kind of burglar. Uh, and you're hungry. And you know you're here to make money. And you have this line of ambition in you. And we've talked about this game before. King of Dragon Pass. Which is like, a pretty big influence on a lot of what I- what we've done with Friends at the Table. Um, actually the beginning of Twilight Mirage, we talked about this one specific thing that happens in those games, which is called 'hero questing' where they're kind of fantasy games that take place. There's King of Dragon Pass and there's Six Ages. And they both take place in the fictional world of Glorantha.

And in both of them, there's this thing where you can send someone from your kind of clan. They're kind of like bronze age-esque fantasy. You know, sword and sorcery fantasy. Um, and you can send someone into like, the realm of heroes, basically. Or the realm of myth to try to recreate a great story from your- from your culture's mythology. And- and this is what the thing is. The thing is you-

**Jack:** Oh, it's a seven.



**Austin:** Sorry, it was still a mixed success. A mixed success. [Jack laughs]

**Jack:** Yes.

**Austin:** Uh, you can't be sure what you're seeing is one hundred percent accurate, and part of that is you might do something different than the person you are inhabiting. Again, in- in the way King of Dragon Pass's hero quests work, it's like you send someone in to take the place of a mythological figure, right? It's almost as if you're like, 'alright. You're gonna be Hercules, and you're gonna go do the- the trials that Hercules did.' But then you get to one of the trials and like, in the game sometimes maybe you don't- you, the player, don't know how it was supposed to have gone, and so you take a different choice and the outcome changes.

And that is the situation you are in. You are inhabiting something important about whatever is happening with this fuckin' dragon egg in the sky. Um, and you are like- you are- are an actor, but you're also caught in these individual moments. Like, you're going- you're slipping from vignette to vignette. So maybe you even had some earlier vignettes of you like, sneaking aboard a ship- or not even a ship, right? Sneaking into a- When you're even younger, sneaking into a group of people. Like a- a line- a long- a long convoy of people, where you don't have any direct connections because you are hoping to find some food here.

You like, ran away from home or you were- you were you know, were someone who was orphaned in the war. You, Lem King, don't really know. You just know that there's this like, deep feeling of like, frustration at the world. And you slipped in there. There's a shot of- of- or not a shot. You see as the continent is pulled away from- from you- or is you know, as you are pulled, the island is created.

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

The island that we know eventually as Marielda is created. And then we get this vignette of you creeping into this attic as a thief. And at that moment, you start to feel there's like, agency. Or like, 'oh, wow.' You like, 'oh, I'm in the dream. I'm here. I'm in the dream. It's me, Lem King. This is not my body. This is the body of an ugly human. [light laugh] What the fuck am I doing?'

[Music plays out to end]