

Transcriber: Matt @prairiecryptid

*All timestamps are for the Youtube video.

SYLVIA: Hello? *[sigh]*

[Surprised crosstalk; Ali giggles]

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh shit, good timing on that - the timing on that was incredible, Sylvi¹.

KEITH: *[cross]* Hi, Sylvi! Incredible.

JANINE: Damn.

KEITH: *[cross]* We went live - *[Ali dissolves into giggles]*

AUSTIN: We went live - I went "three, two, one", and then you said "hello" and - *[Keith and Ali start laughing]* yeah, it was. It was *unbelievable*. *[everybody cracks up]*

ART: So you're hosting this now.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: Honestly, it was -

SYLVIA: *[cutting him off]* Hey everybody, uh - welcome -

AUSTIN: Ephrim has arrived.

KEITH: It was more in sync than most of our claps.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it was unbelievable.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* I didn't have the stream muted, so my brain just exploded there.

AUSTIN: We hadn't - we didn't - I - I literally went "three two one" and hit play and you said "Hello?"

SYLVIA: *[cross]* No - but then I unmuted and I heard everyone laughing at that and I *[dissolves into incoherent crosstalk]*

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

KEITH: It sounded - it sounded like a reaction to everyone going live, *[crosstalk]* like “hey, maybe the audience will like that”.

ART: I think the live made the sound of a Discord call.

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* Ah, if only. Uh -

SYLVIA: But we didn’t do that.

AUSTIN: We didn’t. That was not - yeah, that was perfect. Um...

KEITH: I have a sick gyro, I’m gonna eat it a little bit.

AUSTIN: Hell yeah.

KEITH: I’ll be good though.

AUSTIN: Just - mic. You know.

KEITH: Yeah, no I’m good, I got it.

AUSTIN: Are we good? Are we ready to do this thing? *[cackling in the background]* We have to time.is.

ART: Oh, we’re not gonna clap?

AUSTIN: *[tabs to time.is]* We have to clap.

ART: Oh, we *are* gonna clap.

AUSTIN: Yeah, we should clap.

ART: *[muttered]* Oh, shit.

KEITH: *[after a pause]* Do we wanna do a guessing game of what’s in this gyro? *[bursts into laughter]*

JANINE: Is it a couch?

AUSTIN: Yeah, is it a couch? Is it the rest of the couch that’s missing?

KEITH: It is, yeah, I did put some of the splinters in there. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yum. Bad for your teeth -

KEITH: It's got... splinters, red onion, um, there's pork, and then uh - two - I put two screws, but they were long screws. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: Okay. Ok- That makes them more than a meal. That makes a meal and a half. *[cross]* Let's clap? Are we clap-ready?

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah. *[thoughtful noise]* I am iron.

ART: At fifty?

AUSTIN: Yeah, fifty.

[Silence as they wait. One clap is ahead of the rest by half a second, then the rest follow in a cluster.]

AUSTIN: *[inhales]* You know how when I say it's a wave, you can tell? *[Ali bursts into laughter]*

KEITH: Uh huh.

ALI: We sounded like a bunch of dominoes.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. *[laughs]* It sounded good, which is not *good*. Let's do ten, also.

[Silence as they wait. The claps sound like two distinct claps back to back.]

ALI: Ooh.

AUSTIN: That sounded good to me. I may have been a split second late, but I think that's fine. Alright. *[tabs to the presentation]* Welcome to Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast focused on critical worldbuilding, smart characterization, and fun interaction between good friends, I am your host, Austin Walker, and joining me today, Alicia Acampora,

ALI: Um, hi.

AUSTIN: Where can people find you on Twitter?

ALI: *[bursts into laughter, as does Keith]* You can find me at @ali_west on Twitter.

AUSTIN: Sylvia Clare,

SYLVIA: Hey, I'm Sylvi, you can find me on Twitter @captaintrash, and you can listen to my other show, Emojidrome, on iTunes or Google Play.

AUSTIN: Andrew Lee Swan,

DRE: Hey, you can find me on Twitter @swandre3000.

AUSTIN: Art Martinez-Tebbel,

ART: Hey, you can find me on Twitter @atebbel, listen to One Song Pod, who the *fuck* knows what that's gonna be about anymore, [cross] but it's a fun thing that happens.

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, good question.

KEITH: Wait, are you done with it?

AUSTIN: No, but it's [cross] just... bad right now. Janine Hawkins.

ART: [cross] No, we might just be done with it.

KEITH: Oh, did he do - wait, did something big happen -

AUSTIN: Don't - don't. We'll get - Listen to the next episode of One Song Pod.

KEITH: Gotcha.

AUSTIN: Janine Hawkins.

JANINE: Uh, you can find me @bleatingheart on Twitter.

AUSTIN: And Keith J. Carberry.

KEITH: Hi, my name is Keith Carberry, you can find me on Twitter @keithjcarberry, you can find the let's plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton.

[00:03:19]

AUSTIN: Jack de Quidt is traveling right now, but you can find Jack and everything he does @notquitereal on Twitter, and all of the music on the show at notquitereal.bandcamp.com, you can find me @austin_walker and find the show @friends_table and as always, you can support the show at friendsatthetable.cash. Uh, as always, that gives you access at the \$5 level to a bunch of stuff including episodes of things like, uh, Tips at the Table, which is a Q&A podcast that we do, to an entire other campaign called Bluff City, which we have two episodes of in the

can, I just need to write intros and record those and those'll come out sometime in the next couple of weeks, hopefully, uh, and then, uh, um, uh, live shows! This, I'm marking as a live show, because we are really far back on those, 'cause it's kind of like an Episode Zero for Spring in Hieron which we will be kicking off in the next couple of weeks! So! Uh... we should get into it, because I just wanna give a high level of what this is, um, and then - and then start walking through. Um. I think, so - so if you started listening to the show around Counter/WEIGHT, you know that we did Marielda, and then after Marielda, which was a prequel game to our first season, uh, Autumn in Hieron, I think then it was just called Seasons of Hieron, is that right, Ali?

ALI: I think so, Seasons of Hieron, I - Autumn.

AUSTIN: Right. Uh, we did a - a kind of club show, we did like a recap double episode, um, in which Ali *[laughs]* relistened to the entire first season, uh, re-edited some of the audio, and put it back together into a, like an easy-to-listen-to two-episode um, uh kinda summary, and um then we stitched those together with some like narration from Samol that kind of made that listenable. That took a lot of time, *[laughs]* it took a *lot* of time. Um. Because you have to listen to the whole show, and mark out, like, "I'm" - Ali, you could talk to this more than I could. Uh. *[cross]* That's a big deal.

ALI: Yeah, that was - *[laughs]* it took some doing. Um... yeah, it was like, figuring out all the clips, and then transcribing them so you could write things *[laughs]* um, in between them, and then putting them all together and then like, re-editing those... uh, scenes? It wasn't great. Well, it was fine.

AUSTIN: And so we didn't want to do that again, but what we did need to do was have one of those just for us, internally? Um, and - and we felt like, "well, why not just do that as a live show", that way, not only are we all on the same page, and I've needed that because there have been things that - we've already recorded the first, like, two or three episodes, I'd say, of Spring? And there have been a number of times like "wait a second, I have to go to the wikia, I need to - I need to just remember this." I have to open notes I haven't opened in *four years* because I don't remember what happened to this character.

Um, and so I wanted to just sit down with everybody and talk through that stuff... I have like eight questions I think we'll answer over the course of this, um, in which, uh - that I think we'll answer already, but in case we don't I wanted to write them down, that way if the very end we're like "wait a second, we did not answer this", we can just be like "oh, okay, so here's the thing". So! "What *happened?*" *[laughs]* is one. Number two is "where (and how) are all the main characters?" Uh, number three is "what is the Heat and the Dark"? Number four is "what's up with the stars/the starstuff", five is "how did Adelaide's 'curse' work?" Six is "where did Ordenna come from?" *[laughs]* Uh, seven is "who, where, and why is Samoths" and eight is "what are the stakes for Spring in Hieron?" Um... again, I think we're just gonna answer these as we go through the recap of everything here, uh - is there anything I missed? Uh... y'all? On the call?

Any other questions that are like “oh, here’s a big one that doesn’t fall into any one of these.” Or anything you’re like “oh, I think I’m supposed to know the answer to this, but I don’t.”

[00:07:02]

[wheezing in the background]

ART: That’s how I always - I feel that way all the time.

AUSTIN: Fair. *[cross]* Fair.

DRE: *[cross]* Seconded.

KEITH: Should we add - should we just add, uh, Samot to the “who/where/why Samoths”?

AUSTIN: I think Samot’s more simple, because of the stuff that happens with Samoths.

KEITH: Fair. Yeah.

AUSTIN: The Sam - the yeah. I’m gonna say this right now, which is if you’re watching this and you have not listened to Hieron, or if you’re listening to this - for people who are listening to it in the feed, we streamed this, uhhh and so there’s some people in chat now, uh but if you’re listening to this or watching this and you have not listened to both Autumn in Hieron, Winter in Hieron, and Marielda we’re gonna spoil all of those all the way, we’re not spoiling anything going forward, we’re just kind of setting the ground - kind of like the ground rules for what comes next, and making sure we’re all on the same page. And also, I think there are gonna be some things w - we’re like “we’ve said this” - like the - “where did Ordenna come from” is a thing I think we’ve said - we have all the pieces of the puzzle on the table but we never like sat down and said “here is the one place” or “this is what the thing is that happened”. *[laughter]* So we’re gonna do that, that might mean retconning things here or there, or it might mean inventing new things from whole cloth because we think it’s interesting, so - I wanted to mark this as an Episode 0 because this is the sort of place to do that worldbuilding stuff. Are we ready to just... look? There’s just one more little thing about this - this entire presentation that I have.

ALI: Oh?

AUSTIN: Ali.

ALI: The only other thing is that like, Arrell and the study is *[cross]* a thing that like - is a - *[starts laughing]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. Yes. Yes, that’s a good one. I’m not gonna edit this - yes.

ALI: *[cross]* Said like it's like a proper noun, but isn't - *[wheeze]*

AUSTIN: You're right. Uh, that's on - so if I jump to... the last of these slides, *[Ali starts laughing]* you'll see I have a *whole* list of NPCs, uhh, on slide 60, *[cross]* uh, but y'know, that'll be... that'll be *[Ali laughs again]* a fun -

ALI: *[cross]* Okay.

KEITH: Oh, slide 60!

AUSTIN: So you're wondering, what's between slide 2 and slide 60? Well, it is *[goes through slides]* every map we've ever had.

ART: *[cross]* Oh, my *god*. *[indistinct]* This is like, 400 hours of my life.

AUSTIN: It is, it is, like, 300 hours, 400 hours of our life. Um, it's every map we ever had. And so if you are a mapmaker-level backer, I'm just gonna give you share - like, view access to this once this is over. That way if you ever wanna look at a map, from Hieron, instead of having one big post that was like "here are a bunch of images you can't scale up", it's just "here they are". All the garbage ones, that were just like thrown together in Roll20, all of the beautiful ones that Janine made, *[laughing]* and all of the ones that I did in between, where I'm really proud of them but they're kind of still ugly as sin. So -

ART: Yeah, I don't know about you guys, but whenever I interact with fans, people are always like... "where's the map that says 'Buttopia' on it" -

AUSTIN: Don't *spoil* shit, Art! *[laughter]* Come on! No one's - that was a whole bit! *[slide: a very basic map of Hieron, drawn in Roll20, with important locations marked with Xs]* Here's the original map of Hieron. This is the one we did in that, like, weird, uh... drawing... system? that we - that we used for the very first episode? I don't know if y'all remember that? *[Ali murmuring affirmation]*

KEITH: Oh, I remember that. I had to roll a little thing.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's - you choose a little thing, there's the weird Mark of the Erasure that was literally a mistake, uh -

DRE: Looks like a pasta.

AUSTIN: It - wait, what looks like a pasta. Oh, it *does* look like a pasta!

DRE: Yeah, see!

AUSTIN: I hadn't noticed the 3D - like, the 3D dimensions of it here. Uh... wild! Weird! So yeah - so somehow - I sent this to Janine, and she was like "oh, do you mean this thing?" *[slide: Janine's map of Hieron]* Uh... which is *beautiful* in compar- to - just - it's still wild to me that *[slide of original map]* this thing turned into *[slide of Janine's map]* this thing. And wilder still when you see what we've done to it since then. Uh - to Art's point about Buttopia - *[slide: Janine's map, superimposed with the original Hieron landmass, 'Buttopia' in Western saloon-esque font, and a very fat Pikachu.]* Yeah. Janine also sent me this image, originally, and I was very confused, and -

[00:10:33]

JANINE: I wanna say, that Pikachu - the Pikachu there is by zoro01 on deviantArt. Every time we show that I forget to mention it - I didn't draw that fuckin' Pikachu.

AUSTIN: I appreciate it. That's important. I'm gonna tell you something -

JANINE: I googled "fat pikachu" - and then it gave me that.

AUSTIN: I looked at this -

ART: Every time - I've never seen this before in my life.

AUSTIN: We've done it before. It's come up.

JANINE: It's - it's come up.

AUSTIN: I've, uh, I looked at this five times today and didn't see the Pikachu once, it's just - *[laughter]* it's well-camouflaged, in my opinion. Um -

JANINE: I don't remember why I even put it there, to be honest. It might've just been a thing I found on the internet, unrelated, at that time and it was like "ah, I'll put this here, that's funny".

AUSTIN: That sounds good. Yeah, that sounds right.

SYLVIA: We'll get into it if we ever go east, I mean it's um, you know, *[laughter]* geographic information.

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* Oh, ah, the Grand Tour. Alright. So. *[slide: Janine's map of Hieron]* Um, I've done the thing of marking the directions everybody went, and how this all worked, and I'm gonna do my best to move through the first season really quickly, but we should hit the brakes if people are like "wait, what was that about", or "I don't know what that was". So, beginning of this game, y'all get sent from Velas, and by "y'all", it's, what was it, it's Lem, Hella, Fero, Hadrian? Fantasma. Right? That's the group that leaves Velas.

ART: *[cross]* Not Thrandir.

AUSTIN: Not Thrandir yet. Leaves Velas, goes to uh Eventide Isle, or the Isle of Eventide, I forget which one is ours, and which one is from the Breath of the Wild - *[Ali bursts into giggles]*

KEITH: I think it's Isle *of* Eventide.

AUSTIN: Isle of Eventide is ours. Um, you get off the boat, eventually, one of you kills a skeleton, you can't open this door, um, you - there are some living chef knives and hats, there's a whole living library, um, uh, you encounter a group of soldiers sent by Samot, who are carrying a mask and a crow that, when combined, allow Hadrian and Lem? Or is it just Lem.

ART: 'S Hadrian and Lem.

AUSTIN: Okay. To - *[mic rustling sounds]* Someone is having a weird audio thing right now.

KEITH: *[rustling continues]* Uh, could be me, I just set all this stuff up ten minutes ago.

DRE: *[cross]* I think it's you, Keith.

AUSTIN & ALI: Yeah.

JANINE: It sounds like the ocean.

AUSTIN: Sounds like - *[mic contact noises]* whoa! *[various chatter]*

KEITH: I know what this is - there we go. I heard it. *[someone yells "on the right" in the distant background - people snicker.]*

AUSTIN: Are we good?

KEITH: Uh - yeah we're good.

AUSTIN: Okay. Uhh, uh, what was I saying? I've lost it. Oh, so uh you meet Samot, Samot says "is it time already", uh and you go up to the top of this tower, the first of these towers, um, that uh - you were sent there because the water had gotten weird, and what you found was the reason the water had gotten weird is because it was being animated and brought to life by this book, the Book of Life, um, that animates stuff, and then there was a debate between Fantasma and Hadrian, uh, and really the whole party but those are the two major speakers, about whether to put the book back on its pedestal, where it was before, or to take it back with you.

And... y'all decided to take it back with you. Fantasma really - a really good point here in retrospect, Arrell *really* wanted Fantasma to get that book, lemme tell you. Um... *[slide: Austin's*

map of Velas] you return to Velas, here's my initial sketch of Velas AKA The Burg, I - we hadn't named it yet when I did this bad iPad sketch? Oh no it wasn't iPad, shoutout to Microsoft Surface for letting me do this bullshit, and yet again Janine turned it into something... viewable, *[slide: Janine's map of Velas]* uh this was -

KEITH: This is viewable.

AUSTIN: Eh, it was alright. Uh, and um, uh, the... Velas! Split into the Garden District, which was where kinda the rich people and the City Council lived, uh, kind of a garden or kind of like a - not just a garden but like, very green, um, uh city district with lots of single-family homes that were all overlooking the sea? Fish District was kind of the rising craft and merchant district and then the Sun District was where people lived mostly around the church of, or the temple of Samoths, um but also all of these wavy lines were, like, abandoned homes from pre-Erasure. And then there are fields, also! Um... *[laughs]* This next slide is my favorite, *[slide: Autumn in Hieron campaign pitch and character bios]* Ali, do you want to explain what this is?

KEITH: Hold on, air - trouble. Problems.

ALI: *[cross]* Hey.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Hi.

KEITH: Hi.

JANINE: *[laughing]* Contempt.

KEITH: Contempt - ghost - *[laughter]* *[cross]* puttin' a ghost on the board.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Ghost - what's good?

KEITH: Uh, my Audacity settings are wrong 'cause it's in - I just set everything up, so -

AUSTIN: Gotcha. Do you wanna - *[cross, through laughter and Keith making noises]* do you wanna - fix that?

KEITH: No, so we're good now, I just fixed it - yeah, do we wanna clap again?

AUSTIN: S-sure -

[scattered giggling throughout]

KEITH: Or I can just wait til the end -

AUSTIN: Well... let's do one now, just in case you crash or something.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: Or we crash, and we lose - let's do one at 40?

ALI: *[laugh-crying]* Okay... *[giggling stops]*

ART: *(sarcastic)* This is gonna be great.

AUSTIN: It's fantastic.

ART: It feels like Season 1 again.

[Claps that sound like 3 individual claps, with a 4th almost immediately after the last.]

KEITH: I just moved my home into a different home. Like just - like five minutes ago I was doing that.

ALI: *[cross]* Mmhm? *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: That's - that's - was recently. Uh, Ali, do you want to explain what's on the screen right now?

ALI: Hi, okay, there's a ghost. That was startling. Okay, so I was just like looking through stuff today, and in old Gmail drafts I have all of the *[laughs]* like, write-ups that I did from our old website, bless our old website's heart, but this is all of our *[laughing]* old bios!

ART: *(indignant)* I sent in a bio! *[laughter]*

KEITH: *(proud)* I also sent in a bio!

AUSTIN: You - I - I can see *yours*, Fero.

ALI: *[cross]* Yours is there. *[laughter]*

KEITH: Oh, okay.

ART: *[cross]* Yours is *there*. Mine was *late*, but it *existed*.

ALI: I... don't know where it is. *[laughs]* And it wasn't in the Gmail draft.

AUSTIN: I wish you had, because it would've been *very* funny if the only person who didn't have one was Fantasma, that would've felt very apropos for the events of Winter, um, so...

ALI: *[cross]* I know...

AUSTIN: Uh, you know, these are just here! These are - these are - it's fun to look at what people thought their characters were, um, in terms of what they were focused on, and I think a lot of these ended up being pretty on point, but, with like one or two things that are like "oh, interesting, okay. Okay". Yeah.

ALI: *[giggles]* Yeah, I asked people to write these back in Season 1, and they did, *[laughs]* and here they are!

AUSTIN: Mhm. Hella Varal! Armed with a mysterious sword! You'll note, sadly, no Ephrim or, or Adaire, because again, Season 1.

[00:17:01]

[slide: map of Velas] Um, so you guys, you finished the - y'all finished the Isle of Eventide stuff, you went back to Velas, um, while in Velas there's two groups, one group is Fero Hella and Lem, Gregalos, um, Greggy convinces you to go to the mark, uh - actually, where he convinces you to go is this mark under Rosemerrow, um, and there was a debate about whether or not to do that over land or over sea, you did it over sea and we'll get to that in a second, uh, the goal was to go recover another book, um, which is one of those things that if there was a novel of Hieron I would probably just go back and that would just be another relic, another artifact, something like that? Because it turns out that other relic ends up being the guitar that Samol gives - or who knows! Maybe I wouldn't do that, maybe Greggy was like "oh it's another book I guess."

Maybe that's what the Disciples thought because it turned out Gregalos was part of a group called the Disciples of Fantasma, uh, wore that ring with the three vertical lines, and the other group, Fantasma and Hadrian, were ordered to go to the Mark of the Erasure, and that's when Throndir joined them as a scout because he was familiar with the snow and such between Velas and the Erasure. Uh -

JANINE: I have a lore handwave, if you want, for the book and guitar thing.

AUSTIN: Please.

JANINE: Someone told him it was full of songs, and he was like "oh, people put songs in books!" There you go.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* “Ooh, must be a book.” Yeah, there you go, I love it. Thank you. Um, let’s talk about the... about Ice Party first. *[slide: maps of the river and the word-eater’s cave]* Is that what we were calling it? Ice Party?

DRE: I think that sounds right.

AUSTIN: Alright, big picture stuff. Uh, what I have on maps is like - I’m missing one big section that we did not have maps for. Y’all go into the w - so this is Thrandir, and - and Hadrian, and I guess again, Nick isn’t here, right, so. The two of you, you get sent out there to go to the Mark of the Erasure, you... hit - you meet the goblins, you meet Mee Kosh, right, who is the goblin like, elder, sage, uh dude, who was like “oh yeah, the rest of the goblins had their words stolen from them”, um, you investigate that and meet the word-eaters? Right? *[sound of agreement]* So the map on the screen currently is the weird cave that the - y’all also had an ambush for the word-eaters in? And then the bottom half of it is where you fought fake Kindrali, and - is that - was that fake Kindrali? Like the word-eater -

DRE: Yeah, it was a word-eater who’d taken his body. And then Kindrali’s actual body was like, in the corner...

AUSTIN: Right. Actually, this is not a living Kindrali over here, this is a dead corpse Kindrali. Right. Right. Uh, I really love the posing on all of this stuff, it just looks like *[laughing]* Thrandir and Hadrian are on benches sitting *[laughter]* while Fantasma lectures Kindrali, the word-eater... extremely good. Then there was the whole section in Auniq, where Thrandir, y’all go get captured by Thrandir’s people, the snow elves, and break out, um, and there’s some like familial drama, you shoot your father with an arrow that *[cross]* gets him high,

DRE: *[cross]* Tryna get my dad high.

AUSTIN: Yeah, classic. Classic stuff. Um, and you bust out, and you free the goblins who are all like “yo we’re gonna fuckin’ set this place on fire later”. Right?

ART: Excuse me, you left out a very important part.

AUSTIN: What did I - what did I leave out?

ART: *(solemnly)* The snow elves... were very rude to Hadrian. *[Ali giggles]*

DRE: They were! *[Keith laughs]* I mean, fair.

ART: Hadrian was being a reasonable person, and they were being super rude about *[cuts out]*... and y’know, I dunno, maybe that comes back maybe it doesn’t, but I know - I’m -

AUSTIN: *You* remember. *[Art cuts out]* Great. Good. Uh, Art, your connection has been weird, just so you know.

ART: Oh, that's just been my life now, I dunno what it is.

AUSTIN: What *happened*?

ART: I dunno, like, honestly, like, 40% of the time when I open a website they're like "connection interrupted!"

AUSTIN: (*amused*) Great. Good.

DRE: Seems bad.

AUSTIN: That's *bad*. That's a thing that they should - for what it's worth, my connection is also being very weird right now, uh so hopefully we don't get disconnected. If we do, apologies, we'll be back soon after. Um... alright, keep it moving.

[slide: map of the fallen tower] Uh, get through Auniq, and you wind up here, at Samot's fallen tower - there might be stuff on here that you've never seen before, because I just took a screenshot today, of the Roll20 map, and that includes stuff that's the GM's side's stuff, so like the ruptured place, the collapsed place, residential and slaves level, armory, um, "windows and lights?" Question mark? I don't know why that was hidden on the GM level. *[Ali and Janine laugh]* Um, "The City: an actual set of city streets", I don't think you ever went to, but you looked down on it? Um, or - or you - maybe you just saw - you know, 'cause you went to the place that was like - I mean, we should talk about what this place is, right. You get here, you meet Sunder Havelton, you meet Uklan Tel, um, they are here investigating stuff, y'all are here trying to find whatever the artifact here is... what all happens?

[pause]

ALI: Um... Thrandir gets that weird thing -

AUSTIN: Glowy orb.

ALI: *[cross]* from the downstairs... ? Yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Glowy orb, from the mage mall - right. So the thing that ends up happening here is each of these broken - so this is a tower that was standing vertically and then fell. And is now like - it's now - on the northwestern side is like the top of the tower. On the southeast side is the bottom of the tower. Um. And each - there had been this weird rupture in space and time for a reason we have not explai- or - for reasons that we've, I guess, gestured at, or been indirectly - uh, indirectly spoken to. Uh, but each of the broken bits took you to like another potential world, or a world where like for instance, Ordenna took over this tower, and that's why there was

that alternate Hella that Fantasma erased from existence. And that whole other alternate timeline and world. Um, what else? Uh, yeah, the Disciples of Fantasma district was the district with all the mages, um, *[sighs]* this is, um, I think the first time that we see that - I mean, up until this point Hadrian believes that there is Samoths, and had forgotten the name of Samoths, right?

ART: Nah, uh, Hadrian had it back at this point.

AUSTIN: Okay, but you had briefly lost it, had thought it was Samot, got here - got it back, then got here and there were the five temples of the five - of the Sam- of the Samtheon, as it were, uhh, uh, Samoths, Samot, Severeas, uh, Sam- er, I guess Severeas was actually - at the time we were still calling Severeas, uh, Samonta.... Samaantine, who is now Galenica, and Samol. And the five temples are the first time you see that stuff, um and the story here was that y'all were getting jumped by the pala-din. You also learn what the pala-din are, you meet Tabard who is, uh, a soldier on behalf of Samot, who is looking for something here also, um, other key stuff here. Uh... Thrandir. Hadrian. Do either of you remember any big-picture stuff here? Before we get to the very end of it?

ART: Uh, Hadrian's turning into a rock at this point.

DRE: Oh yeah! You had that rock hand.

AUSTIN: Oh, right. You start to *become* a pala-din, right, they, like - one of them touches you and starts to convert you, right. [Art: Mhm.] Boy, yeah, much different thing than - about how that worked. Um... any other stuff -

DRE: Didn't Uklan get hurt, or get sick or something -

AUSTIN: Uklan gets sick, and also just gets kidnapped. I think Uklan gets sick - or gets hurt during the collapse of one of the - the Ordennan district and is like "oh, I'm just gonna stay back here, in the camp", which y'all moved into the throne room, the bottom throne room, and then got kidnapped. And then the rest of that sequence ends up being y'all trying to rescue Uklan. Um *[slide: map of the throne room from the Autumn finale]* And in fact, it ends *[laughs]* in this confrontation in a big room with a mirror, uh, where - where, uh, Samot shows up flanked by a royal guard, uh, and Fantasma tries to charm him, which goes exactly as well as you might expect, uh, convincing *both* of them that they're old friends, um, and then Hadrian, you get killed by Tabard, but Samot... rescues you? Saves you? And heals -

ART: Switches it.

AUSTIN: Switches it so that he's the one who's been killed, yes. Um, on the condition that you, like, consider some stuff, basically. Consider who you're serving, right?

ART: ... Right.

AUSTIN: Right. Um... *[pause]* Yeah, it's a big mirror, people in the chat like "that's a big mirror" like yeah, uh huh, and you escape because Uklan Tel breaks the mirror using this elaborate pattern magic that he's been doing since the beginning of this - this sequence.

[00:25:29]

AUSTIN: *Meanwhile, [slide: boat party map]* in the ocean, *[laughs]* uhh, boat party, *[pause]* y'all got on a boat with Calhoun, which was good, and I have something very important to say, which is: I looked everywhere I could to find the actual picture of the birds attacking when the panther split. *[Ali and Keith wheeze]* I am so sure it's out there on the internet somewhere, or on someone's hard drive - or maybe even on my own hard drive. In fact, lemme just do a quick... I typed -

JANINE: Can I just say this boat picture is extremely Inca People?

AUSTIN: Yeah... yeah. Yeah, it is.

JANINE: That CD-i game? *[cross, nearly unintelligible]* To - to be clear which reference I'm making?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Uh huh. People should watch - people should watch the Giantbomb playthrough of Inca People. Uh - and so I just need to admit that this *[slide: boat map with a picture of some chickens, labeled "this is a: REPRODUCTION"]* is a reproduction, of how things were, this is the right chicken picture. If you go on Roll20 and search for birds or chickens, this is what comes up. This is about what it looked like? Uh... y'all got jumped by zombie pirates, *[laughs]* and those zombie pirates included the bird that could split into many birds, um... *[Ali snorts]*

KEITH: And those were his many birds! *[Ali bursts into muffled giggles]*

AUSTIN: Those were the many birds... other important stuff. Uh, I mean that all - that all ends, with this - two important things: one, Lem meets Emmanuel, two: uh, Calhoun is captured. And the captain - the pirate captain Brandish who had been Hella's enemy from a love letter at the start of the game, was like "hey", like, "make a choice. If you give us Calhoun we'll let you live. Otherwise, we're gonna kill you all". Right? And we had a really long conversation about what evil was, *[laughs]* both on that recording then after, um... then what. Is there any other big stuff that happened there, am I missing anything else about that boat fight.
[pause]

ALI: Those are the big ones, I think.

AUSTIN: Okay. And yeah, you can blame Keith for the zombies, because Keith reminded us that Brandish's neck had been - had been cut and that - that means like, "wait, could they all - are they - are they undead?" And the answer was was yes. Uh...

KEITH: Wait... "blame" is, I think, harsh. *[cross]* That was - *[dissolves into laughter]* There we go. I like that one.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Uh, praise! Praise Keith. For... *[slide: map of Nacre]* Um... and then y'all went to Nacre! Um, and - I still have - that map I still have. Uhh, and that was a town of people who were undead, um, y'all learned about their culture, learned that the old god of death Tristero protected it from whatever the Erasure was, you, um, ah, met various people here, and, um, at one point you got into a fight, with, uhh, uh, Brandish, and Brandish's crew, um, this is the first time y'all fought ghosts, I think? And... *[sigh]* Hella, you get killed, right? During all of this?

ALI: Yeah. That's the spot.

AUSTIN: And what happens?

ALI: *[giggles]* Um... I... succeed that roll, I guess? *[bursts into laughter]*

AUSTIN: Okay.

ALI: I was able to talk with the god of death, I guess, and bargain for my life?

AUSTIN: Yeah. And the deal was, is -

ALI: The deal was... to be like his right hand. And to kill his son. And Hella's like "sure I'll go kill your son".

AUSTIN: "I'll go kill your son", right. *[Ali laughs]* Um... yeah. Yeah, I think even as phrased, I think it was such that - I think what it was was that "you were gonna be my right hand" and in retrospect, I have no - I've listened back to that clip a bunch, and I have no idea if he's lying to you about being his right hand, or if I... changed my mind about what was supposed to happen with the - with the Tristé line, after that promise was made. You know?

ALI: I think it was the other way around? *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: What do you mean?

ALI: I think I had been, like, playing it like Hella like, didn't remember that part, and then reminded you about it, and then you were like, "oh, right. That's right".

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Ohhh, right, yeah. That makes sense. That makes perfe- wait, which part. The right hand part. *[Ali: Yeah.]* Yeah, that's what I'm saying. I probably just forgot during prep, and was like "oh, it's interesting if what happens is - the reason that - why - why does Tristero want Calhoun to die - oh, okay, because XYZ." Um... tryna think. Uh... and then yeah, Emmanuel also shows up - Keith, you're making uh - st- *[cross]* weird - noises -

KEITH: Hey, sorry, I was - re-fixing it. It's fixed.

[00:29:47]

AUSTIN: Okay. Okay. Um... I'm tryna think at this point... uh, Kevin in the chat says "could any of the party actually die at this point? Didn't they all have the curse of Nacre?" No. This is before they - this is before they spent a full night here, there's lots of Emmanuel meeting up with Lem in the streets and being like "don't stay here, you have to go immediately", and not explaining why, except to say once you stay in Nacre for a night, you can't - you can't leave. You can never leave Nacre once you are there for a day. Um... which is the curse. Which I guess we will return to in a moment. Uh? What else. Uh, *[slide: fight map] [slide: Nacre court map] [Ali wheezes]* God. Go ahead!

ALI: *[laughs]* I feel like the important thing to note there is that like, we got into that trouble because Lem had wandered off to hang out with Emmanuel, *[Austin: Yes.]* and we were like "what are you *doing*?"

AUSTIN: Yes. Yes. Because we- listen, sometimes you gotta flirt on a balcony at a hotel (*amused*) that a death god used to stay at, like you do!

ALI: It is what it is!

KEITH: Listen, at least that's the only time anyone's ever gotten everyone else in trouble by flirting. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[laughing]* God. Um, other important stuff here, sword, uh, is singing the name Tristero as you landed, um, I - I also just went back and realized the sword first started talking to you in the tower, actually. That's the first time it said your name. And it was in reaction to the Book of Life, which is interesting. Um... other stuff here? What else here - Calhoun - the Calhoun sequence - uh, Hella, you kill Calhoun... y'all get *arrested*. *[Ali: mmhm.]* Y'all get arrested after -

KEITH: She - wait, she *WHAT?* *[Ali bursts into laughter, followed by others]*

AUSTIN: Uh, uh yeah...

KEITH: WAIT, BUT WE WERE - HOLD UP, WE WERE THERE TO SAVE HIM! WHAT?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I know, it's *weird*! Um... and choked him to death, three times, and, uh... *[Ali wheezes disbelievingly]*

KEITH: Three - wait, she did it *three* times?

AUSTIN: Yeah well see in *Nacre*, you ha - first you have a physical body, then you can be like a robo - not a robot, a zombie, *[laughs, followed by others]* or a skeleton, you know, a robot, like a human robot, a skeleton, and then - and then a ghost form. It's like, death, undeath, and then - spectral. Um, and then after that, if you decide to die, or if some sort of magic kills you, uh, then, then you can die. Um, and in this case, Ali - Hella had that magic, uh, killed Calhoun, gets arrested - gets *double* arrested? Y'all already been arrested at that point. *[Ali laughing]* Jack writes -

KEITH: We - we went from de - arrested to detained. Or the other way around.

AUSTIN: Detained to arrested, yeah, I definitely did that. Um. Then, you get taken to... *[slide: Nacre court map]* the courthouse! And there's a whole sequence of... Lem and Fero prepping to be lawyers, and then being lawyers, if I recall, Fero, you were Hella's defense attorney, and Lem, *[Keith: Yep.]* you were... the prosecution, um... uh, and the whole system that I have - that's a system I should put up - as a pusher update or something, is the whole, uh, the whole court system - I haven't looked at that in *years*. Um, and here is the *[starts laughing]* the fantastic jury of your peers, which - I dunno why *Gandalf* is there, I don't remember who that's supposed to be... *[Ali giggling]* Oh, I *do* remember! That's the dude who was like, the... the librarian. What's that dude's name?

KEITH: Yeah. Began with a J, I think?

AUSTIN: Did it start with a J?

KEITH: I think so.

[pause]

AUSTIN: *[cross] (hesitantly)* ... J-Jonathan.

JANINE: *[cross]* Jerod? Was that a person? Oh. Okay.

AUSTIN: No, Jerod's a different person, we'll get to her. Um...

DRE: Someone in the chat said Ventaro?

SYLVIA: *[cross]* That sounds right.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Ventaro! Yeah yeah yeah, Ventaro Doce. Ventaro Doce. Yes.

KEITH: *Oh, it ends with J!*

[A beat of silence, then Ali starts laughing]

AUSTIN: No...

ALI: Dogé.

AUSTIN: Dogé. Yeah. Great. Good. *[Keith laughing and talking in the background]*

DRE: Wait, hold on.

AUSTIN: What's up?

DRE: I don't see Gandalf in here.

AUSTIN: What?

DRE: *[cross]* That's - that's the Harry Potter guy, that's Dumbledore.

AUSTIN: Okay, listen, I - sure.

JANINE: *[laughing]* Oh shit, it is.

[laughter and crosstalk]

KEITH: Where are we - *[cross]* oh, I do see, yeah, yeah yeah.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* You know, those incredibly different things. Those very - very easy to tell apart.
[laughter]

AUSTIN: *God.*

KEITH: And there was two Dumbledores, do you know which Dumbledore that is? I think that's the fir - the original Dumbledore.

JANINE: *[cross]* No, I think that's the second Dumbledore.

DRE: *[cross]* So that's - that's straight Dumbledore, not gay Dumbledore? *[Austin laughs]*

KEITH: *[cross]* That's Irish Dumbledore?

ART: *(bewildered)* None of the - none of the movie Dumbledores are gay Dumbledore, they're very clearly -

AUSTIN: Oh my *god*. We're moving on.

KEITH: Is that true, is that part of the c - is that -

AUSTIN: *(yelling)* I'm not - I can't be a fake fan of Harry Potter 'cause I'm not a *fan* of Harry Potter!

[everyone laughs]

KEITH: *(amused)* Well... well, try being five years old when those came out. *[someone coughs]*

AUSTIN: I would *love to* have been, it seemed like a fun time. Until - until *now*. *[cross]* You know what, now, after the shit from this week, I think I'm good. I think I'm gonna be good.

KEITH: *[cross]* No no, I mean, it's been like two - it's been a solid two years of being very aware of how bad - *[starts laughing quietly]* it is -

AUSTIN: *God*. Um... So...

ART: *(deadpan)* I hear Harry's got a black grandpa. *[Austin and Keith lose it. Someone says "jesus christ" in the background.]*

AUSTIN: *(pained)* *God*. *Ohhh...* Fuck. Okay, we're gonna keep moving - 'cause my head is going - *[Ali giggles]* we're - okay. We're gonna keep moving, we're gonna keep moving. *[Ali laughs]*

KEITH: Also played by Johnny Depp.

AUSTIN: *Aughh* - Yeah. Great.

ART: *(sarcastically)* Johnny Depp in blackface, you're gonna love it!

AUSTIN: *(incredulous)* *Ohhh* my god. *[Ali laughing] (trying to forge on)* Somehow, you win this court case -

KEITH: J.K. Rowling had 100% control of the canon.

[00:34:46]

AUSTIN: (*moving on!*) I am aware. Yeah. Uh huh. You uh, win this court case, Fero... no, Lem is held in contempt because it's clear that Lem was throwing it, um, a lot of the argument had to do - ended - part of the argument at least had to do with the fact that Fero, you had discovered that Ordenna was coming, in ships, to - to attack Nacre? Um... Lem goes to say goodbye, or - to save Emmanuel, uh, while Fero and Hella go to confront, uh, Adelaide, Adelaide explains her plan. Which is that... she - she sort of explains it. She explains her *goal*. Her goal is, she does not want there to be a world in which death is uhh... uhh... involuntary. She believes that the world is - should be one in which final, true death should be a decision that people make, uh, of their own mind, uh, their own will. And, um... the way that she tries to [*laughs*] enable that world is... when you kill her? The sword sends up that signal, right. Is that right? Hella? Do you remember this, the beacon? Like, that big bright light that goes up?

[*pause*]

KEITH: No.

ALI: No, I only remember hearing Calhoun. [*laughs*]

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Okay, well - no, that's fair. You know what -

ALI: [*laughing*] Sorry, Austin.

AUSTIN: That's valid.

KEITH: Was that the second or the third time?

AUSTIN: The last time.

KEITH: The last - oh yeah, fair.

AUSTIN: New Archives... oh, fourth, it was the fourth time that - she'd killed him already, and what she heard was - was him leaving, was him... almost forgiving you? Is that right?

ALI: Sorta...

AUSTIN: Hm...

ALI: [*wheezes*] Who knows. (*joking*) Does it matter...

KEITH: That's a big ask, by the way.

AUSTIN: I forgot about the water clock - there's a water clock, that's fair. Um... the... yeah. Adelaide's plan is basically, get people to arrive at Nacre, and then spread the curse of Nacre,

or the rules of Nacre. The rules of Nacre are such that if you are inside of Nacre, whoever is the god of death controls your life and death. That used to be true of *all* of Hieron, but when Tristero died - oh sorry, when things started to fall apart, post-Marielda, Tristero like pulled all of his power into just Nacre and just hung out in Nacre and protected people from the outside world and made Nacre kinda disappear from the minds and the - the uh, the kinda history of everybody. That actually happens *before* the end of Marielda. It happens mid-Marielda.

Um... and... Tristero's reach - or whoever is in the throne of death, right, whoever - whoever's in Tristero's seat, their reach, at that point, was contained to Nacre, but to become a citizen of Nacre the way the magic worked was if you spent a day and night in Nacre and then went somewhere else that new place also became part of... the kind of reign of Tristero. And so her plan was to ascend to - ascend to that realm, and also to kind of spark a - a - um, some sort of campaign? That would move throughout all of Hieron. Nacre does not have that kind of military power - Ordenna *does*, so she leans in as *[laughs]* hard as she can once she knows that Ordenna is coming. And, um, Ordenna goes there, obviously spends nights there because like, "whoa, look at all this new technology", um, and, uh... eventually becomes the primary spreaders of Adelaide's, kind of - the territory that Adelaide controls. (*amused*) I think that is the most brief and clear way I can describe what that - what the curse, uh, is. Does that make sense?

[silence]

ALI: Yep.

AUSTIN: Is there any... remaining... questions about it? *[pause]* I think that that's it. Okay. What's up next? *[slide: map of Hieron, in autumn]* Alright. So! That's the first half of - that is - *[stuttering]* time-wise, timewine-lise - uh. (*carefully*) Timeline-wise, that is the arc of that first party, til they get to the Rosemerrow detective game, or sorry, the Velas detective game, they go back to Velas, you'll see I've drawn this big yellow loopy thing, because it's like you magically went back to Velas? You didn't go back over land? So whenever you see yellow, that's 'cause like some weird magic shit is happening here. Um... *[slide: Map of Velas with Scrabble tiles representing characters]* You went to Velas, I just took this screenshot of the actual Velas map at the very end of the - the detective game? Uh, you can see there's all these like, G1, G4 district things y'all went from place to place, and investigated the death of... was it Greg's death? Was it Gregalos' death? *[long pause]* ... Anyone? Did I lose connection?

ALI: No...

KEITH: *[cross]* No, I just don't remember whose death it was.

ALI: I think it was his.

ART: Why - *[cuts out]* down.

ALI: *[laughing]* Yeah, that's so distracting.

AUSTIN: Wait, say that again?

ART: These are all Scrabble tiles, right? *[Janine laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: But the L is upside-down.

AUSTIN: A-ask... ask Jack. *[background laughter]*

JANINE: There weren't enough Ts.

AUSTIN: Yeah, I don't know why there wasn't - why the L isn't -

KEITH: Lem doesn't begin with a T.

ART: What, whatever happened to Tlem... is really not - *[Austin and Keith laugh]*

AUSTIN: Yeah, so it's the Day of the High Sun, what's up.

ALI: Wasn't it someone else who died and like *during* the investigation we find they're dead?

AUSTIN: That's what I thought too. Um... I remember who killed the person, uh, I remember...

[Keith sneezes] Bless you. *[Keith, far away: Thank you!]* Um -

ART: *(joking)* I don't think it's important, we can just move on.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* No... no, *[Ali laughs]*

JANINE: *[cross]* Wasn't it the - prel - was it the prelate? Was the word prelate involved -

AUSTIN: The word prelate *becomes* involved, but not from... not from -

ALI: Not from the jump. *[Dre: Yeah.]*

AUSTIN: Prelate is - is also key to everything that happened here.

ALI: Okay, chat says Greg was in the field.

AUSTIN: Good, it was Greg. Okay! So yeah. So Greg is the one who's killed, thank you - thank you, chat. Um... uh... you do a bunch of investigation, I'm not gonna walk through either of these

investigations beat by beat because they go for a while, um - what are the big findings of this investigation. Does anyone remember?

[pause. scuffling noises]

ALI: Um, start of the Disciples of Fantasma?

AUSTIN: Good. Big one.

ALI: Yeah.

[pause]

AUSTIN: Who are...

ALI: ... Beats me. *[laughs]* Sorry. Uh...

ART: *[cross]* I think they're uh, Fantasma's friends?

AUSTIN: You know now who they - they're Fantasma's friends, right, uh huh. *[laughs]* But like, they - we - since learned they were for Arrell. Right? That Arrell is the head of the Disciples.

[pause]

ALI: Right.

AUSTIN: Um... and that they - they have been... *[pause]* at this point, I think you learned that... the - okay. I can - I think I can give the actual - the actual full answer here. Gregalos is a member of the Disciples of Fantasma, which is descended from the Disciples of Samot. Both of which are magical groups of researchers, uh the Disciples of Samot, that symbol, Lem recognizes during the episode, or during the first episode with Gregalos as "oh, this is tied to an ancient group of researchers who worked with time, who studied the past present and future, that's why it's three vertical lines of different heights." Um. That's what the symbol is of. The... Gregalos was working with them, which means they were trying to get the Book of Life, and trying to figure out a way to beat the Heat and the Dark. Who kills Gregalos? *(about to laugh)* Hadrian.

[pause]

ART: *(scandalized)* Did *not*.

AUSTIN: No, *who*. *[Ali and Keith laugh]* I'm asking you, who killed Gregalos.

ART: *[long pause]* I'm just - it's - like implying things, that aren't true - *[crosstalk drowned out by Austin]*

AUSTIN: I'm just saying you're the one who maybe knows the most about who killed - who you - who killed Gregalos.

ART: Ye - yeah, I - I *do* -

AUSTIN: Uh huh.

[pause]

KEITH: I - this is one that I know the answer to.

AUSTIN: Chat does, shoutout to chat for being like "oh yeah, obviously". It was obviously -

ART: I don't - I don't, yeah. It was - *[trailing off]* it was, it was Jericho.

AUSTIN: It was Jericho. Jericho Alum, who... uh... was ordered to do it by, as Janine noted, the prelate, Prelate... Luuuucius?

KEITH: Yeah.

DRE: That sounds right.

AUSTIN: Because, and he'd said, because it was e - he was evil, he was doing evil magic shit, right, which *now* we know is, is the Disciples of Fantasma were working with Arrell to try to stop the Heat and the Dark, and that Lucius and much of the church is actually part of the Church of the Dark Sun, uh, more than the sort of surface-level Church of Samoths that we - that Hadrian knows, so that is what the cause of that murder is, is like "oh, these - so this is two factions who are like - this is like on the periphery of these two factions butting heads." Um...

KEITH: Like "this bishop is secretly in an apocalyptic cult"?

AUSTIN: Yes. Exactly. This - and this bishop learns that this, like, librarian or whatever is secretly in an anti-apocalyptic cult, that also has its own fuckin' problems. Um.

KEITH: *[cross]* Right. Arrell is not... the best dude?

AUSTIN: Arrell is *not* the best dude. Uh, at all. Um... alright. What else? Well, people are just realizing now that - that Fantasma is an anagram for "Samot fan", yeah, it's very good. *[Keith bursts into laughter, joined by Ali and others]* Um... Super good. Uh, sometimes things just work out. Lucius gets killed - oh, this is also where you introduce - we introduce the Golden Lance.

Right? [Dre: Mhm.] Yeah, that's like, Victoria Lake - nope, Victoria - mm, Gloria, Dr. Gloria Lake, and Victoria Solomon?

DRE: Yeah. You got it.

AUSTIN: Okay. Phew! Thank you. Thank you, uh, Throndir, who later on will become, uh -

DRE: That's my new moms!

[laughter]

AUSTIN: That's them! Ummm, we also get some Ordennan - some like first hints of Ordennan politicking, but it's not that important. Any other stuff from the holiday special...

ART: Oh, before holiday special, I don't know that this is ever gonna come back, but the charm - Fantasma casting Charm on Samot and failing? *[cross]* They're both -

AUSTIN: Yes. I mentioned that when we were on that map screen. They're - they both believe that they are friends to each other, and have always been friends to each other. Which is a - yeah. Magic, huh. Um... alright. I don't think there's any big stuff here. I don't think. Right? Season ends, *[pause]* we move on. To... *[slide: Marielda cover art]* Marielda.

[00:45:30]

So this is Archives - oh! Archives end up with the book. That's an important thing. Book of Life ends up with, um, ends up with -

ALI: Morbash.

AUSTIN: No. With - Elgash. Elgash Or. Rhymes with Morbash. What else. Um. Uh yeah, Nacre curse beginning to spread, we tal - we hit that, we talked about that, yeah, Mitta Parr is there, but like Mitta Parr hasn't *really* shown - she showed up in the Rosemerrow special, but like, I - *[stuttering]* I don't really know that I need to hit Mitta Parr... um, there was one other - oh, oh, there is a, uh, a sequence in the Nacre-side finale in which, um... Emmanuel ends up with a book of poetry. Uh. That is given to him by Lem, that's a thing that we'll come back to in a bit. Uhh, Marielda happens! *[slide: The Quiet Year map of Marielda]* Check out this dope, uh, *[laughs]* Quiet Year map we drew! Um... boy! What's the quick and dirty on Marielda? Janine, since you helped do the final map, and also since you were in the Quiet Year game, um - I just - I'm gonna put this on Janine and Sylvi 'cause they weren't in the first season. [Sylvia, faintly: Aw boy.] Can you summarize the Quiet Year part of Marielda?

[pause]

JANINE: Um... *[starts laughing]* A lot of the stuff that stands out actually got turned into things that I don't understand? *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Sure.

JANINE: *[still laughing]* Um... Because the Quiet Year is so, like... it's so much of like building a prototype, almost, of this space? [Austin: Yeah, yeah.] And then it became this whole other -

AUSTIN: But I mean just like the highlights of "what is the Quiet - what happened to the Quiet Year?" *[pause]* What's the setup?

JANINE: Um... so there's a bunch of people. [Austin: Uh huh.] Who are like, they - Samoth's people? [Austin: Mhm!] Um, and they're on this sort of island that has broken off from the main... land, ostensibly to protect them?

AUSTIN: ... Yeah. Yeah. I think it's... yeah. Ostensibly is probably the right word.

JANINE: Yeah. *[laughs]* But they also kind of have to, uh, they are building themselves up here because all of the things that they had are sort of gone, right? [Austin: Yeah, yeah.] Like, the things they're used to? Um, and this is all happening with Samoth's, in the background, across this... the water is like, molten... me - metal? Magma? Magma? Right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's - it's - it's fire... water - It's like *[cross]* you can't just - right.

JANINE: *[cross]* Yeah, you can't, like, cross it.

AUSTIN: I don't think it's all the way to magma, but it was like, weird glowy golden water.

JANINE: You needed special metal boats to do anything...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Yes. *[cross]* And those are under control mostly of Samoth's, right?

JANINE: *[cross]* Um... and Samoth's - Yeah. So Samoth's is like, uh, occasionally doing things that are kind of helpful but also kind of a problem, [Sylvia: Mhm.] um, the big example would be the rocks full of fish, [Austin: Yeah.] uh, which, people needed food, and couldn't get into fishing boats and whatever -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Can I tell you a secret about those?

JANINE: Yes, *please* do.

AUSTIN: I always imagined Primo made those. But I never wanted to say it because the idea of Samoth's just being an indifferent asshole who did it... was very funny.

JANINE: I mean there's like a logic to it of - it is, to me, a very like, god thing to do more than a Primo thing to do.

AUSTIN: Right. Right.

JANINE: Like I think Primo - my understanding of Primo is that Primo would maybe like, piece together why this would be a problem for people?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right. Well and then - yes. And then -

JANINE: But the idea of like, "what are things that the people know can fall from the sky, how can I make this useful without thinking about like, 'oh, their houses aren't a volcano - I live in a volcano? So if someone throws a rock at a volcano nothing happens.'" *[Ali giggles]*

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: If someone throws a rock at a thatched roof, it... is bad. *[laughs]* *[cross]* Even if it's full of dinner.

AUSTIN: It's bad, yeah. *[cross]* It felt so desperate of like, "ah, we gotta fuckin' feed people immediately", and Samoth's whole thing is just like this - Samoth's is the one, especially at this point in time, who is not the "we have to try" person? Um, and much more the, like, "oh yeah, I have to keep order" person? Uh - but I'm actually happy to have that continue to be a question mark. Um. Because -

JANINE: Also rocks are like, if you - you can't throw - you can throw a rock farther than you can throw a fish. Aerodynamically, right? And like, mass, and whatever. Um...

AUSTIN: Probably. Probably. *[cross]* I mean maybe -

DRE: *[cross]* Checks out.

JANINE: *[cross]* In a vacuum it'd be the same.

KEITH: *[cross]* I know for a fact that I could throw a fish as equally far as I could throw a rock. *[laughter]*

AUSTIN: Um...

SYLVIA: I think it depends on the fish.

KEITH: I think it depends on the rock.

SYLVIA: That's all I'm gonna say.

AUSTIN: Fair. Uhhh...

ART: What if the rock was shaped like a fish?

ALI: *[thoughtfully]* Oh.

DRE: Oh *shit*.

AUSTIN: Coming this fall. Dwayne Johnson is - *[laughter and unintelligible crosstalk]*

DRE: *[cross]* - It all depends on the fish.

AUSTIN: ... Fair.

JANINE: *[cross]* Uhh... I remember some of the like -

KEITH: *[cross]* My favorite New England monument - natural monument is the rock-shaped fish. Wait, fish-shaped rock.

JANINE: I remember some of the beats, but I don't remember what order they go in, is the big thing. [Austin: Yeah. Fair.] Like, I remember there was a bridge that gets built and the elves cross over and [Austin: Yes.] sort of live in that sort of uh, western chunk? Uh...

AUSTIN: Yeah. The, like, snowy part.

JANINE: There's the forest that people disappear into, and they think it's like, cursed and magic and stuff? Like a magic forest? And then they start finding people in there, like all distorted? [Austin: Yeah.] But they're - and I think it's the people that they lost, but then they find, um, that those people are just dead, actually, [Austin: Right.] So it's like weird, it's like - it's like they're in wood and you have to get them out, um, there were people with nice pants and I don't remember what happened with them, but I think they turned into some sort of merc gang?

AUSTIN: They had bad - they actually had *bad* pants. They had these like, heavy black wool pants. The Black Slacks. They had nice *shirts*. They were -

JANINE: Oh, they switched it up.

AUSTIN: Yeah, they switched it up.

JANINE: 'Cause I remember in - yeah, in Quiet Year it was, they had fancy pants, and then - wasn't it like, they put a ban on the pants being fancy...?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh right, you're right, they put a - ban on the p - on the fancy pants! Yeah, they were the fancy pants gang! Remember, right?

JANINE: *[cross]* Yeah, yeah. So they switched to the - to the shirts.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

JANINE: Um. There was a whole... war with magicians? Right?

AUSTIN: There was, that happened at a tower that got turned into Maelgwyn Park here. Um. That - and that we would learn eventually was Charter Castille and... who... what's the other dude's name.

ALI: Oh, god.

ART: Maelgwyn?

AUSTIN: No - well, Maelgwyn was on the other side of that duel. Um...

ALI: And, um...

AUSTIN: Was it Cartwright? Was it - *[sighs]*

ALI: I think it was Cartwright.

AUSTIN: That sounds right. 'S a ghost... Mr. Ghost...

ALI: The dude who like, cursed her the *fuck out* - *[dissolves into laughter]*

AUSTIN: Oh, it was Bolster! Bolster. Bolster Valentine. Yes yes yes. *[Art: Oh yeah.]* Thank you chat. Again. *[Ali laughs]* I have not listened to Marielda since it came out, so.

JANINE: *[cross]* Oh - the... cobbins....

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes, big ones, important ones.

JANINE: Rose up out of the ground and started building, like, houses out of the volcanic rock kinda stuff *[Austin: Yes.]* in Sloe Point but then encroaching into Emberboro? *[Austin: Yep.]* And then they took over the University for a bit, right? And then got like, violently shut down.

AUSTIN: Shut down, yeah, they like, were trying to help people and teach people stuff, [Janine: Mhm.] and then people were like “no, fuck off”, um, there was some child labor, in Iris Parish, in the factories -

JANINE: Sorry.

AUSTIN: Thank you Janine, *[Ali laughs]* uh, there was, um -

JANINE: A sea dinosaur!

AUSTIN: A sea dinosaur, which turns out to be Samol -

DRE: *[cross]* Our good friend.

AUSTIN: Um, I can pro - here's a thing I'll say, Samol talked about eating in one of the first *[laughs]* episodes of Spring. So, find out more then. Uh, Tamsyn was an orphan? In - in Red House? And like the Red House district or whatever? Um, who ended up later becoming a mercenary, and then later becoming a vampire. Uh, and Claret Holiday, became Claret Holiday. Um, who also then later s - becomes the founder of the Golden Lance on the mainland. Right? *[brief pause]* Um... what else - *(pained)* no more vore jokes in the chat, please!

JANINE: *[cross]* I think... black... uh... that big black, like, was like an iceberg? Or a hole. But there was like a big -

AUSTIN: Uh, it was - it was a hole. It's - it's a - it's a hole all the way down.

JANINE: Was it um - was it like a big weird rock thing that turned into a hole? 'Cause I remember a big weird rock thing. *[cross]* Out in the water.

AUSTIN: Uh, the big weird... rock thing.... I think it was a big weird rock thing, and then it *became* a big black hole. Right?

JANINE: Yeah, that's what I remember. Okay.

AUSTIN: Um... and then the... well, the other big rock thing is the big rock, at the north, that had water coming out of it.

JANINE: Yes. That's one of my favorite little icons that I drew for the map, that I - it was - I was - I loved it so much that I saved it separately. I just saw it today. *[she and Ali laugh]* I was like “ah, that was a nice rock I drew.”

AUSTIN: Uh it was, in fact, *[slide: Janine's map of Marielda]* let's advance and show that. Look at that good rock that has the... the... what was it, the blank of Maelgwyn, the... *[sighs]* what was it, was it Maelgwyn's... chosen? Was it Maelgwyn's...

ALI: *(bemused)* Wait, what?

AUSTIN: What was this - the - there was like a cult of Maelgwyn in Marielda.

[various thinking noises]

ALI: Um... *[long pause]* No idea. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Because that was like, the beginning of the different sun. The different sun symbol. Um... where it was like, the ring *plus* the... the extra little symbol, the extra little rays.

ALI: Yeaaaahh.....

AUSTIN: Um... so yeah! This is Janine's Marielda map - Maelgwyn's *Faithful*, thank you chat. Um. And... it's a good map. *[laughs]* Uh, you can see some key things, including Yellow House, uh, including, um, everything. So I - we're just gonna move through this pretty quick.

[00:55:04]

Uh, I don't - I did not do the like dot dot dot, going from mission to mission thing here, but the first one was the train mission, *[slide: a train emoji and a calendar emoji]* Train Day, happy Train Day, *[back to the map slide]* um, the second one was at Memoriam, uh, College, which is up at where number two is, the third one wasn't a mission at all, it was, um, the... War and Azaleas, um, like, the downtime episode with the war against the - the Fontmen? And then the fourth one was at Samoth's forge. *[slide: train day. slide: a book emoji and a ghost emoji]* Um, and I *do* have a bunch of maps for that, um, *[laughs]* *[slide: train day]* so I don't have Train Day map because we ended up reusing the Train Day map? Um... the Six, Sylvi? Do you want to talk to me about... the big picture events of just Marielda as we kind of *[cross]* punch through this.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Oh *boy*, okay... *[pause]* Let's... *[laughs]* let's see. So we started with - I guess we should go over the characters first, actually, huh.

AUSTIN: Yeahhh. I guess so.

SYLVIA: So we had, uh, *[Austin tabs back to the map slide]* The Six were like a group of like, knowledge thieves? *[someone snorts]* Like, our whole thing was that we wanted to, like, spread knowledge because Samoth's was hoarding it. If I'm remembering correctly, right?

AUSTIN & ALI: *(simultaneously)* ... Yes.

SYLVIA: We wanted to help spread, uh, information and education. Uh -

AUSTIN: Yeah, Samoths is - at this point, is especially depicted as a god who wants to fix everything, um, for, uh, for - not for himself, but he'll fix something for you, he'll build you a bridge but he'll never teach you how to build a bridge.

SYLVIA: Yeah. So we had... um. We had Castille, who was, uh, Ali's character, who was a pala-din who was like, sentient? [Austin: Mhm.] And uh... *God*, there's a lot going on a - with *every single one* of these characters! [Ali laughs] And I'm not sure, like, if we wanna get into it chronologically or not, um... [cross] We had... Hitchcock...

AUSTIN: [cross] I think just - yeah. I - the big picture stuff. Yeah.

SYLVIA: The... do we talk about, like, the big thing with him here?

AUSTIN: Yeah, we're all the way. We are all the way in spoilers.

SYLVIA: Okay. Yeah. So, there's two Hitchcocks, which are - I know that Jack likes to leave that unspoiled, so I -

AUSTIN: [cross] Yeah, totally. I think at this point, we're so deep in, you know?

SYLVIA: For sure. Um... so we've got the - they run the... uh, dancing studio and dueling school that is both like, uh, one of them is the cover business for the Six, I guess, the dancing studio, [affirming noises] and the other I guess is a side hustle?

AUSTIN: [cross] Just a side hustle, just a little bit of coin. You know?

SYLVIA: Like, respect - I respect it. Um, we had Sige, who, uh, is the big strong man who was workin' on his boat, uh, uh... like, I love Sige, but I don't really, like, [laughs] know how to describe him better than that? [laughter]

DRE: [cross] No, yeah, no, that's perfect.

SYLVIA: Great! Um... oh, I forgot to mention that Castille is also, uh, is like secretly - was secretly Charter Castille [Austin: Right.] who knew Maelgwyn and stuff, uh, that's important. And then we have Aubrey, who's my little nerd. Uh. [Ali snorts in the background] And uh, is a alchemist.

AUSTIN: [cross] Important. Good nerd.

SYLVIA: And, uh... as we went on like eventually became very close to Samot - that was actually a big thing! Was that each... group - or like, each player character, uh, or player basically, had a different, like, deity-type relationship, Castille had *[inhale]* a relationship with Maelgwyn, uh... Hitchcock sort of had visions from Samoths, didn't he? If I'm remembering right?

AUSTIN: From... yeah. I think that that's basically the case, right?

SYLVIA: Y-yeah.

AUSTIN: Mmm... Hitchcock was definitely the one that was the weirdest. 'Cause it's like - Sige is very clear, like, met Samol in the woods. [Sylvia: Mhm.] Right. And, uh... Castille... met Maelgwyn. Was like the Castille one. A hundred percent. So then yeah, I'd say Samoths is the one that - yes yeah yes yes especially once the Hitchcocks get - once one of the Hitchcocks gets conked on the head and has this like a really bad experience at Memoriam. Um, and, you know, sees the Heat and the Dark and all of that stuff, uh yeah. Totally. Um, and- and yeah, that's true, um, uh, uh, and Edmund's - the Hitchcocks' mother also *knew* the family. Because of the story that he'd been told, of the mother wandering into Samol - Samol's - uh...

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Right. Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh, home, which, I mean - I guess that's the big thing with Marielda was, the - the background story of it is there's this war between Samot and Samoths, right, uh it's a civil war between the two, they - they were - clearly together, uh, Edmund - they were clearly *aligned* at the start of Marielda? And then broke up? Or - I guess it wasn't clear that they broke up, *[laughs]* they were clearly *aligned* in some way, and then had a civil - civil war, what's revealed is they in fact were married, uh, and they split over the way they wanted to handle... the death of Samol, um, and the... kind of end of the world? The impending end of the world? Um. And... that is what that huge conflict was about, and then yeah, the Six end up being kind of tossed into it, right? Deeply - a deeply messy divorce. *[laughs]*

[1:00:01]

SYLVIA: Oh god. That's a - that's a bit of an understatement, honestly. *[laughter, Austin agreeing]* Still, um... *[sniffs]* Right. So. Do we wanna go over - *[laughs, mumbles unintelligibly]* do you need me to summarize the heist?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* We don't need to go over like - yeah, sure. *[slide: train day emojis, which are a train and a calendar]* I mean, I have - I have emoji here so, I'm ready for you, Sylvi the emoji expert.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Oh I love them! Yep, yeah! Oh, this is a good one. [Austin: Mhm?] *[sniffles]* A combo. Uhh... so, the first heist w- *god*, I *really* have to think back for this one. [Austin: Uh huh?] It wa - we - it was the day that like - wasn't it - it was Train Day, obviously.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it was - it was Train Day!

SYLVIA: But wasn't it like - it had just got running that day, or was it like - yeah.

ALI: Yeah.

SYLVIA: And... we were trying to... reroute it, if I'm remembering correctly. Right? *[cross]* Oh no, that was a later one.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You... no, that was a later one. *[crosstalk, Ali laughs]*

SYLVIA: Oh my god - we did too much stuff with trains that season...

AUSTIN: A lot of trains.

SYLVIA: I'm also very... out of it right now, um...

ALI: We were trying to steal the plates.

AUSTIN: Yes.

SYLVIA: Right!

ALI: Because they like, rewrote themselves? Or were always on like a different line, so we were like "if we can get what the master is, we can sell it to people."

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. And like - figure out how - yeah. Yes.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Yeah, we wanted to figure out how - how he did his reconfiguration stuff with the city. Right. [Ali: Yeah.] Totally. Um.

AUSTIN: Um...

SYLVIA: Was the... university next? Or was that -

AUSTIN: Yes it was! *[slide: Valentine Affair emojis, consisting of a book and a ghost]*

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Okay, yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You can see here, uh. *[laughs]* Here is - here is books and ghost, two other good *[Sylvia wheezes]* emoji. And that I actually have all the maps for. *[slide: map of Memoriam College]* 'Cause that's - that was a big one page, super big map, um, uh in which your mission was to get in to the Rector and College of the Last Living Spirits in Memoriam for Their Service Awarded to the Grace and Wisdom of Our Protector, Originality Alive, or, Memoriam College. Um...

SYLVIA: I believe we got in by both staging a protest and then faking our way as students? *[Ali snorts]* Something along those lines?

AUSTIN: No - you got half of it right!

SYLVIA: I know we had the protest going, and then we got into a dinner.

AUSTIN: You just *climbed* the - this is like the wildest shit - *[cut off by indistinct crosstalk. Ali laughs]*

SYLVIA: *[cross]* We just went in!

AUSTIN: I was like "oh yeah, y'all are gonna do this protest", and I *thought* it would be like, "that's a distraction", so you - they won't know that you're not really students, you know, walk in the front door - no, and then you're like "we're gonna climb these trees and jump on the balcony and just walk into the dinner." *[Ali muffling her laughs]* Which is here on floor two, which is *[cross]* fan-tastic.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Here's the thing, about the Six. *[Ali wheezing]* Is that you think they're gonna go one way! *[Austin: Uh huh!]* And then they go the other. *[Austin: Mhm.]* Y'know? It's - it's - they keep ya on your toes. And that's why they're, you know, *[Austin: Yeah.]* the greatest heisters to ever exist, in fiction or nonfiction.

AUSTIN: Totally. And your mission here is to recover this book, *Mortal Liminality: On the Space Between Life and Death*, which is down in the basement, uh, of the - actually wait no, that's not the - that's the *other* book. Wait, what is *that* book? I thought it was the book you were looking for. *[Ali laughs]* I think that *is* the book you're looking for. Why is it up *there* and not in the basement? Maybe it just was always up there and the basement was a - was a - *[slide: map of Memoriam College's basement]* 'cause the basement's here, which...

ALI: No, wasn't there a book that Hitchcock stole from... the nun... ?

AUSTIN: Sabinia, yeah, from the rectory. Maybe that's the right book, then, or maybe - was that two different books? 'Cause the other book that's here *is* the *Book of Life*, *[slide: Memoriam College]* which the Yellow House was there for. Uh... I'm pretty sure that book is the book that

you were there for. Um... Katie wants to know how Maelgwyn got in the gauntlet, I dunno, play to find out what happens. *[beat of silence, Ali bursts into laughter]* I know the answer to it. But...

ALI: *[laughing, barely distinguishable]* Oh my god...

ART: *God.*

AUSTIN: *(amused)* Play to find out what happens, I dunno! Look into it! *[brief silence as Ali winds down]* Um... Yeah. So you're being sent there to get this book, this is where the reveal around... Castille starts to happen, right? *[slide: Memoriam College's basement]* Because you meet... the... Valentine? Is that here or is that after this?

ALI: Yeah, this is here, so. Castille goes to the basement, meets the ghost of her former partner, that she had set up and had Maelgwyn kill, and then meets Maelgwyn who's like "hey what's up I know who you are", and she's like "Someone who knows who I am? Let's hang out!" *[wheezes]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right. Perfect. Yeah. Right, the book in the basement ended up just being the Book of Life, not the other book. Gotcha. Perfect. Um... Maelgwyn was there, uh, there was just a - *[stutters]* you can see here, any time that there's like, grey text, that's text that only I could see as the GM that y'all couldn't see, um... Silas was in the reading room down there at some point, and also there was just a painting of the City of Light that was just, very expensive; if y'all wanted to get rich you could've broken into the reading room and gotten that super expensive painting, that's all. That's all that is. Um... uh, and then that crystal, the Samot/Samoths crystal would have been, I think, an earlier way to get more info on who they were, which you ended up getting through Aubrey like... flashback drug trip things, right?

SYLVIA: Yeah, the, like, dream liquid I made... I can't remember the name of... *[cross]* Um...

AUSTIN: Totally. *[cross]* I also forget what it is.

SYLVIA: Yeah. It was cool, though.

AUSTIN: Um, and yeah, and this is where Silas knocks out Hitchcock, *[slide: Memoriam College]* uh, at the operating theater, um - oh, you know what? You got the Black Slacks to - to protest. That's why there are all these pictures of black *pants* on this floor one! *[Austin and Ali laugh. Dre "hmm"s jokingly.]* Perfect. Perfect. Perfect. Um...

SYLVIA: We also... foresaw... like, saw like the early version of the Blade in the Dark here, didn't we? *[cross]* With the Yellow House?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. That was... I'm gonna say that was Mister Calendar?

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah, that's the weird knife.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's the weird knife. That grows when it's used. And yeah, people in the chat are noting that yes, you did get that crystal, and you used that crystal to... to - that is part of how Aubrey goes down that - that road.

SYLVIA: *Right.* Yes.

AUSTIN: Um. And you end up leaving, there's a huge fight, there's a fire, that's when the Black Slacks like, storm the building, um, and you manage to just sneak out the back door. Um... down one Hitchcock, one Hitchcock having been badly wounded at that point. Right? Um... Yeah, it was either Master Latitude or- or Mister Calendar, I forget which one had the knife, I - it's super unimportant, um, because they have since been killed, or died from old age, or - not a big thing here. The void nun died, the void nun was killed by the - by the Blade in the Dark, um, Hella - not Hella, uh, Cas- Castille ends up with the Blade in the Dark - no! Is that true? *[cross]* Who has it at that point?

ALI: *[cross]* Maelgwyn. Oh.

DRE: *[cross]* No, I do. Sige did.

AUSTIN: Sige did. Uh, Sige did, right. I remembered someone had to give it to Maelgwyn. Um... but I couldn't remember who had it leaving this. Yeah, Sige, you had it. Which... wild, right? Um...

DRE: Oh, uhhh... I killed... whiiiiich Lance Noble and took a second gun.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's true... that's true. That was really good.

DRE: It's important, 'cause that - that gun shows up later.

AUSTIN: Yeah, it is. *[slide: map of the train]* Uh, and then, and then of the... *[flips through slides, ending up on a crossed-swords emoji and a flower emoji]* oh did I - did I delete it - yeah, here we go, the War and Azaleas, is the third thing that happened, which was the... the, you hit a war clock, with the Fontmen, um I forget exactly what that was just the - like the - group? The Fontmen, who were people who kind of enforced Samoth's like, system of information control? If that was just them hitting the "this means you're at war with them" thing, or if that was like a downtime roll, or both? Um, but -

DRE: I think it was a downtime... roll.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I know what happened during downtime. I don't remember if it was like, an entanglement, or if it was -

ALI: I think it was entanglement.

AUSTIN: Okay. Okay. Um, boy, that went a way, there was a mall, there was a guy who sold shoes, *[Ali agrees, laughing]* um, there was... *[sighs]* what else was there.

ALI: Um.

AUSTIN: Debate over whether or not azaleas and rhododendrons are the same thing... *[Ali giggles. Dre agrees.] (muttered)* They are. I learned.

DRE: Uh, Aubrey got drunk.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Aubrey got drunk.

KEITH: *[cross]* Wait, if they're the same thing why are they called two different things?

AUSTIN: I - listen, Keith, you know... I just don't know. Uh, right, Rebecca was one of the - the Fontmen, um... yeah, the... *[searching noise]*

SYLVIA: Oh, I think -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Uh, is the order here off?

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Was this before the College?

AUSTIN: Maybe it was.

SYLVIA: Someone mentioned - I think it was, because... I believe this is when the famous "have you ever fought a ghost" line comes from.

AUSTIN: I'm gonna -

SYLVIA: And we didn't very much fight ghosts in the College, right? *[cross]* Or am I wrong -

AUSTIN: *(slowly)* You do fight ghosts in the College...

ALI: This is where we establish that the Hitchcocks are afraid of ghosts, and carry anti-ghost charms? *[cross] [laughs]* 'Cause -

AUSTIN: You're right, you're right. This is before, this is before that, then. Yes. Okay. That makes sense.

KEITH: I'm - everything I'm seeing is that azaleas and rhododendrons here are different things.

AUSTIN: Then maybe it was a different thing than azaleas. Maybe it was - maybe it was chrysanthemu - no.

KEITH: Chrysanthemums are gold, right? *[cross]* If they do look -

AUSTIN: *(skeptically)* Mmmm... *[cross]* thespruce.com says... *[laughs]* that I think they might basically be. I - I'm gonna close this page. Y'know? Ah, here we go. "Blame the name and confusion on Linnaeus in 1753". Thank you, to Linnaeus. Thank you. Bye. Closing it. *[Ali giggles]* Moving on. You're right. You're right, War and Azaleas was before that, you're *totally* right, um, uh, because Maelgwyn isn't around for this in any way, this is before Caroline uh - uh joined - you know, before any of the - the... like, extended crew joins the S - oh I guess that's not true, Zaktrak and Peg are probably with the Six by now, right? So - whatever. The point is, y'all are a bunch of thieves, who steal information and who wind up, uh, really just pushing it until - *[slide: knife emoji and sun emoji]* until, uh, you team up with Maelgwyn and through a series of manipulations, bad rolls, and miscommunications, Maelgwyn becomes convinced that the way to... uh... the way to save the world, effectively, is to kill his father. Um, I guess we could say, yeah, Maelgwyn was Samot and - and Samoth's son, um, and... uh... is convinced that he has to - because of a bad roll, that uh - because of a bad roll, and because you had the Blade to begin with, and because of all that other stuff that rolls up to it, because he's being manipulated already by the mages, uh, is convinced he has to kill Samoth with the Blade in the Dark. Um... and so... we do. *[slide: map of Samoth's volcano]*

[1:09:48]

ALI: Yeah, she was just like "this is a cool knife" *[background wheezing]* and there was a bunch of other people in his ear. *[cross]* *[laughing]* Like -

AUSTIN: That's true. Yes. *[cross]* All of the mages. Yes. Absolutely. That is the, like - the... Fester Finlays, and the, um, uh... I was just looking at these names the other day, I was just looking at everyone who was killed by the *[laughs]* Blade in the Dark. Um... but it was those folks, right? It was that group of mages who was using the - the Mask of Samot to whisper in Maelgwyn's ear as if it were Samot. But it was not Samot. *[Ali: Yep.]* Um... you come here, there's a big - you go to the forge, you go to - to Samoth's, like, castle during High Sun Day, uh, a castle built into a - into a volcano, um, you... what else. What are the big events here besides - besides the end result.

[brief silence]

ALI: Bird people... *[cross]* Um...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Bird people are there, they're naked. That's cool.

ALI: Giving Samot champagne...

AUSTIN: True...

DRE: Kindrali's there.

AUSTIN: *[overlapping]* Kindrali is there - you can see there's a bunch of like weird symbols here, those were staircases? That for some reason Roll20 lost access to. Um. I dunno why, but that - those were staircases, or doors, or something. I think that they were staircases, and - somehow they got turned into like, this like bad image file, so. Oh well. Um... Someone says "what is that yellow circle in Samot's room". Gooooood question. *[brief pause]* Don't remember. Um... *[pause]* was it Samothos? *[Keith says something unintelligible]* At some point?

SYLVIA: Was that the like, elevator teleporter thing? I don't remember if it was an elevator or if it was a -

AUSTIN: I *don't* remember. At all.

SYLVIA: But I remember there was some sort of, like, thing we talked about to get to there and I'm pretty sure that was the end, um - but I *could* be... *completely* wrong. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right. In the end, Sige, you defend - you've de- *[stammers]* you, because of what Samol has told you, decide to defend Samothos, as the rest of the party effectively tries to let, or get Maelgwyn to get the killing blow - ah, you know, it isn't even about the sword, right. It's about - the thing that - that is - that - the rule, or the plan is "kill Samothos", the *belief* is there is some sort of artifact that will activate when Samothos is killed, that will - like, save the world, effectively. That will grant power *to* Maelgwyn, and with that power, Maelgwyn will be able to, like, fix Samol and save everybody. That does not happen. Instead, *[chuckles]* Samothos is... pulled in a bunch of different directions? Um, is, uh, is... stored inside of? Is - is trapped inside the Blade in the Dark, and Maelgwyn is magically transformed into... Samothos 2. Into, uh, y'know, whatever you wanna - the Dark Sun, into uh Cool Ranch, it - depending on which part of the fandom you're in. *[background laughter]* Uh... And... uh... is locked in - *is* locked in an artifact that no one knew what it was, and that artifact is a, uh, a sort of - *[sighs]* we kind of described it at one point as being like a prison, or a tomb, uh, in Winter he describes it as being pinned to the bottom - to the bottom of Hieron, he's effectively at the very lowest level of Hieron, which I guess we'll have to get into also in a minute, um, that's - that's a question that should've been here, "what the fuck is a strata and a lamina." Um... and it is... uh, is trapped down there. Um, and is stuck as like, a Dark Samothos. Uhm.

And... the reason that he's there is, or the thing that's happened is, by doing that, that artifact has stripped away the special power that all the gods had, or that those five gods had, called reconfiguration that let them remake the world, that let them rewrite history, kinda load a save game and try again? Um, and the thing we end up learning in - in Winter is when you do that, the past save game is not erased, it's just like - it's like you put a new layer of paper on top

of it. You put a new book on top of it, and that - that old book is still there in some part, right, it maybe gets torn up a little bit, maybe the Heat and Dark eats it a little bit, um, but that is - that is there. I guess that's the other big thing in Marielda - Marielda introduces the Heat and the Dark. Marielda says "there is this thing called the Heat and the Dark. We are on this landmass named Hieron, that is made of Samol, that is, uh, uh floating in Nothing, in a - a blaze of Nothing, and that blaze is getting closer and closer." Or, is beginning to eat away at the structure of - of the world. Um. Is there anything else... ?

Yeah, Photoshop layers also works, but it - it only - the thing that it doesn't work is that that's only - the thing in Photoshop is you have different stuff on the layers. The thing in strata and lamina is, much of it is the same. Inside of a lamina - inside of any given lamina, inside of any given like, layer? You're just - you're just kind of being like "oh, we just wanna change this one little bit a little bit", it's like "I wanna choose the other ending, I wanna get the - I wanna get the... UFO ending this time", in Silent Hill... 2? *[chuckles]* Um, and so "I wanted to do that instead of going the other direction. But I'm gonna save everything else we did." Um?

ALI: All Silent Hills have an ev - a UFO ending, go on. *[breaks into laughter]*

AUSTIN: Which one?

ALI: All of them do.

AUSTIN: Do they? *[cross]* Do they all have the UFO ending?

ALI: *[cross]* All. Yeah. Yeah, yeah!

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Thank you. I was looking for the... for the help guide.

KEITH: The second one, I think, is the famous one, it's got the dog, right - am I getting this right? Yeah.

ALI: Yeah. 1, 2, and 3 all have it.

AUSTIN: Right. Right, totally. Um... um, Merry Madness says "so do the people realize they've been - they've been covered over?" Yeah, totally! People are - the people underground completely understand this system and live it every day. And move between them freely, and understand their paths, and like - that was like an important thing with figuring out what Hieron's version of dwarves was, was that "oh the wharvers need to just get this". I'm not gonna send a party down there and be like "you figured out what this *is!*" *[stutters]* You were only here for two weeks and you *understand* it, but these people who have been living here for - who knows how long, forever, for as long as there's been a Hieron don't get it at all." They just like, live in this space that's vaguely multidimensional and like, they get it completely. Um... uh... what else? Anything else here? *[pause]* I think that that's the big Marielda stuff. Uhm, where's everybody end up? Sige... stays for a while, um... what else. *[Sylvia: Uh...]* Castille's uh - I mean Samot

invades, Samot invades and takes over Marielda. That's - renames it the City of First Light, uh... Castille stays on as like... *[pause]* just working with Samot? Right?

ALI: Yeah, she goes back workin' with M - Samot, who she had like, worked for before, um.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. And Aubrey? You stay on as like, Primo? The Primo?

SYLVIA: Yeah, I believe it was like Samot's version of Primo, was the idea there.

AUSTIN: Right. And right, Sige becomes a cop, I forgot.

[pause. Ali starts giggling]

AUSTIN: Right, like a supercop! Uh -

ALI: Oh and then the Hitchcocks go back to... they finally find the map, *[cross]* which is, *[mumbled]* I think we never... yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* They find the map - and they - they find the map - and yeah, we didn't talk about the map - they find the map and then they go back to Samol's place. So. Nice work. And they - they end up living out a full and healthy life there, so shoutouts to the Hitchcocks.

ALI: The map is like their main motivation for doing all of this, it was like their mother's map to their house that they had lost.

AUSTIN: And - and they had been raised by their father, they never knew their mom, blah blah blah blah blah... Anyway. That is... that is Marielda. Um... yeah I dunno what happens. The dogs live happy lives, I'm not gonna fuckin' - ever fuck with a happy dog life. You know? *[Ali chuckles]*

[1:17:18]

AUSTIN: *[slide: giant clock emoji]* Uh, time passes. That is what this - this emoji means. *[slide: map of Hieron, Winter edition]* And... we are back, and it is finally Winter, uh lemme say let's take like a five minute break? And come right back? Does that sound good?

ALI: Okay. Yeah.

DRE: *(faintly)* Sure!

AUSTIN: *[flipping through slides]* Yeah, I'm gonna go back to that nice... clock emoji. There we go! And then what if I play the... Winter music? Does that sound good? *[Ali: Yeah.]* Let's do that. *(faintly)* Lemme find it first. There it is. *[regular volume]* Alright. We will be right back.

[MUSIC - "INSIDE"]

[MUSIC - "RED JACK"]

[silence]

[1:23:55]

AUSTIN: We are back! Uh... hi! Uh - *[gargles]* hello, again! Are we ready to talk about Winter? *[Ali groans, then murmurs agreement]* Big picture? Okay.

[slide: Winter Hieron map] So. Presumably, between the end of Autumn and the beginning of Winter, the group of people that wind up in Rosemerrow on a rooftop together, and that is Fero, Ephrim, Lem, and Fantasma, go from Velas to Rosemerrow - and I guess - Ephrim comes from the east, right. Goes to Rosemerrow from the east... to join a growing Church of Samothēs in - in Rosemerrow that has grown, especially since Ephrim showed up, partially because we left out a big thing, which is: during the word eater stuff, uh, Winter Party, Ice Party sent a giant snowstorm *[laughs]* into Velas and into the north - the northwest of Hieron in general, causing an endless cycle of snowstorms. Um, and so Ephrim's rad immolator power, uh, meant that that was a really easy and powerful way - in general, sun god's well liked during the winter, gotta pray for the sun to come back, um but especially when also you have a Prince who can set things on fire at - at will, right? Um... yeah that was Ice Party's fault, yes, a hundred percent. A hundred percent that was Ice Party's fault. Um...

KEITH: *[from far away]* It's in the name!

AUSTIN: Yeah, right there. Ice Party. *[Ali chortles]* Meanwhile... uhh, the newly-joined up mapmaker and uh... *[sighs]* medicine seller, Adaire? Uhh, along with... Hadrian, Hella, and Thrandir, go south to Old Man's Chin in Twinbrook where they are escorting... Sid Cider-brew? Sol Cider-brew? *(confident)* Sol Cider-brew. *[pause] (uncertain)* Sol Cider-

JANINE: *[cross]* Sid was his brother, right?

KEITH: *[cross]* Sid was in... yeah.

AUSTIN: Sid's his cousin, right? Sid Half-off. Sid is his cousin. *[Janine and Keith agreeing]* Sol Cider-brew... are... going - er- you're escorting that cart, um - which in my mind, that's why it takes longer. To get there. Right? Um, is - is - you have to have this whole cart, you get to Twinbrook, and when you get to Twinbrook you learn that the bridge is collapsed. Um... which sucks. Um... I think that that's like, the big picture stuff. *[slide: map of Twinbrook]* Uh, here's Twinbrook? Uhh you roll up to Twinbrook, what happens? Um. Forest Party - is that what you were called? Is that what we called y'all? Forest Party and Mountain Party.

JANINE: I think so.

ALI: Mhm. *[Dre and others agree in the background]*

AUSTIN: Talk to me - talk to me about Twinbrook, and *[inhales]* Old Man's Chin. *[exhales deeply]*

[pause]

ART: *(faintly)* There were bug people. *[Ali laughs]*

AUSTIN: *(amused)* Uh huh. That is how it's kicked off...

ART: ... And there was conflict... about the - *[indistinct under Ali's laughter]*

JANINE: There was - there was a dam that they built in Twinbrook because people kept falling in the water and getting swept up under the ice and swept away and dying.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JANINE: Um. Is my understanding. And they - they built a dam in this river and that - fucked up the situation for the moths, um, and the weavers and stuff - the moths tried to rob us. *[cross]* They tried to steal the water off the cart. I think is the thing. And...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* That is true. Yes. I am now nineteen or twenty episodes into this season on a relisten, um, and so, this part is at the very least a little bit more in my foremind *[Ali chuckles]* than - than anything else we just did. Thankfully. So yeah, so far so good.

JANINE: Um, so the weavers are plant people who need the water to be good at - being plant people. *[Austin: Yeah.]* Especially the Weaver King, who like, heals people up and stuff, um... and... there's also Red Jack and his rowdy, rowdy children, and his horse... who... *[pause]* came to Twinbrook to do some like shenanigans, and then we end up like, talking to them? *[cross]* About the problem? Right?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You... *[pause]* Alright, so there's a bit where the weavers are trying to *steal* uhh, uh the cart? Again? Um, but I think you end up just meeting Red Jack in the woods, because there's a point at which Throndir convi - there's a point at which *Fron*d, one of the - one of the moths who has become undead, is just trying to destroy the dam with like a sword, by himself? And just like hitting it over and over again? And you convince Fron

d to walk into the woods and I *think* you finally start talking to Red Jack in the woods but maybe I'm wrong. Maybe - oh, you're right, Red Jack - okay, yeah, Red Jack does just steal the cart, I'm, I may have missed that part on my relisten. Um... I should just actually show people Twinbrook... *[In quick succession - slide: closeup of the map where Forest Party is fighting the mothkin and Red Jack. Slide: map of*

Twinbrook] directly, because it's hideous... *[laughs]* Um... uh... the Greasy Snifter, everyone's favorite... place, where The Lardwulf is, um, the Church of Samoths, the Primping Badger, uh, the Regency Inn and Tavern - this *fucking place* is like, a bunch of carts, a church, and *three different taverns*. *[snorts]* *[Keith and Dre laugh]*

JANINE: I mean, look, a tavern of the period is gonna - *[huffs]* of the period - you know what I mean. Is gonna take on many different names, you get - your dinner there, *[cross]* you also have lodging for visitors -

AUSTIN: You want some options. Yeah.

DRE: Meetings.

JANINE: *[cross]* You can - grift...

ART: *[cross]* I've been in some small towns in my time and they've got bars!

AUSTIN: Mm, yeah. Um... Yeah. *[laughs quietly]* Uh... Twinbrook is split - or is in the middle of two different rivers, the Cloud River, which is the one that had been dammed up, and then what *had* been the Rose River, which has since run dry. And now it is just this big canyon. Um, and the bridge across the Rose River had been broken, and so... yeah.

JANINE: And P.S, Ordenna is coming, right, like this was - we were also... I think, *[cross]* aware of that, 'cause they were gonna fix that bridge or something?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes, a hundred - you become - *[slide: map of Twinbrook and Old Man's Chin]* aware of that, yeah you become aware of that when you get to Twinbrook, because there is a group of Justiciar, which are these new kind of - Ordennan witch hunters, in Twinbrook, ahead of the arrival of the Impetus, which is the kind of new Ordennan war machine. The big, one of the big stakes of Winter was, uh, Ordenna had - had become this giant militaristic power *[swallows]* that was ready to point itself somewhere on this continent and begin to - to grow. It had already - it had one foothold in Nacre, and it was looking at both Velas and Rosemerrow as potential places to put the rest of its army. And so, you knew that you were kind of stuck here until Ordenna fixed the bridge, and you could continue on to, uh... to - to Rosemerrow with the cart that you were protecting to get some money ahead of your journey, to the... *[flips through slides, settling on the Hieron map]* the south, to this - to the icon that the Boat Party was originally *[snorts]* headed to so many years ago. Um... y'all meet the moths, you meet Rosette, who's like the Moth Queen, you meet like you said Red Jack, and the weaver king, and you decide to help them instead of helping, um... the Ordennans. *[slide: zoomed in map of the fight]* Or at least, *most* of you do. *[Ali laughs, slightly startled]* Hella, you... don't? You're not so keen on it, right?

ALI: I waffle. *[laughs]* And try to do some non-violent... *[cross]* assistance, and then eventually come around.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah. Yeah. And take over some pala-din, or some Anchors.

JANINE: *[cross]* If there's two things that go together really well, it's Hella and non-violence. *[Ali bursts into laughter]*

AUSTIN: Yeah. *[indistinct burst of crosstalk]*

KEITH: I thought you were gonna say Hella and waffles.

ALI: *[laughs]* Attempt to get some water, it does not go well, attempted to train some people, I think? *[cross]* Only sort of well, and then -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I think that goes alright. Yeah...

ALI: In the middle of the night, is finally like "fuck this, this sucks, man."

AUSTIN: You kill... You kill, like a double general or whatever named Raporro Coro Don, and you learn that you can control, using - using his plates, his like, the special piece of stone he has, um, uh, his detachment of Anchor, which are... uh, new model pala-din that the Ordennans have learned how to build through a combination of Nacre technology and - and some actual pala-din that they found, *in* the Isle of Eventide, behind a door that Hella could not open, at the - during the first game. Um - *[cross]* I *compare* him to the Doctor General, but he is not actually a Doctor General, I compare him to somebody who would insist you call him Doctor General, but I don't believe he's actually - anyway. I *just* listened to this.

KEITH: *[cross, barely audible]* Now, who *could* open it there?

AUSTIN: Um... *[pause]* What were you saying, Fero?

KEITH: I just wanted to know, who - who could *possibly* open that door? Come on. *[cross]* We *tried*, pretty hard!

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Good question. You did!

ALI: If Hella couldn't? Come on.

AUSTIN: Who could? That's true.

DRE: *[cross]* Exactly. *[Sylvia starts to say something in agreement, but cuts herself off]*

AUSTIN: You know what, I think it's probably 'cause they had that Nacre technology that they probably figured out how to like, y'know, winch, or like a - like a jack, uh boop-boop-boop, and then unboop. I dunno. Um...

ALI: *(incredulous)* Was that *Ephrim*? *[wheezes]*

AUSTIN: Did - what.

ALI: You said that they *could* -

SYLVIA: I thought we coulda, yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Fire, y'know.

SYLVIA: Yeah, I could, I - *(very close to the mic)* I have - I *burned* through a very big door... *[Ali and others laugh]* We'll *get* to it? I - I can handle any fuckin' door.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* It's true. It's true. Um... *[sighs]* Tryna think of any other important Twinbrook stuff, or any other important stuff here, uh - this is the first time again we've seen, like, Ordenna misunderstanding what the fuck the curse is, and the fact that they are the big people spreading it, uh that it is not a disease, that it is about the expansion of Nacre, and those who've stayed on Nacre land, and also the fact that they just don't *care* about what it is? And they're just kinda like arbitrary... uh, fascists, *[laughs]* basically? That are - *[cross]* that are drawin' lines -

JANINE: *[cross]* "We find it everywhere we go, therefore we should take over everywhere we go!"

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Everywhere we go, exactly! Exactly! Um... uh, this is also -

ART: Hadrian lays a big guilt trip on Hella. *[Ali agrees]*

AUSTIN: True. That's a *great* scene. People should go back and just listen to that fuckin' scene, it's *incredible*. *[Art chuckles]* Um... there's a lot of - there's honestly a lot of good speeches from everybody during this sequence, a lot of good exchanges during this whole thing... uh, Hadrian, you pray to God a whole bunch, um, your ring falls off at one point, uh, your... uh instead of being answered by the sun, the sun goes away, uh... *[Dre snickers]* and, uh, Samot! Is your primary - is the person who's primarily talking to you at this point, because - things get cold, and the - the cape - the cloak of Samot, that - that he gave you when he resurrected you, kind of pull - you pull it tighter around you, at one point a wolf literally shows up and is like "hey, it's me, a wolf." *[Art snorts]* And at that point - by then it's also the last wolf alive? Because something that happens early on in this season on the *other* side of the game is that Fero, you miss a roll when you turn into a wolf, and in that moment the - all the other wolves on Hieron disappear. Um. Which means that Samot is *literally* the last wolf alive. Um... ?

ART: I think it's important to note that Hadrian does *not* figure out the "multiple gods talking to him" until like, the last ten minutes of the season. *[Ali snickers]*

AUSTIN: That's correct. Yeah. A hundred percent. Um... other important stuff in Twinbrook. I don't - I'm trying to think if there's anything else that's super... y'all win that fight. Beat the shit out of Ordenna. Celebrate... Oh. Uh, Ru, uh, uh, Rosette, on Adaire's - wish, *(amused)* flies Adaire to Rosemerrow. *[Ali and Janine chuckle]* To meet with Chancellor Lutz! Who is an acquaintance? Of Adaire's? *[pause]* Is that fair to say? *[cross]* Y'all get soup.

[1:34:50]

JANINE: *[cross]* Yeah... I think it was... uh, I tr - I don't remember the reason I gave - the reasoning I gave for them being acquaintances, it might've just been, like... oh, oh! It was because she had been to Rosemerrow before and been like "hey I'll make you a map, it'll increase local trade". Local commerce.

AUSTIN: *[sniffles]* Uh huh. Yeah.

JANINE: And he was like "cool, I'll show you around!" Um. And then so we went to a diner and I asked for some reinforcements and he did send some? *[trails off tentatively]*

AUSTIN: Mhm, he does. In fact, he sends Balion Wythe, who is his... on-again off-again partner, um his like adventurous... companion, they - they once run - they once ran away from Rosemerrow together and were hunted by enemies, and uhh sends his like personal bodyguard detachment, and they are actually on the map, they help stop some bullshit. Let me go back to that map. One second. Uhhh... *[slide: map of Old Man's Chin and Twinbrook]* Boop! They are the ones with the bow, on the other side of the river, they show up and like take out one extra detachment of the Anchor. Um - I dunno why you're on this map twice, Adaire, but I think it's very funny that you're on this map twice. *[Janine laughs]* Um... ? Other important stuff, I think that that might be it. I think that might be the only - the end of the Twinbrook stuff, basically. If someone else remembers something - *oh*. Uh, Thrandir, you meet the leader of the animals? *[short silence]*

DRE: Oh, yeah!

AUSTIN: A squirrel, named Carrot? *[pause as he takes a breath]* Um, 'cause like before you can convince the bears to fight, you gotta convince the squirrels. *[snorts]* Uh, and you do. And - and Carrot helps, Sol gets killed by the weavers? But. The curse has happened, and so Sol shows up again later. Um...

JANINE: But I got a nice pocket-watch out of it, so we're fine...

AUSTIN: You're right. That's true. The weavers did give you that dope pocket-watch - *[cross]* you shoulda sold that for *money*.

JANINE: *[cross]* Oh we didn't - no... I made good use - I'm happy with how I've used that pocket-watch. Uh, the thing we didn't mention is why it's good that Sol was killed, which was, Adaire, like, tried to make a deal with him to convince people to take the dam out, and he's like "Well... I'll be..." I forget what the exact thing was, but he was like "I'm gonna be some sort of commerce guy, and it'll be great!" And it didn't - like - "we'll just give them buckets of water, sometimes!" It was some shit like that. It was like no, that was not -

AUSTIN: *[intermittent crosstalk]* Okay. Oh yeah. Yeah. He fuckin' sucks. Yeah.

JANINE: *[cross]* That's not - yeah. *[laughs]*

KEITH: Are you thinking of the Dying Light 2 E3 demo? *[Ali snickers right into her mic]*

AUSTIN: *[through Ali's laughter]* Yeah, that's right. The Dying Light 2 E3 demo. That's *[laughs]* 100% it. Um... yeah. And, uh - wh - I should also note one of my favorite characters from last season, from Winter, Gnack, with a G, the - the goblin businessman who showed up to help do the hard pitch on getting rid of the dam to the... regent of this place, along with Thrandir and Hadrian, uh, Gnack the goblin, shoutouts, MVP, y'know, really helped things along. *[Dre chuckles quietly]* Um? *[pause, buffering noises]* Sol was killed! He came back and he - when he came back he was undead, that's - I *just* listened to that episode like two days ago, because Janine is like "what! How is he back! The - the weavers said that we took care of him!" and - they did, but. The curse. So.

JANINE: I thought I'd been scammed.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

JANINE: It's fine.

AUSTIN: Um... Alright. *[buffering noises. Flips through slides and settles on a map of Rosemerrow]* Meanwhile, in Rosemerrow... uh, which is here, we... did... some heisting. Still feeling that Marielda buzz, still wanted to do some heists, anyone wanna talk to me about - about the New Old Museum?

[pause]

SYLVIA & KEITH: *(both very hesitant, simultaneously)* ... Yeah.

SYLVIA: ... So. *[quiet chuckles in the background]*

KEITH: Let's - Sylvi and I are going to tell you what happened at the same time. Alright. *[Sylvia laughs]* Three, two, one -

SYLVIA: I fell off a roof...

KEITH: *[cross]* There was this - *[Ali and others laugh]* Okay. How long were you gonna do this bit for? *[Janine chuckles]*

SYLVIA: I dunno.

KEITH: I'll - I'll do it for five minutes.

AUSTIN: Uh huh?

SYLVIA: I thought we were - that we were gonna end it right there. *[laughing subsides. Austin says "okay" from a distance.]*

KEITH: Um... you can start with falling off the roof.

SYLVIA: *[huffs]* I mean like, that is kind of important is that Fantasma and I almost immediately got separated from the group, uh, and captured by gnolls, and then Lem and Fero got high. I think.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* That's - they light stuff.

KEITH: *[cross]* Only on accident.

SYLVIA: By accident, right? Like you guys touched the plant that Morbash had given Lem... *[cross]* Oh no, that was before -

AUSTIN: No. *[cross]* You guys *get* high on purpose, one hundred percent. Oh, *early*, you're talking about, on the roof! Yeah. Yes.

SYLVIA: I'm talking about like early on, I remember there being some sort of negative thing that happened because of that plant. *[cross]* It was... yeah.

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah, yeah. We...

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: So, Lem was trying to take care of the plant, and I said "Dude. I know plants. Come on." *[Ali snorts]* "I can help you keep this thing alive." And instead it made us high. *[cross]* Yeah.

AUSTIN: And that made you like confused, or gave you some other debility, um. Yeah, y'all each had - I mean, everybody had love letters coming into this season, which we did not go over just - on the other side of the party, uh - maybe I'll wrap back around to those but that was like yes, Lem had to take care of this special plant from Morbash that was only growing in Velas, and he, uh, he had the last one that was still alive, um, Fero, you had learned that a special type - or like, an insect had gone missing, this was ahead of the wolf roll? Um, so the first thing that went missing last year was the - an insect you realized had - had gone missing from the world, um, uh Ephrim... what was yours? *[exhale]* Oh, it was about your relationship with the - like the Church and with Rosemerrow, you made the roll that meant that Rosemerrow was way into Samoths. That's what you did. Um, and Fantasma, I think, was looking into the Disciples? *[short pause]* Um, yes. Fantasma was the one whose roll and like love letter stuff ended up being tied to Isaac Adelton, who was this mage, uh, who was caught up with some Lenny Lenova *bullshit*. *[short pause]* Um...

KEITH: And so part of that bullshit was that we went to the New Old Museum. *[Austin: Yeah.]* And the - the entire museum not only... not only did we learn, *[snorts]* - oh so we learned that - that, that uh, that the uh halfings had like, stolen... pretty much all of their culture and land and technology from the gnolls? *[Austin: Yeah.]* And that - and that the museum wasn't just filled with like fakes, it was just the whole thing was like a magic scam. Like, it was like a bunch of sticks that they turned into the first fork. *[Austin: Yeah...]* Like through magic, or whatever. And so we burned it down. *[snickers]* Did we burn it down? *[cross]* Not on purpose.

AUSTIN: You... So... *[cross]* There was fire. There was - uhh.

KEITH: *[cross, indistinct]* It... peaked, burnt down.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* There were moments when Ephrim definitely set some shit on fire on purpose. *[Keith cackles]* And I wanted to say Fantasma may have also done that. Um... there was, later it would be revealed that the actual fire that consumed the entire museum, and - made it weird, which shows up in an episode description, was the arrival of one of the stars. After y'all left, a star crashed there. Um. And did more - did *much* more damage than even your fuckin' fire had started. Um... but yeah, you did not intentionally burn it down. Yeah - you were there, you met - you meet Lenny Lenova, who was there announcing uh, his candidacy for, uh, chancellorship, um... *[cross]* for becoming the chancellor -

KEITH: *[cross]* That guy's a fuckin' shithead. That guy suuucks.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Fuck that guy.

AUSTIN: Yeah, he sucks a lot... um... wh - except for one thing! *[slide: map of the museum atrium, with Mountain Party and several gnolls and halfings in it.] (amused)* Here he is, right here, as this - there's this halfing on a skateboard, and that part was really funny and good. *[Ali giggles, several people make noise simultaneously]*

KEITH: Well that just makes him a *poser*.

AUSTIN: Ohh, true, true true true. *[Sylvia laughs in the background, followed by Dre laughing in the foreground]*

SYLVIA: *(distorted)* Lenny Lenova has never even *listened* to NOFX. He doesn't know how to skateboard.

KEITH: He *has* a skateboard but he just walks, he just carries it around the mall.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* "No bro, I love Nah-fix." *[Beat, then Keith and others burst into laughter]* Um... yeah there's G-Dragon, there's some gnolls, there's the whole clique. Y'know. Y'know they had to do it to you. Um... *[pause]* anything else before that. *[slide: map of the vault and its stairs under the museum]* Okay so you end up - you end up going down in the - downstairs into this long hallway that connects to this vault, there are some pala-din - uh, there are some *non-pala-din*, they were just some guards who Lem... *very*, like, *[cross]* *horribly* fucks up.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* *(remembering)* Ooh. Ugh. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Plays this song that uh, forces one of them to kill the other one, which is doubly bad because of the - the - the, ah, Adelaide's, uh, curse... which is bad, *[sighs]* yeah, Corey and Button, yeah, um... it's like heartbreaking, uhh, uh - and then Mother Glory chases after y'all. And there's an entire sequence with Mother Glory charging you, and then there's like some - some Anchor that are gonna blow up, um, there is a Justiciar nearby, but Ephrim ends up cutting a hole in the door, uh in the vault, getting people in, and then, um... Fero? Either Fero or Lem convinces Mother Glory to like chill and come inside, that y'all are on the same team -

KEITH: I believe that it was me.

AUSTIN: I believe it was F... I believe it was Lem outside, and then you inside. But, *[cross]* I might be wrong.

KEITH: *[cross]* Oh, yeah okay, maybe it's - maybe it was both of us.

AUSTIN: Yeah. And then Mother Glory, who is the leader of the gnolls, um, does come inside, uh, y'all meet Blake Bromley, who is a thief who had already broken into the vault and was looking to rob the place and had heard that there was something special secret down here? Um, and they were cool to like hang out with y'all?

Um, and y'all pass some time. By breaking out the halfling uh, pipelea- uh, leaf, uhhh, and - really putting that to work while reading the first contract, which was effectively the Constitution of Rosemerrow and the *secret* constitution of Rosemerrow that *proved* that the- the, the thing that you now know is that Rosemerrow was originally a place called The Meeting

House, or built around this place called the Meeting House, um, and it was built on uh, the kind of collaboration, it was - it was gnoll land, and then they made contracts with the, the halflings, uh who were these like, at the time they were - they kind of flopped places, right, the halflings were, uh, a group of people who lived in the woods nearby, um, and who were still very technologically um, uh, y'know reliant on - on - they were kinda like hunting-gathering - a hunter-gatherer society? And were like, hyper-aggressive, um, and were pillaging the - the gnolls and stuff, and bit by bit through the use of contracts and through the use of, uh, kind of controlling messaging and also taking advantage of people's perceptions of the gnolls as being big and scary beasts, and the halflings being small and "quaint", and specifically through the construction of this sort of like, um, very... British folk culture? Um, this very like quaint, old-timey, uhh, "things were always better in the good old days and so we're gonna keep things that way", um, really manipulated the history and - and culture to make them this kind of center of Rosemerrow history. And you figured all that out! By finding this document - the true version of this document. Um... ? *[pause]* And then... y'all went further down. I don't think I've missed anything so far, right?

SYLVIA: No, none at all.

KEITH: No.

AUSTIN: Yeahhh. *[chuckles]* Ice Cream Jones in the chat says that "they White Peopled", yeah. *[slide: map of the Meeting House]* Uh, love to take things from - from brown folks and then say that brown folks are scary.

You go into the Meeting House, which underneath the New Old Museum, um, and you find some inscriptions there, you find, uh, the - more history of Rosalind Marrow-eater, who had shown up briefly in Marielda, um, and you wind up in this kind of big floating building that is looking down on like, a shadow grayscale version of Rosemerrow. Right? *[pause]* Is that - *[Keith: Yes.]* Does that - also, I love that we had - we had regular G-Dragon above, and down here we have *(amused)* anime G-Dragon. *[Ali chuckles]*

SYLVIA: *(far away)* Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: That's good. Um? *[sighs]* What all happens here?

SYLVIA: *[beat, quiet inhale]* Okay. *[louder exhale, Ali laughs]* A lot. *[Austin: Yeah.]* Um, I find a cool sword, *[Austin: You do. Mm...]* coincidentally, the sun is gone after that.

AUSTIN: Yeah, weird... huh. *[cross]* yeah.

SYLVIA: Uh, coincidentally. Uh, we... God, there's a l- we fought off these like, the feral... *[cross, mumbled]* I don't wanna say feral -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You... you also learn what that blade is. You also know where the blade there comes from, that blade came from - it's a - it is a sliver of the sun, that Rosalind Marrow-eater stole from Samoth's forge, on the day he died. Which at the time, *[random piano keys plinking faintly in the distance]* was me indirectly teasing that it was the blade portion, not the hilt, but the blade portion - 'cause it was only the blade here that had been turned into this crescent shape. Um, the blade portion of the sword that Samoth's had made for Maelgwyn, and had - you know, said - "if you'd kill me with this sword, things would have been diff -" like, Samoth's had *made* Maelgwyn this special sword to kill him with. Basically. Uh, classic - classic dad move! Um, and, uh, and yeah. So you get the blade portion, but don't have the hilt. The hilt is somewhere else. Right?

KEITH: Do we wanna go around the table real quick and say when our fathers *[cross]* gave us the sword that they said to kill them with?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah. How old were you? Yeah.

KEITH: I was *eight*. *[snickers briefly]*

AUSTIN: Wow, that's young, that's a young - *[cross]* Yeah.

KEITH: That is young. I heard that that was young *[cross, mumbling]* I didn't realize it then...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Did you get the hilt too, or just the blade?

KEITH: I got the hilt when I was fifteen.

AUSTIN: Okay, that's good though. *[Ali: Wow...]* You had like seven years to just sit with the blade and be like, "Alright, gotta get ready. fuckdads.com."

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah. And I can't really do anything with it because I would pick it up all - like, there's no way to pick it up without -

AUSTIN: Getting rid of the sun.

KEITH: It's just blade.

AUSTIN: Right, the sun goes away. Yeah, totally. Right. Totally. Um... apparently audio got bad. I don't know. Did the audio get bad?

ALI: Mm?

AUSTIN: ... I don't know!

ART: *(extremely quietly)* I don't...

AUSTIN: My chat just disappeared, so that's great.

SYLVIA: *[cross] (deadpan)* That's a good sign.

KEITH: Mine did too! Oh it's back!

AUSTIN: *[cross] Really!* Weird!

KEITH: No. Oh, it's - I guess maybe just for one person?

AUSTIN: Okay, okay, okay. That's good. Um...? Other stuff that happened here.

[pause]

SYLVIA: Um...

AUSTIN: The gnoll - er, not the gnolls, the... ghoulish versions of these old halflings show up?
[Sylvia: Yeah.] Who are living here in the kind of in-between... zone, forever?

[Beat of silence. Someone bumps their mic.]

SYLVIA: I'm trying to remember, there was something that like, happened when they attacked people, to the people that they hurt? I think - If I'm - I might be misremembering here, but I feel like something happened that started changing people into like - 'cause there were statues that were here.

AUSTIN: *[cross] [fumbles his mic]* Oops! Sorry, that was me. Um... I don't know if there were statues, I think they were like engravings of stuff...

SYLVIA: *[cross]* I - yeah, I - I'm probably just misremembering here. Uh... I, what - the big thing is, I think we all got out and like, that's kinda when Mother Glory and Blake kinda became more friendly with the group... [Austin: Mhm.] a little bit... 'cause we, y'know.

AUSTIN: You fought through this all together. *[cross]* Yeah. Um, yeah -

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Yeah, and it was a cool thing that has nothing to do with the sun disappearing!

AUSTIN: Totally. *[Ali chuckles]* Um, there was a combat, there was a moment where Fero saves Lem's life, as - as Merima in the chat is - is, is reminding us, um, it was a hard fight. Like it was - I definitely - it was definitely one of those ones where I was like "fuck, is this gonna - are they

gonna *die*, on this bullshit nothing fight that I didn't mean to be bad," uh, but ended up doing alright there, leaving with the - with the crescent blade, um... what else.

KEITH: I do remember that that was a tough fight! Was that not supposed to have been a tough fight? *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: It was supposed to be like - it was supposed to be - it's the final fight of this arc, you know? *[Keith: Yeah. Yeah.]* So it was supposed to be like *hard*, but it - ended up being one of those ones where it was like, "oy, this is... a little harder than... than... it should have been." You know? Um... *[busy noises]*

ALI: *(concerned)* Can we zoom in on the sun thing a little bit? 'Cause... *[dissolves into a chuckle]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Sure. Totally.

ALI: Ephrim takes the sword...

AUSTIN: Yes. At the same time that - that Hadrian does this prayer. *[sniffling noise in the background]*

ALI: *(understands now)* Ohhhh-kay.

AUSTIN: And I - that is - a... that is a mystery... *[pause, Ali laughs]* I wish Jack was here, because he would know how to frame this well, but there are things that are like "yeah, and those two things happen at the same time."

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: And it's like, those two things happen at the same time. Does that - is that why that happens? *[noncommittal noise]* Don't know. Um, like that - that's - the vagueness around that, I think, is important, that like - Hadrian fails that prayer at the same time. But! I can totally tell you, like, there *are*... In my mind, and on my notes, which is important, mm well let me get my - let me get my lamina notes up, one second. *[intermittent periods of silence as Austin talks to himself quietly]* Drive. That's where I keep my notes. *(louder)* Um - I guess this is also a point where we can talk about strata and lamina, because this is the first time that you leave the top - floor, of Hieron. Right?

[1:50:43]

AUSTIN: Stratum Zero. So - Hieron is a layer cake. And it has a *ton* of these strata and lamina. Strata are these giant, big, um... are the biggest layer? The note that I have here is that each strata - each strata is made up of multiple uh lamina, right. So like, I guess you could talk about

it as like... shelves? *[sighs]* And on each shelf there's a bunch of books, but they're like vertical shelves? *[laughs] (amused)* Does that make sense? Um.

KEITH: On my bookshelf I have books that are like more, like -

AUSTIN: Vertical than -

KEITH: Space-economical to stack *[cross]* instead of in a row? So like that?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Sure. Alright. So then - so then yeah, let's - you know what? Here. I got - I got exactly what I want to do. Boom. Check this shit out. *[drags MS Paint onto the screen]* This is - this is a little program I like to call Microsoft Paint. *[Ali giggles] (muttering to himself)* Pull this out here.

KEITH: *[cross]* You know books I have that are like that? I have the - I have all my Star Wars Obi-Wan books from when I was a kid. *[Austin: Ooh, yeah...]* And I stacked those vertically, because they're too - they're really thin, but there's a ton of them...

AUSTIN: *[has been drawing a rectangle in Paint] [cross]* Yeah... Right.

KEITH: Takes a lot of space, just to stack them up. Uh -

AUSTIN: *[adds a line across the top portion of the rectangle]* So. *[Ali murmurs something about Microsoft Paint] [cross]* Boom.

KEITH: *[cross]* So Hieron is stacked... Star Wars Obi-Wan books.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Is stacked. A hundred percent. And y'all have been up here on Stratum - *[makes a typo]* that's "strum" - Stratum Zero, right? Um, and Stratum Zero has two lamina. It has - it has Lamina Zero, that's why everyone underground calls y'all zeroes, which is like, *(as he types it out on screen)* "the Hieron we know and love", question mark? *[Ali snickers]* Uh...

KEITH: I - Keith loves it.

AUSTIN: But Fero. Less so. *[beat]* Alright. Then there's also inside of that top stratum, this like transitional s-strata? *[makes a thick line dividing the top segment]* Uh... *(muttering)* Actually I don't want to do that, I wanna do like a tiny line here... Here we go. Right. *[makes a thinner line in the same spot]* There's like a little line here, and then there's another one which is Lamina One, which is a threshold space. Which is the space that y'all go - go down to. This is - this is where there is um, uh, present - or - or, or, the Meeting House, right. The Meeting - is that what I called it? The Meeting House? The Meeting Room? The Meeting House. Um. And that is what connects to the next stratum. Next - and then there's another big, Stratum Two. Or, Stratum One. And that is from immediately before Samoth's death. That is the world in which um, uh...

that is like - all that is when - when... um... Tristero goes away, right, er goes to Nacre, all that stuff is happening there, um, and you can look down on that world from that threshold space at the Meeting House, and from the threshold space of like the bridge that - that - the Forest Party ends up going to at some point, all that stuff is on Lamina One, that is like looking down on the next stratum below. Um, these continue -

KEITH: *[cross]* What -

AUSTIN: Go ahead - keep - keep, uh - go ahead and - and ask.

KEITH: What is... okay. So like... what happen - so you - you're saying it's like stacked, and so we - we go down to Lamina One, and there's stuff there.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. Yeah. There's stuff there. Yeah. And -

KEITH: *[cross]* And we can see it, and it's - it's kinda bad! It's bad down there.

AUSTIN: Well, what that stuff is, is the previous Hierons that have existed. So, let's say you go all the way to the bottom. You go to the bottom lamina. That is like, Nothing, right. There's no sun, there's no death, the only thing that exists there - the only thing that can even be there, is like, Samol, Samoths, the Sams, basically. Things that are immortal, things that like - have - are not just mortal beings. [Keith: Mhm.] Above that is like, I mean I can just say this, above the - the very bottom peak, or like - and you can almost think about - about, uh, Hieron as being a mountain? Right? Or like a - or like an iceberg, I guess, right? Think about it as being an iceberg. At the very bottom is where like, only the Sams can go. The one above that is like, the empire of Death. That is when Death gets invented, right? One above that is when like, the first - the first physicality starts to exist. One above that is when like the world is - is remaking itself, and is like, it starts to have some degree of order. And bit by bit, this is the gods using reconfiguration to kind of load an old save, and - and push things forward a different way. The stratum are the big changes. The stratum are like, um, the big branches. It's like when you've decided - I had a really good, *[huffs]* I had a really good breakdown of this, uh, over in the Discord that I'm just going to find and - and maybe read? Uh, if you're in the Discord, it's - "Dwarf Fortress" is what to search for? Uh, 'cause that's - that was my big breakdown, because that was -

KEITH: I guess my - my question was gonna be, like, if the strata - what happens to the other branches.

AUSTIN: They all exist. You don't get to erase anything. They all exist, they get partially fucked up in the layering, um, which is why it's not just complete worlds, over and over again? Some of them *are* complete, some of them change less th-than others, and it's okay, but, it's like, each... each stratum is - is a - is a reset all the way to zero. Whereas each lamina is just loading a slightly previous version, and changing from there. Does that make sense?

KEITH: *[cross]* Got it. Yep.

AUSTIN: It's like, Stratum Five is the one in which you decided to roll bard, and Stratum Six is the one where you were like "nah I'm starting this whole fuckin' game of Skyrim over, and this time I'm gonna focus on like, all physical combat. But I'mma start from the very beginning."

KEITH: "I wanna be the king of the wizards and the king of the Assassination Guild."

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah, this is the - the actual problem is that Bethesda games are the fucking worst examples of this *[Keith laughs]* because you literally *can* just do everything in those games? Um... the example that I gave in the - in the Discord chat is: "Lamina are contained inside of strata", um, uh, *[reading very quickly]* "think of it as a very complex video game system." Let's say you - imagine you've played through, at this point, thirty hours of Dwarf Fortress. At the very very very top, you - the - the - in Strata Zero, all of the things in Stratum Zero are this base you built at a river. And then like, at Lamina One, that is your current save. That's just like - or at Lamina Zero, that's your current save. That's where you are right now. The lamina behi- uh, under that could be, y'know, one in which... you... y'know you still built your base near a river, but on that one you, uh, lost a bunch of people in a - in a landslide. And then - and then there's one below that, that maybe you didn't get as far in, it's only fifteen hours in, and that's a save where you know, you - you - you hit reset, or you - you went backwards because all your crops spoiled or something. Then the next stratum? The next big thing? Is like "no, I didn't build my fuckin' base near a river at all, back then I built my base near a forest." And so you're just like, going - it's kind of just like completely new save states from the very beginning?

KEITH: *[cross]* Got it.

AUSTIN: Um, and the reason they do this is because there are things that you can fix, like, as a god, the - the power that the gods had, until Marielda ended, was rewriting history. And so, if you're Samoths, and you want there to be a culture of engineers who know how *[laughs]* to work with volcanic ash, you need to introduce them into society and culture and history at some point. Um, there are times that you can do that by just rewinding the clock a little bit? You go like "Um... I'll go back seven hundred years and drop them in here." And that'll give them enough time to like, develop. But there are things you can't just do that with, because too many other conditions are already set, and are already in place if that makes sense, right. So like, if, um... I'm looking at my notes of previous - previous stratums here, right.

So, for instance, um *[laughs]* there is... one in which, uh... oh we've talked about this one before, where Severeia and, uh Galenica become, like, the leading gods? And in that world, the orcs and the halflings ruled the world from the jump. Uh, uh, Severeia and Galenica were just like *[snaps fingers]* orcs! Halflings! From the jump, you have a ton of supplies, they've gone into the game, they've raised all the sliders for who gets what, all the way up for the orcs and the halflings, and so from day zero, the orcs and the halflings are just like, kings. Um, and so if you're Samoths, you're like "No! Fuck that!" Like, I wanna go back the other way! I wanna

make it so that, y'know, Nacre has a bunch of shit, you can't just go back five hundred years and do it there, because at that point, the - the halflings have already like, really dug in and directed history, and everyone's already speaking Orcish and Halfling, and so you go back and you're like "you know what, new strata. Let's go back from the very top." And that's what history was, *forever*. Going back before Marielda. It was literally just the gods making and remaking the world, over and *[laughs]* over again indefinitely, and just layering new worlds on top of the old ones. And so like yeah, sometimes Samol eats seven people, that's *nothing* compared to what the fuck these people have been doing, forever, like the gods *suck!* Um. I think that is... as close as I can get to like, what... the basic thing of all of that is? Does that make sense? *[pause]* More sense? *[huffing laugh]* Less sense?

KEITH: *[very distantly]* Yeah no, more sense.

AUSTIN: Okay.

JANINE: More, yeah.

AUSTIN: It's bad! It's not good. Like, it's - it's - I - this is - yeah. Uh. And that's how it's been. Or that's how it *was*, until Marielda ends. So. Trying to think if there's any other - descriptions here -

KEITH: *[cross]* Oh. We used an analogy in one of the first episodes, uh, that I - I think makes Samol eating people sometimes pretty internally consistent?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. Mhm?

KEITH: *[stammering]* The bush analogy?

AUSTIN: *[beat]* What was that.

KEITH: Uhhh... you said... *[unintelligible crosstalk]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I'm trying to remember... Oh! The episode that hasn't come out yet, you were talking about.

KEITH: Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah, *[cross]* that's what I -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah yeah, you can - you can go ahead and - you can go ahead and use this analogy.

KEITH: Oh okay. You were talking about uh, y-you described, um, or *[background metal jingling]* - you said - one of us described Samol as a - like, as a bush, and then all of the - all of the things of Hieron are the branches and the leaves and the - fruit.

AUSTIN: Right.

KEITH: And so like if people are fruit, falling off the tree and decomposing, that's what a bush does, it eats the. *[snorts]* It eats - its own - fruit...

AUSTIN: Yeah. The thing that is like, different is the - the bush doesn't also play guitar. *[laughs]* *[Ali giggles]* And like, invite you over for dinner. But. Yes.

KEITH: *[cross]* Well. Sure, well there's a lot - there's a lot of ways that Samol is different than a bush, yes.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes, a hundred percent. *[Sylvia laughs]* Ice Cream Jones says, "Which Bush? Like a Jeb, or?" *[snorts]* *[scattered laughter]* Samol says "please clap". Um... *[Dre bursts into laughter as Ali says "oh..." in pained disapproval]* Alright. So that is the strata and lamina, we got to that stuff. Um, and so yeah, each stratum has a sun. Is the thing. That's the other important thing, because that's zero. The first thing that is like, beginning of recorded history? Before the sun exists, there is like, you know, land, and stuff. But like, *the* beginning of culture for people is "the sun exists, and so now we can start having days, which means we can start recording time, which means we can start building - and also we can start building things." So that is like, each - each strata has a sun, basically. Um... alright.

KEITH: They never tried one without a sun?

AUSTIN: Uh... you know what, *[cross]* *(nearly unintelligible)* I'll check my notes.

KEITH: *[cross]* Maybe that's where they messed up.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I mean, you know what? Listen. Maelothes, definitely, is all about gettin' rid of these suns. *[Ali chuckles]* Um, yeah. Like, lower stratas? Don't have suns. The very very bottom doesn't have a sun, the one where the empire of Death is does not have a sun, um, the first sun at this point is, I *[laughs]* I have a note here, that's *(reading from a list)* "Samoths and Samantine created. First sun is created." And then in parentheses, "missing now". Um, because it had been - stolen. Um, that is part of what Maelgwyn was doing - or Maelothes, or Samoths 2 - was doing throughout Winter, is what the Cult of the Dark Sun was up to, was partially destroying those suns. As a way to hasten the Heat and the Dark. Um... ?

ALI: Um, I think Hella's still holding onto a sun? She...

AUSTIN: Yes. You have the ring, right?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

KEITH: Everybody's d - *[scoffs]* everybody gets to play with one of the suns. *[Ali giggles]* I feel like, but me. I feel like I'm left out of the whole sun biz.

AUSTIN: Well - okay now that sun is - you *have* that sun, *(strained stage whisper that trails off)* and also it's inside the sword now, so *who even fuckin' knows...*

ALI: *(quietly embarrassed)* Yeah, I don't know, I was - I was hoping to bring it back home, but we'll... see...

AUSTIN: We'll see!

KEITH: *[cross]* Oh, I'm - I'm very - I'm very curious to see how the next thing we record goes.

AUSTIN: Yeah, me too. Uh, we still have to record another thing on the - on another group still, Keith, so it's gonna be a minute. *[Ali yawns]*

KEITH: Oh really? *[cross]* Oh okay, I didn't - okay. You guys have two?

AUSTIN: Yeah. *[cross]* Yeah yeah yeah. We did not get through those. We have... yeah. *[Ali giggles]* Nope! It's fine. We'll get there. Um... *[slide: map of Hieron, with Rosemerrow circled in red and various trajectories drawn around the northwest of Hieron]* Alright. I think that's it for this section. *[slide: Meeting House fight]* Right? *[beat of silence]*

ALI: *[cross]* Moving onto the holiday special now?

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah, we have the holiday...

[2:02:35]

AUSTIN: Holiday special. *[slide: Hieron map with Rosemerrow circled]* So. As you can see, I've circled Rosemerrow, because Rosemerrow Party, Mountain Party, stays in - in Rosemerrow. Uh, Forest Party advances from there and goes to Rosemerrow. *[slide: map of Rosemerrow, with labeled districts and points of interest]* This is the same map, except it just says like, RH1, RH2, this is Rosemerrow, this is all the districts of Rosemerrow, um. Again, if you're at the Mapmaker tier I'm just gonna link out to this - stuff, and if you're listening on the audio, I - the video is up on our Youtube channel, you can go look at that, um, that'll - that's free if - anybody can look at that.

Um... *[exhales]* Chancellor Lutz... is killed. There are *(counting)* one two three four five... there's a bunch of, uh, of districts inside of Rosemerrow, a number of them detained someone who they believe is the killer, or orchestrated the killings, and because Rosemerrow is the *worst* place in the world, they have a system by which you get kind of political presti - it's not a system, it's a *culture* by which you get political prestige by bringing someone like this to justice. They

have some good things about their justice system, one thing I'd forgotten about until I relistened is like, like - theft isn't a big deal. Like, everybody has someone in their - in their family who's shoplifted before. You're gonna get a - a fuckin' slap on the wrist for that. No one's going to jail for drug charges. But when someone *kills* someone, um, that stuff ends up being really, really important politically to show that you're tough on that sort of crime? Uh, and so a number of people are detained as potential suspects. (*amused*) Can we name them.

[*short pause*]

DRE: Uhh, Mother Glory.

KEITH: [*cross*] Mo - yeah. There.

AUSTIN: That's - that's the big one. Who else?

JANINE: [*after a beat*] The fancy lady.

AUSTIN: ... Great. Arinia Slayton, the - the ex-wife of - of Chancellor Lutz, yeah.

KEITH: [*cross*] Um... do we... do we detain, or do we have the - the, uh, Lenny detained?

AUSTIN: ... Lenny was one of them. Lenny was one of the suse - suspects, yes.

KEITH: Right, but did - was he officially detained, or?

AUSTIN: Yes. [*cross*] He in fact -

ALI: [*cross*] He got a - yeah.

AUSTIN: Go ahead.

ALI: I - he got a - he like, arranged his detainment 'cause he owns the police and was like "oh, they're gonna question me, [*Austin makes noises of agreement*] and then once I get out, I'll be fine."

AUSTIN: And in fact, didn't just like - [*dog barks in the distance*] wasn't just detained, he was in like a really nice prison? Or jail? Um, and made sure he got the worst cell [*dog barks*] and was like making a big deal about being mistreated, and a bunch of other bullshit. Because he sucks, because Lenny Lenova is the *worst*.

ALI: [*cross*] Oh, right right right.

KEITH: He's the worst. [*dog barks*]

AUSTIN: Um...

JANINE: *[almost unintelligible]* Well hopefully -

ALI: *[cross]* And then me and Lem show up and be like "if you wanna be *mistreated*", *[wheeze]* "guess what."

AUSTIN: Right, exactly. *[Ali laughs]* Uh, who else. Blake... Bromley.

DRE: Uhh, weren't the... Golden Lance... *[cross]* people... ? Yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. Yes. Victoria and Gloria were both hel - or I think at least Victoria was held, Gloria was either held in different cell, or was like, going to be charged with aiding and abetting.

DRE: Mm.

AUSTIN: Um... Tavira Shal. An - an, the Ordennan Justiciar. Also. Was one, but was not... um, was not uh... under arrest at that point? Was kind of in the wind? Um, and then uh... Isaac Adelton I think, maybe? But by the time y'all find - found Adelton, where Adelton was, or Adelton had been being held, um, he had already been whisked away. He was the illusion mage who had done a lot of the stuff in the Westshore-upon-Sea New Old Museum, um... *[sighs]* I think that's the list? That's the list that's in my mind.

KEITH: Honestly, Westshore-upon-Sea is wh - still one of my favorite names of a place. *[Ali wheezes]*

AUSTIN: I love it. *[cross]* It's so good.

JANINE: *[cross]* Yeah...

KEITH: *[cross]* Y'know, in the whole... thing.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* D'you know the name of the theater, there?

KEITH: No, what was that.

AUSTIN: *(very amused)* Westshore-upon-Scene? *[Keith cackles]*

DRE: *(remembering)* Oh, yeah...

AUSTIN: You were a big fan of that, at the time. Uh... *[laughs] [cross]* It's like the Westshore-upon-Scene... uh huh.

KEITH: *[cross]* Still a fan. Still love it! I - I forgot, but *[Microsoft chimes]* now I know, again, that I love it.

AUSTIN: Uh huh. Um...? Yeah, y'all never inv-investigated the ex-wife, okay. Who - so I think that's all - that's the big picture, who were the suspects.

ALI: Oh I have that PDF of the - *[cross]* list - oh no I have the first one. Um, the first one.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh do you? Awesome. Um, I think -

ALI: *[laughing]* I couldn't find -

AUSTIN: It's in here somewhere, for sure. *[typing]* "Rosemerrow"... "Rosemerrow, oh Rose" - most important thing is "Rosemerrow, oh Rosemerrow" was - was in theaters that week, *[laughs]* um... here we go. Doctor Glorias Lake. *(correcting himself)* Doctor Gloria Lake's notes on Rosemerrow. *(amused)* Gloria's Lake, my favorite Twilight Mirage NPC - *[dissolves into a snort]* Um? Iduna Fel, not Tavira Shal. Sorry. Tavira Shal gets killed, during the, um... Twinbrooks stuff, uh, uh, Iduna *Fel* is the - is the Ordennan uh Justiciar-Captain who they're trying to pin it on. Which is important because the word Fel and - and her - she in general show up a little bit later, also. Yeah. Alright so y'all got all - oh! Also, fire monster? Uh, the - the star? Was... was... one of the suspects, theoretically? *[Ali breathes "oh right"]* And then there's the Cult of the Dark Sun. Also. Theoretically could have done some shit. Um? What happens? Talk me th - I *literally* just finished listening to this today. Or like, last night. Um, I think I'm like two episodes past this now. So. W-walk me through the big picture here, besides the fact that it took us like seventeen episodes.

[Ali laughs. Brief silence]

DRE: *(tired)* Oh, god. *[beat of silence. Ali laughs at that]*

ALI: Um... we investigate Lutz's house, um, Fero talks to a plant, doesn't get much information but learns that like... *(uncertain)* there were two...? Three people there?

AUSTIN: Yes. *[cross]* Mmhm.

ALI: And one of them ran away. Um. Then we're like "oh, it was that illusion mage, let's go talk to the Ordennans 'cause they have that dude", go there, dude is dead. *[Austin: Yeah.]* Or like, had already escaped because he's an illusion magic guy. There were like burn marks or something?

AUSTIN: Yeah. There were three burn marks in fact, it was one of my questions, *[Ali laughs silently]* was - I still *have* those questions, which is very funny. What ha - are you - "What happened to Chancellor Lutz?" *[beat] (incredibly amused)* Let's go through these questions. *[laughs]*

ALI: Okay yeah let's go through the questions. Chancellor Lutz gets put into a magic bubble by Arrell...

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: Who *[breaks into a laugh] (very uncertain)* is Fantasma...? *[cross]* Um.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Who... there - Let's - let's, what - what is the actual relationship there between Arrell and Fantasma.

KEITH: Uh - F - well, A-Arrell was the servant, right? The book carrier?

AUSTIN: That is *true*, but also...

KEITH: Um... Fantasma was like the good guy puppet disguise?

AUSTIN: ... Yes. Yes? Does it sound like you remember, Ali?

ALI: ... Yeah, I mean, yeah. *[laughs]*

JANINE: Fantasma's Kermit, and Arrell is Jim Henson. *[beat. Keith guffaws into the distance]*

AUSTIN: Right. Yeah. Uh huh? Yeah. Okay. Um -

KEITH: And Friends at the Table is the Muppet Show.

AUSTIN: Is the - yeah. *[Ali giggles. Austin screams quietly in pretend horror]* Um, the -

KEITH: Can we have a Statler and Waldorf character for the next season?

AUSTIN: Yeah, I'll see what I can do. That's a pretty funny - yeah. That's - we should just do that with our... Primetime Adventures game, just get other players to just be on the call - and be hecklers? That'd be very good. *[Keith and several others laugh]* Uhh... the... Arrell... created Fantasma as a façade, as a dummy, as a - as a, um... uh, a disguise, effectively, as a - as a person who would not be detected to be Arrell by the - the Cult of the Dark Sun? So that Fantasma and the Disciples could work on getting these books - and also because like, people just knew Arrell was a fucking shithhead. No one was gonna send - *Arrell* to Eventide Isle to recover that book. But. Fantasma, maybe. Um. But especially though like, the connection with

the Dark Sun was trying to like, keep a low profile, and keep his own head safe from any sort of like, assassin or whatever. Um, and so lived invisibly. And yes, *[cross]* whisked Chancellor Lutz away.

KEITH: *[cross]* I have a question.

AUSTIN: Yep?

KEITH: How... how is there... how do - how long has Fan - had Fantasma been - around, instead of Arrell.

AUSTIN: A long time. *[cross]* Because - long enough to have taught peo -

KEITH: *[cross]* Okay. Long enough - I mean, long enough for the cult of Fantasma... (*barely distinguishable*) yeah. For them to be called the Disciples of Fantasma.

AUSTIN: Yeah, for the Disciples - *[cross]* well like for the Disciples of Fan - Yeah, well, and long enough for... the, um... the... for like Isaac Adelton to have trained under him. Right? [Keith: Right.] Like Isaac Adelton remembers Fantasma, having trained him, I don't think that was just like, magic from Arrell at that point. Um. Though he also knew Arrell - yeah I think he probably knew *both* of them as individuals, right? And did not put - make that connection. So they don't just like, they're not just - it's not Superman/Clark Kent, you know.

KEITH: Mhm.

AUSTIN: Um...?

ALI: I mean, it's enough that Arrell is a buffer version of Fantasma, apparently? *[dissolves into laughter]*

AUSTIN: ... Buff and... younger, and like, uh darker hair, um, no ponytail. No glasses. *[Ali giggling]* Um. But like the build-wise - when I said a buff version of Fantasma, I didn't mean like the same actor, even. Uh... *[buffering noises]* Uh yes, yes, Sunder also knew Fantasma, obviously. Yes. A hundred percent. Um?

KEITH: What was er - I remember that this was answered in like the original thing - what was Arrell's original... um... motive for creating Fantasma.

AUSTIN: What do you mean.

KEITH: Like, why decide to have a second guy.

AUSTIN: Oh, because the Cult of the Dark Sun was going to assassinate Arrell. Because he was *[cross]* trying to fight them. Yeah.

KEITH: *[cross]* Right. Gotcha. Got it.

AUSTIN: Um, he was like a major antagonist to them. Uh, second question on my list, from this - the Rosemerrow thing - "What created the three scorch marks in Lutz's bedroom?" *[beat]*

KEITH: Isn't that just the bubble?

AUSTIN: One of them is the - one of them *is* the bubble. *[beat]*

ALI: Um... another one of them is... was, uh self-defense from... the fight getting into the bubble?

AUSTIN: I believe that that's true.

KEITH: And then there was a third one, Arrell's bubble?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* It was not.

ALI: *[cross]* No, the third one was... someone escaping...

AUSTIN: Yes.

ALI: The... hm. Elf... lady?

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Was it the apprentice?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Was it what? Uh, Sylvi?

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Uh, his apprentice, what's his name, uh...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* No, it was not. Because his apprentice was busy being... fake Mother Glory, running through Roseheart [Sylvia: Right.] to draw attention and try to blame Mother Glory. *[Dre hums thoughtfully]*

ALI: Was it Blake?

AUSTIN: It was. It was Blake using special magic flash paper to blind people and get away. Um... "When and where is the Orden - is Ordenna invading the continent?"

[silence. Ali inhales and then starts laughing]

KEITH: "Soon", and "here."

AUSTIN: Not -

ART: Soon in *Velas*.

AUSTIN: Yes.

KEITH: *[cross]* No - oh right, Velas, right.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. Yes. Velas was the answer. Um, which we learned from Jerrod Shiraz, who - eauh - was a - was the Vicerine of, of Velas? Um, Jerrod was th - like kind of the head of the cultural and spiritual aspects of Ordenna? I said Velas just now, I meant Ordenna, my bad. Um. Uh, and was uhh... is like the one who doesn't wanna cause shit, like she - her part of the Ordennan government is the part that is like not trying to take shit over, and is just trying to like, be chill. So.

KEITH: *[cross]* Um -

ALI: *[cross]* Um, she had specifically been hiding the star...?

AUSTIN: Exactly. Yes. A hundred percent. O-belas. Or Obelas, I forget how to pronounce that, I just have the note in front of me. Um...

KEITH: I have a question about something that I did that I forget.

AUSTIN: Sure.

KEITH: What happened when I went to The Long Sand? I met someone *[cross]* that was very enigmatic?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah, you met - a sage, you met, like, this person who could read the future, uh, and - and the stars, and such, um, and the sage gave you some advice? Um, and I don't remember even though I just listened to this -

KEITH: *[cross]* Did I *take it*?

[beat of silence. Austin blows some air]

ALI: *[cross]* Probably not.

AUSTIN: *(apologetic)* Probably not... *[Ali snorts and laughs]*

DRE: Probably not.

KEITH: *[cross]* I'm not *that* awkward.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You would ask questions to the sage, is - was the thing. Um... *[short pause]*
[cross] Um, I did *just* listen to it.

ALI: *[cross]* Well you were there to in - yeah, you were investigate - there to investigate a m - a murder, and he was more there to be like, "follow your heart, bro," and you were like "okay I gotta go." *[wheezes]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* "I gotta go". Yeah.

KEITH: *[cross]* Okay well if I - if - if, if he said "follow your heart" I - then I guess I did do that. *[Ali laughs]*

[2:14:34]

AUSTIN: Right. Um... um... someone wants to know in the chat - Merima wants to know in the chat why one of the stars was calm and collected and the other one was not, the one that you meet that is being held by Jerrod Shiraz landed a few days ago? Er, landed - uh, during the... heist, at the, uh, museum, and has had days to learn the language and calm the fuck down? The one that landed in Roseheart landed in Roseheart, and then was immediately setting everything on fire, and then killed by Hella. *[chuckles]* Um, so. They're just - *[stuttering]* they hadn't had the time to uh - acclimate to what the world was. Um, we should actually - uh, I mean that's a specific thing, right, like what was up with those stars. What - how did that star - what was some of the stuff that the star was talking about, and I think that conversation was Ephrim and Hadrian? *[short pause]* What do y'all remember about that star.

SYLVIA: Yeah, uh... *[sniffles]* As far as I know, we... went back, we... went with Jerrod Shiraz, right...?

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

SYLVIA: Uh, yeah, in uhhh... the roof of an inn. Not the roof, but, like.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* The attic, yeah.

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Attic. You know what I mean. Uh...

AUSTIN: The roof would be *sick* though.

SYLVIA: Oh, it would be sick as hell! Uh, it would be obvious, though, with the giant glowing star person. [Austin: Yep.] Uh... [sighs] We had like a meeting with them, but I can't remember the specifics, uh...

ART: Yeah I remember the meeting *after* that... or... [cross] before?

AUSTIN: Before, I think it was b - I think [cross] the star comes late, yeah. The star is pretty late. It's - after the Arrell stuff, it's after the - other priest stuff, uh, Obelday. Um, the... star was surprised? That people did not know the stars were coming. Um, the star wanted to speak to people of the faith, because they believed that Samot was supposed to... educate people? About their impending arrival? Um. And also, they seemed to be unfinished.

Um, and so it's a combination of those two things, one, they land without language, they land without having, like, their wits about them, they land needing to, like, very quickly make sense of everything and in the process set a bunch of shit on - magic fire, and turned it into other shit, [someone sneezes] which is what happened in Roseheart? Um, but also, they - and I guess this is about stakes for next season, right? The stars were one of Samot's many plans for how to stop the Heat and the Dark, um, they were supposed to come make a - a world that could resist the Heat and the Dark. He never figured out how to make that world one where *people* could live on it. Um, and so in their minds, they're supposed to come and just make something that will sustain - and that the Heat and the Dark cannot destroy - and they expected people to be cool with that. To be like "ah yes, we've prepared over the last century, we've gotten our -" you know, "we've become kind of stoic about the end of *our* lives, because there will be new, future stuff in the world." And, no, unfortunately, no one knew this was coming, or happening. Um. So yeah... that's rough. Um...

KEITH: Time to get Stoic. [Ali giggles]

AUSTIN: Yeah... I don - I dunno. Um, Emmanuel shows up, there's a - a great - a number of good scenes at a bakery, Emmanuel was working at, um. This doesn't happen here, it doesn't happen on screen, I imagine Emmanuel gives Lem that fucking poetry book back. There is some, "close the - the curtains on a scene" uh, uh, moments there, there's one of those moments I think in the background, off-camera, Lem gets back that poetry book there, during the hookup. Um... other important stuff here.

DRE: Uh, I died.

AUSTIN: You did die! Uh, Arrell kill- kills you.

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: That dice roll is like, it's like 6d6. [Dre: Yeah!] I *just* listened to that again, like, two days ago.

DRE: What is... what I remember about that specifically is that... I actually had a healing potion that I was thinking about drinking during that fight?

AUSTIN: Yep.

DRE: And if I had taken it, I would have literally had *just* enough HP to like, have 1 HP and survive that hit.

AUSTIN: Yep, totally. Yeah. Oh well, unfortunately, [Dre: Yeah.] instead, what happened was you got an offer from Adelaide, to... do a favor for her to continue living, uh, Adelaide who is now Queen of Death, *or*, uhh... to... become a vampire, uh, an emotions vampire, uh, and join the Golden Lance. Because that is what Victoria offers you. And you say yes to that! Which is great! Uh... and yeah, Marisol, Lem has the poetry book as a New Archives but there was a - a - there's - this is definitely a retcon of just like "oh wait! The reason that he had it at the New Archives is 'cause I looked at his inventory and he did there", but he was not supposed to still have that book at that point, he'd given it to Emmanuel. Or had lost it a-at Nacre. But our - our absolute retcon of that is like "oh no, he just got it back from Emmanuel here! That - that makes perfect sense." Um? *[exhales]* I don't think Sige is a vampire. No, because the - Claret, Claret Holiday was a vampire, and Claret Holiday brought the guns and the Golden La - er, the Lance Noble stuff, off of Marielda, into Hieron in general, and *then* that became a vampire thing. *[Dre murmurs agreement]* It was *not* a vampire thing in the City of Light.

[beat of silence] Um? Also there was another good one that I wanted to address - uh, Eamonn Tee says, "why is it that no one knew how to prep for the stars?" That is also a uh "play to find out what happens" question, like, Samot is still in the world. Ask Samot why no one knew. You know? Um... *[short pause]* Other stuff that happens here. No one else dies - well, no other player dies. Plenty of other people die, unfortunately. *[beat]*

DRE: Yeah, Mother Glory dies.

AUSTIN: Yeah, Mother Glory dies. Um, and... Adelaide chooses not to - let her live, right. Um, one of the - one of the important things about that - there like - I guess a couple of important things the way like, that stuff works... both A-Arell and Adelaide have these kind of big picture goals about what they want to happen to everyone on the - on the, uh, on Hieron? I almost said "on the planet", which is true, I guess, but um... uh, Adelaide... wants there to be chaos, and wants - someone like, uh, uh, Mother Glory not to be able to bring peace, because that will spread the - the curse further, um, she was *not* shot with Ordennan steel, or - or if she was - it's not in a scene, maybe I say it in a later episode, but in the... in the episode itself, she's just shot with an arbalest, she's just shot with like a big siege weapon. *Ephrim* gets killed with Ordennan steel, um, in a way - later episode.

Uh... but yeah, Adelaide makes the choice to toss Mother Glory into - into entropy. And - and into the Heat and the Dark. Um... and likewise, Arrell is making the choice to bubble people like Lutz, partially because bubbling someone like Lutz means getting, uh, uh people who... Arrell thinks are smart enough to start thinking *through* the Heat and the Dark and finding a

solution? Um, but also partially because as the world falls to chaos, boy is it easier to convince someone - to be able to be put in one of these bubbles, to be brought into the Study. As we see *[laughing]* just after this. Right, Hadrian?

[silence]

ART: Uhhh, yeah! *[Ali snickers]*

AUSTIN: Right? Because like if Lutz is there, maybe Lutz convinces Ordenna not to invade Velas. And if Ordenna doesn't invade Velas, then... Benjamin certainly doesn't go anywhere. *[motor accelerates in the background]*

ART: Yeah, that's certainly true. Hadrian gets super spooked about Ordenna invading, especially after Old Man's Chin, and... potential reprisals... *[cross]* and... and evacuates... his family.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah. Um... yeah. Tim Howes in the chat says, "Ordennan steel is propaganda I thought?" No, the - their understanding of the curse is propaganda. Ordennan steel is really truly this weird anti-magical thing. It's why the snow and the blizzard doesn't affect their boats, it's why the - the water, in the... in the disturbed ocean, um, during the Eventide Isle stuff, uh, isn't - their boats are fine during that also, um, and it's why when you get killed by it, it's why, you know, uh, Undead *can* die permanently from it. Um...? What else... uh... trying to see if there's another thing there. Oh, oh, the - and *[stutters]* I mean, I guess Ordennan steel specifically is a blend of Hieron stuff with - the Heat and the Dark. Mages, at the University, post - or around the Erasure? I think, around what we call the Erasure, that period of time? Do an experiment to create Ordenna, by blending... land, with the Heat and the Dark. Um, it's part of why Samot's tower blows up, or falls apart, 'cause they use the land there. Which is why all that place gets *fucked up*. Um. So that is why Ordennan steel is the way it is, it is literally... anti-life metal. It is - it is the Heat and the Dark, built into matter. Which is maybe not the best thing to do! Um... *[exhales]* *[buffering noises]* Which - ah, that part of the story is told again in like, Samol says a little bit of it here, Samol says a little bit of it there, a little bit of it is in Hella's, like, one of the - the A-plots we haven't talked about is Hella... and... like, the history of the Ordennans, which you were studying through a book, right? *[long silence]* Hella?

JANINE: Ali said "brb". *[cross]* In the - in the Discord. Yeah. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh, I don't see that. Sorry. Okay. *[laughs]* Um, so yeah. That's - that's, that's, uh, Hella - Hella has a-an A-plot where early on, she gets a book that is about Ordennan history, and finds out that she... that her bloodline had been like, a-an official major one, and then turned into this kind of, like, insult-named one that's about them being traitors, um, and previously they had been the - they had *been* the bloodline of magic, um, and they were founded by this woman Wander, Wander Aviz. Aviz? Aviz. Um, who was a mage who lived in Nacre, but who was able to, using her magic, leave Nacre, go back to the University, and then eventually pass back through Nacre after Ordenna was created. Um? *[buffering noises]* I'm trying to think if there's

any big stuff here... Um... *[short silence]* Cult of the Dark Sun shows up, Lem gets that hilt? Right? *[beat]* That happens. That's important. Did anyone else do anything interesting in Rosemerrow?

SYLVIA: *(quietly)* I killed a priest, did we mention that...

AUSTIN: Ah, you didn't talk about that. And you *burnt* the *body*. Right?

SYLVIA: Oh yeah no, I like... that was very, like... I was full Fargo, I went out into the - during the snowstorm, burnt it in the middle of a... *[indistinguishable mumbling crosstalk]* You know?

ART: Yeah, I think it's important that that's a singular "you" and not a plural "you".

SYLVIA: *[cross]* Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Uh, yeah. Yeah - wait, did - did... Hadrian just walk away from - did that just happen behind Hadrian's back or did Hadrian let it happen.

SYLVIA: I think the burning of the body happened behind his back? But he was still very much an accessory to murder.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Okay. Right. Um - oh, yeah, and I wanna clarify, really quick, no, Hella's sword is *not* Ordennan steel. Hella's - Hella's sword is the Blade in the Dark that was made by Yellow House, that is... not made - like - Ordennan steel is a very specific thing made by that specific experiment, by the mages that create all of Ordenna, and they're just like mining up the steel, so. That is uh different stuff. And it's - no, it is different stuff than the starstuff. Starstuff is - is like the anti-Heat and the Dark. It has nothing to do with the Heat - it is built to resist the Heat and the Dark, not to kind of be it. Um...? *[short silence]* Yeah, and y'all *didn't* rob the priest, important - important note from the chat. Um...

SYLVIA: *[cross]* *(smugly)* Oh yeah. *[unintelligible crosstalk]*

KEITH: *[cross]* Just - just the murder then, not...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* And - and yeah, that was not Prelate Lucius, Prelate Lucius gets killed in... Velas, this is Obelday Adelbury, who was like, a preacher as part of this church...

SYLVIA: He was part of the Dark Sun.

AUSTIN: Was part of the Dark Sun. Well like, that's part of the revelation of this - uh, that episode, and then a later one is like, "the Dark Sun is all through the Creed of Samothos". Like it isn't -

SYLVIA: Main - yeah, the main reason I wanted to mention that was that we didn't just kill a priest for no reason, *[Austin laughs]* we found out he was part of the evil cult and was doing... things.

KEITH: Ohh, okay, now I remember that. Yeah, okay.

AUSTIN: Um... other important stuff here. Adaire, you... get Blake into protective custody, who then, they - they break out of it after - they break out of protective custody and escape the city, um, after the end of the detective game, *[Janine murmurs in agreement]* um... what else happens here?

JANINE: In hindsight, it's a little weird that that one cop guy is so... throwin' so much shade at Adaire if they're in a culture where it's like "it's okay if you're a thief", kind of.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. *[Janine laughs]* Agreed.

JANINE: *[cross]* I mean, she's not from... she's just a foreigner... thief.

KEITH: *[cross]* Cops still suck.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Uh, but - but no, because - yeah. Yeah. You're a foreigner thief who also, I mean - he threw shade at you, but he didn't arrest you. You know what I mean? *[Janine: Yeah.]* Like... um... Lenny dies, Lenny is killed, i-in the streets, uh, by a sergeant uh, uh - this is a narrative thing, this is - or narrated thing, this is not like, we don't see it happen, but... um, there is like a cop who is like "I'm gonna clean up Westshore-upon-Sea! But really, I'm kinda here to grow in - in, uh, my own political gains." Um...? And yeah. I think - I think... Mother Glory dying and then... Chatterchin asking... continuing to ask, Mother Glory had already kind of said "hey, will you stay and help us", and then Chatterchin doubles up on - doubles down on that, and Fero - asks Fero to stay. And Fero does not stay. Right? *[Keith hums agreement]* Uh, and yeah, big one, Fantasma dies. Arrell... laughs and is like, "I'm done with this masquerade", and pulls the plug on... Fantasma, who, yeah, the only - the only difference with the - I, someone pointed this out in chat - um, was the muppet - analogy, the Kermit analogy, is only true to a point because Kermit, it's - what if Kermit could also make... his own choices. *[chuckles]* Like what if Jim Henson -

JANINE: He does! *[cross]* That one time!

KEITH: Yeah he does.

AUSTIN: Oh - okay. *[Ali hums]* Mm-hm...

KEITH: There wouldn't be a show if there wasn't a Kermit, making... make - running the show, Kermit's the showrunner of the Muppets.

AUSTIN: (*deadpan*) Right, of course.

JANINE: [*cross*] He has friends and family, too!

KEITH: Kermit is the showrunner of the Muppets, and then Jim Henson is the showrunner... of... Kermit. [*Ali snorts in laughter*]

DRE: (*amused*) Mhm? Checks out.

KEITH: The Muppets.

AUSTIN: Right, right. Um, so yeah. Fantasma dies, uhh... and... um... [*beat*] that's sad - oh uh - I guess also you - the, yeah, the party discovers who Arrell is and discovers the Fantasma stuff ahead of Fantasma being killed, which is also incredibly sad. Um, Fantasma - er, they find Arrell's study, actual study, not magical bubble study, um, and also put together that - the charm spell? Also affected Arrell? Arrell also believes - also has a fascination with Samot. Um... I guess it already had a light fascination, but it blew up in a big way after that charm spell, which is... great. Um... what else? I think that might be it. Big picture-wise. [*short silence*] No one gets anybody out of the bubbles, no one figures that out. Uh, Arrell's staff is broken. Um... [*sighing*] I think that's all the big stuff. [*silence*] Uh, and then yeah, and then Benjamin gets put in the bubble. You put Benjamin in the bubble. Hadrian. [Art: Yeah.] Um, and that's technically the next sequence. So!

[2:30:15]

AUSTIN: [*moves to the next slide, containing a snowflake emoji and convenience store emoji, which is a building with a big red "24" sign above it*] We actually - this is a quick one I'm not gonna go over the details, although people should go back and listen to our Holiday Special last year, [*slide: the character cards and game details from the Holiday Special Follow game*] which was actually *before* the Rosemerrow game, but [*slide: map of the Red House market*] that was our... little game of, um... Follow? Is that what the name of this game is? This is Follow, not Kingdom, right? [*short silence*]

JANINE: [*cross*] I think so...? Yeah.

KEITH: [*cross*] Yeah. It's Follow.

AUSTIN: [*cross*] Is the one - you did the - you did the convenience - not the convenience store, you did the like, strip mall in Marielda? [*Janine laughs*]

DRE: [*cross*] (*remembering*) Oh yeah...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Um, that stuff's all here, go listen to that, I'm not gonna go over it in details -

KEITH: *[cross]* That was fun!

AUSTIN: *[cross]* But it was really fun, and people should go listen to it. Um...

JANINE: Good Red Jack lore, *[cross]* if you're a Red Jack fan.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Really good Red Jack lore in there. Um? Samot is not aware he's been charmed. Samot's been charmed! *[beat]* *[Keith laughs hysterically]* *[cross]* That's - *[slide: a closeup of Orchid and Helianthus Parishes on Janine's map of Marielda, where part of the parishes and the beach are sectioned off by a red line]*

KEITH: *[cross]* Sorry, I'm laughing at a thing that I did that I didn't remember - *[Austin goes back to the Follow game slide]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* "And Licensed Notary"?

KEITH: *[cross]* Uh, "Wally's Sensible Antiques and Licensed Notary"...

AUSTIN: I - well - and across the street?

KEITH: "Wally's Laundry" - *[collapsing into wheezing laughter]* "and Licensed Notary", ha! *[laughs away from the mic]*

AUSTIN: *[cross, as Keith laughs]* And Licensed Notary! Yeah, that's the actual - that's where the joke is.

KEITH: *[cross]* Ohh boy...

AUSTIN: That's the good bit. *[Keith gathers himself]* *[Austin goes back to the slide of the parishes]* Um, uh, there's also, and I just have this here, this is also the map from our youthful offender - or no, our Misspent Youth game, um, which took place only in this little part of Marielda. So I just wanted to note that and keep on moving... *[moves past the slide of the snowing emoji and the dark moon with face emoji to the map of Hieron with a few more arrows on it than before]* We are back, to the final arcs of Winter in Hieron. The... Mountain Party leaves Rosemerrow and heads northeast to the New Archives, and... the Forest Party... cuts through the forest, and then - and then you'll see again I've used this big yellow loop, to indicate, that y'all went into... the - the lower lamina. You did some weird magic transportation shit. Also, Alyosha joins you, Alyosha is an Exarch of the Church of Samoths, um, which is like a wandering monk who is supposed to kind of like, bring the word to people, and help people, and et cetera. Um... I think that that is the yellow and the red, I think that's - those are the big things.

Um, a-also Devar, Devar joins you, that's the other big one, Devar van der Dawes is an archivist, uh, uh *[cross]* an orc -

KEITH: *[cross]* Oh I love Devar!

AUSTIN: Devar is great, and Devar joins y'all on the way to the mountains. Um, Devar is the one who's like "oh, I know someone who knows more about this illusion magic stuff, that seems important". Um, and yeah, Alyosha, also important, developed over the course of the season, uh, as Arrell's ex. Um, Arrell and he were romantically linked for years. Um... and then *[cross]* split.

KEITH: *[cross]* Devar's great because it's great to have someone around that's gonna be - that's just always gonna be like "man, we're gonna get in trouble!"

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's Devar's whole thing! Like I'm - I'm - I am listening to those episodes right now, I just listened to the - the Corsica Neue episode, in which, uh, at the beginning of it - I mean Devar's the one who's like "no, we shouldn't bring this *zombie* guy with us! *[Janine laughing]* Like, we don't have the room or the food!" *[slide: map of Hieron, focused on the northwest, with added details]* Um, but isn't mean about it. Uh, I also just have this zoomed-in map real quick, because... this is Twinbrook and Old Man's Chin but also, the... pa- the path that the Mountain Party takes is up through first a place called Treeton, which is a city filled - or it's a village filled with, um, zombies, or with the Undead, but who are just... in shock, right, who are just like, laying everywhere through the town? They're undead, but they don't - move? And Jeremy was one of them, Jeremy was a zombie who joins up with you briefly, or an Undead person who joins with you for a little bit? Um... *[Ali does a choking laugh]* Welcome back, Ali! *[Austin and Ali laugh]*

ALI: *[laughing]* I thought I was muted, I'm like "let's look on Twitter"...

AUSTIN: *(confused)* What?

ALI: *[still laughing]* Sorry... *[cross]* Yeah, go on, it's fine. Sorry.

AUSTIN: Oh, you were on Twitter. Yeah, uh huh, uh huh... uh, we'll get to your game, we'll get there. And then uh y'all get to - to Baron's Gate, which is under attack by... um, some - some bandits, some undead bandits who are taking advantage of the fact that they are undead? Um, and you also meet, uhhh... you also meet Corsica Neue there, and the Unstill, um, and she is like a - a sort of - self-appointed queen of the Undead, here, uh, on the, on - on Hieron, who is someone who understands how to be undead, um, I - I've described her privately at least as being a Bethesda hero? Um, as being like, the character who is part of the Archives, like she - she has an Archivist title also, I forget what it is off the top of my head, uh, but she has an Archivist title - I think, like, Unsigned Letters or something, like the - the Duchess of Unsigned Letters or some bullshit. Uh, and then also, is like, an undead mummy lady, and also i- y'know,

has been to Nacre, and has left Nacre, is one of the few people who can do that, um, or who - who can say they've done that, and has, uhh... uh, also is just like a dope military commander, um, and... she, uh... she shows up, helps y'all beat these bandits, there's some... some back and forth with the church people at Baron's Gate and that's, we don't need to get into it, but like, there's - *[motor revs in the background]* the - the group begins to splinter, I think, here, especially, right, there starts to be a - a splintering especially between Lem and Fero.

Um, uh, what - what is learned, as you continue to go to the New Archives, is that Corsica Neue and... the Unstill, uh, are - Corsica Neue has been teaching people who have died how to live with their undeath. Um, in Treeton what you see is there are undead people who do *not* know what it is to be... they've been *stabbed* by a sword or shot in the heart with a bow and arrow, and then they can keep moving? And they don't know what to do with that. Um, and someone like Jeremy was one who, y'know, was able to... keep moving, but did not know how to like, care for wounds, and keep himself from smelling bad, and Corsica Neue, because she's been to Nacre, knows all that stuff. Um, and is able to kind of help people cope with their transition into undeath. Um, and - and kind of like, "hey! This is how you can, like, smell really good still," and, er, y'know, and or, or, "here's how you can keep your wounds from... getting worse," um, and... "here's how you can just be like a dope undead warrior with me, instead of just kind of being whatever!" Um... yes, as Jo Peace says, "like she's covered in bandages but also she's super hot". A hundred percent.

Uh, and yeah. Baron's Gate, Ephrim, is also where you get killed. Right? By Ordennan steel, which should kill you instantly, but on your way to the Heat and the Dark, which is where Ordennan steel sends you, you get caught by someone. *[short silence]*

ALI: Sylvi went to bed, so *[laughing]* *[cross]* if you're tossing to Sylvi... Sorry.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh - okay. Well, I was tossing to Sylvi. That's good. I did not see that at all. Um, I don't have my - I don't have our private chat up, I have *[cross]* the group chat - er, uh -

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah, Sylvi's been having allergy attack... problems all night.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Aw, buddy. Aw, well feel better, Sylvi. Sylvi gets killed - (*panicked*) uh, Sylvi doesn't get killed. *[Ali laughs in surprise]* Sylvi's fine! Sylvi's okay! Sylvi is the best! Sylvi's great! Sylvi's great! Sylvi's great!

DRE: *[cross]* Noo, got them!² *[Ali and Keith chuckle]*

AUSTIN: Retcon! *[Keith laughs]* GM Fiat! I can - I can make a move as hard as I want and that move is "Sylvi you're okay now". Um... the... uh... Sylvi did *not* get norted. *[laughing]* Um... *[others laugh]* Ephrim, Ephrim almost gets norted though. Ephrim, uh, is saved by Samoths, Samoths says "yo, I'll let you come back to life, *but*: one, you have to get that hilt off of Lem,

² These pronouns are no longer in use for Sylvia.

and two, you need to bring Fero into my worldview”, basically. “You need to make Fero believe in us.” Um...? So that’s that. That’s good.

KEITH: *[cross]* Who was it that said that? Right, yeah.

AUSTIN: Samoths. Ma-Maelo- *[cross]* Samoths 2. Maeloths. Um... and then y’all continued to the New Archives, and shit goes wild there too. Um, I don’t know that I have - *[slide: closeup of the same map, zoomed in on Baron’s Gate and the New Archives]* I don’t have like a ton of maps, for the New Archives stuff. Um, because we just didn’t *have* a bunch of them. You know?

KEITH: *[cross]* Oh right... Some of that... was the funniest shit... *[Ali wheezes quietly]*

AUSTIN: Which shit?

KEITH: That was so much fun... the betting stuff?

AUSTIN: Oh, the betting stuff was really good...

KEITH: *[cross]* Holy *shit*, that was so funny.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* The... “trying to get a room” stuff was really good... The weird -

KEITH: Yeah, like all of the like dealing with, like - *[cross]* you had to deal with the bureaucracy that’s not - that’s not just like, it’s not just regular bureaucratic red tape, but it’s also like weird magic red tape...

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally. Uh, it’s extremely good. Um... god, what else. Uh... you - you meet Uklan Tel, you meet Zhan Kurr, Uklan Tel who has been in the game before at this point, you meet Zhan Kurr, *[cross]* who is like Uklan Tel’s -

KEITH: *[cross]* Oh, Fero gets slighted by - by uh, no one wanted to stay in his house. *[cross]* That’s - that’s a - *[indistinguishable]* part.

AUSTIN: ... Right, that’s true, that’s a big deal. Continues to be - to be rough, *[Ali giggles]* um... uh... *[short pause]* What else, um... right, you go through the door, there’s - y-you’re doing this investigation, you’re trying to find this book. That’s like the big thing is you’re trying to find this book, the Book of Life, which is here somewhere, um, because you know Arrell is trying to get to it first, and you want that fuckin’ book. Um, and *[slide: closeup of the northeastern peninsula of Hieron and nearby islands]* you end up going through a door, a magic teleportation door, a magic illusory teleportation door that takes you all the way out east, to these islands, where you briefly see... it takes you into a book, but also out east? It takes you into a book, *[cross]* that Devar recognizes -

KEITH: *[cross]* It takes us to where a book is.

AUSTIN: It takes you to - no, it takes you to where a book takes *place*. *[cross]* That's all -

KEITH: *[cross]* That's what - yeah, that's what I meant.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes, yeah, it takes you to a book - inside of a book, where... the story of Galenica is being told, which is out on these islands out east. Um, which is the only reason I - I put this here. *[goes back to the map of Baron's Gate and the New Archives]* Um... then... *[short pause]* Yeah, you may have also been looking for someone to illusion it - illusion the plant to do Morbash stuff, that does come up in conversation, that is a hundred percent. Uh... god, what else. Um... *[short silence]* Before things go really bad. Because things go *really* bad. It's some big stuff. Devar is like, hangin' out, y'all start doing that pattern, Twenty Two Brown Birds happens, you're - you're kind of like, trying to do all this stuff to make this one pattern happen, so that... what is that pattern for? Do you remember? Fero?

KEITH: Um... *[short pause]* Was this when I was already arrested?

AUSTIN: Ehm - you w- yeah, but you had already *started* part of it.

KEITH: ... I *literally* don't remember what the pattern was for. Was it to fi- it - was it not just to find the book? *[cross]* Or was it to make some - complicated -

AUSTIN: Maybe it was - *[hums thoughtfully]* *[cross]* Oh, oh oh oh, I know what the - yeah, no, the - the - *[laughs]* the pattern that they were making you do ended up being part of... the... transportation thing, right?

KEITH: Oh! They wanted the Book of *Poems*. *[cross]* Right?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* They wanted the - they wanted the Book of - *they* wanted. *[Ali giggles]* The Book of Poems.

KEITH: They wanted the Book of Poems.

AUSTIN: But they secretly wanted to switch... Lem and Throndir. Right? *[short silence]*

KEITH: They - *they* wanted that? Why did *they* want that? *[cross]* I remember it was a thing that happened - Right, *[nearly indistinguishable]* it was part of the pattern.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Because it was part of the pattern. That was part of the pattern that Uklan Tel wanted. Uklan Tel wanted to switch those two. Um... Oh! And, no, you're right, it was both - you're right. Part of that pattern, that's what it was, thank you, chat. Chat remembers. You, Fero,

you're in the Untethered Annex, and to get you out of there, they had to do that - they had to do that, um, that whole... *[cross]* All that shit.

KEITH: Right. Okay. Yeah, I remember that bit, but you said that we had already started, so I was like *[cross]* "oh, must be something else." So yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. But *then* they are able to use that to push Lem through the mirror, uh, *[Keith: Yeah.]* uh *[stammers]* with uh - all the stuff that they'd been collecting - there's like a whole collection of shit that they need that's like, they needed like, the Book of Poems, they needed, I wanna say the mask of Samot, maybe, um, they needed - there was like a whole big *list* of shit that they needed that's in one of the episode descriptions. Um, and that is - that is - what they end up using to teleport Lem. *[cross]* Again, I have not relistened to this stuff yet, so it's a big gap for me too.

KEITH: *[cross]* Here's - here's a big gap - here's a big gap for me, is uh... so, I was in - I was so consumed with trying to figure out what I should do? And like, if I should keep being... a shithead?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. Yeah.

KEITH: Um... like - if Fero should keep being obstinate, to be more specific.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Uh huh?

KEITH: I was so - I was so, like, in my own head about what to do there - I don't remember the solution to library - "make the library smile". I like, *[cross]* wasn't listening 'cause I was trying to figure out what I should be doing. *[chuckles]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I think that they... did they just have like a - here's my answer. I think it was pizza. *[beat]* I don't know *[cross]* if it was pizza?

KEITH: *[cross]* Just give a library a pizza?

ALI: Yeah, I think that they were, like -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* They made a party or something, right?

ALI: Yeah, because the - the shit started going really badly, and then everybody was like taking, um... refuge in the library.

AUSTIN: Right. Okay. And there was a - there was pizza. Basically a pizza party. Yeah. Okay! Good. *[Ali murmurs assent]*

KEITH: *[cross]* Okay. Got it.

AUSTIN: That's how you make anything smile, in my experience. So, um, yeah, the list of things they needed to do this - to do this pattern. Okay. Yeah, here - here we go, this is from Episode 23, uh, "They pursue *two* patterns, they showed me only the first until today, but I've gained their trust", blah blah blah. They needed *[reading from a list]* a lukewarm sun, bowing, a room of seeded prisms, two lodestars that carry the banner of the Queen of Death, one which sees the old world, one which destroys the old world, the second face of the Bright Boy, the - a tower of tomorrow's light, a new archive of broken, whole mirrors, the cooling embers of a god's verse, uh, a stolen fiddle in its home, uh, and I think that that's it. And uh y'know, they got all those, no big deal. That's all. Um... *[barely distinguishable crosstalk]* It's simple...

ART: Oh shit, lodestar, do you think you're secretly Mike Pence?

AUSTIN: Mike Pence is - actually secretly wrote this - *[laughing]* this recipe, yeah, a hundred percent. The only people! The only Archivist who's used the word lodestar! *[Ali chuckles]* Fuck. God. Um... *[short silence]* Yeah. Uh... *[beat]* I think that that is... it, until things go really bad, and they go really bad when you, captured by - you get arrested. And you get held by who - a guy who ends up being Devar's d-dad. Devar's dad became like, a secret Archivist cop? *[Keith hums]* Um, is part of the Untethered Annex, uh, and is trying to interrogate you and take you - walk you back through the past to try to find the book he wants - no, he wants to find Ventaro Doce. Right? And he's trying to go through your memories and make you tell him where Ventaro Doce is because *he* thinks Ventaro Doce has the book. The Book of Poems that Lem actually has. *[cross]* And you -

KEITH: *[cross]* Right. So he's trying to - he - but he is trying to find the book.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes, yes. Totally. Through Doce.

KEITH: *[cross]* Through Doce, not knowing that we already had it.

AUSTIN: Not knowing you already have the book, literally upstairs. And so you turn into sand, and fail that roll.

KEITH: *[cross]* Yep. Yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* And, this is one of those things that's wild because like, listening through it all at once, you're like "oh right!" 'cause the wolves disappeared, and 'cause the sand - and 'cause the - the bugs disappeared! But in reality, that was like, eight months apart! *[laughs]* [Keith: Yeah.] And so it's like, "well I haven't seen that rule in eight months", especially with the Rosemerrow arc, right? [Keith: Yeah.] Where - so where did this even fucking come from? And the answer is "you just didn't fail one of those rolls since the wolf in like, game four", and so we just never - inspected it.

KEITH: Was that game four - I thought - I think it might've even been earlier than four.

AUSTIN: Oh, it's like episode four of the - *[cross]* of the - *[stutters]* of the season. You know what I mean?

KEITH: *[cross]* Of... the first. Yeah. Yeah, right. So it's not -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* So it's probably recording two, or something.

KEITH: I think - I think it might've even been recording one, but.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* It's - it's - yeah.

KEITH: *[cross]* It was forever ago, either way.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah. It's the moment when you try to turn into a wolf in front of Mother Glory, is when it happens.

KEITH: *[cross]* Right. Okay, yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Um, which is either the first or second recording for sure.

KEITH: Um, right.

AUSTIN: Um, uh... the bowing sun? I th- a lukewarm sun bowing is I think the... blade. It's the blade. It's the... crescent blade. Um... uh, I forget what a room of seeded prisms is. I - I knew what all of these were, if I take my - if I look at my notes instead of just the wiki, I think I'd be able to find out what they all are, but. We got there, y'all got there. Um? *[short pause]* What else. Uh - asking like, how was that happening, why does Fero shapeshifting feed the Heat and the Dark is also a "play to find out" question. Like, Fero should look into that in this season if that's a thing Fero's interested in. Right? Um. *[Keith hums in agreement]* What else? *[buffering noises]*

KEITH: "Seeded prisms" were the dandelion.

AUSTIN: That makes sense. That sounds like a thing. Um...? Alright. What else. Oh, you're right, the lukewarm sun is the Archive sun, 'cause they built that second illusory sun, at the Archives. That's true. Okay. Um... You turn into sand, that goes bad, and... *[Keith: Yep.]* when you turn into sand and fail, all of the sand of that type... disappears. In everything. *[Keith grunts]* Throughout Hieron. Throughout all of the strata and lamina, which means suddenly... it's like you hit oil, except instead of hitting oil, it was...

KEITH: It was the Heat and the Dark.

AUSTIN: It was bees. Yeah! And you let all the bees in, you broke the jar, and the bees started pouring in. Uh, this is also where where we get Uklan Tel's, like, oh the bee - like, *[cross]* the Heat and the Dark -

KEITH: *[cross]* He doesn't understand metaphors...

AUSTIN: Yeah, he doesn't understand metaphors, Heat and the Dark, the world is like, is like - a jar of bees inside of a jar of bees forever -

KEITH: *[cross]* It's funny that he doesn't understand metaphors because pattern magic is like magical metaphors.

AUSTIN: A hundred percent. Um, and then, Lem, as part of the - the pattern, goes to, uh... the like... the - whatever the name of the place is where the orcs are first made... some sort of forge or some sort of like, altar, I forget the actual name of the place...

KEITH: *[cross]* Um... real quick, Nora Reed says "wait it was *all* the sand? I thought it was just the sand in one desert". It was - the sand from where I grew up.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah, the sand is from Rosemerrow. Yes. Yeah, it was the sand in Rosemerrow, it was the Long Sand, but I'm saying all of the lamina straight down in that place, right?

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah.

AUSTIN: All of that same geographical - or geological sand.

KEITH: *[cross]* Through the whole cake.

AUSTIN: Yeah, through the whole cake. And then, boom. Uh oh. Um... uh. And so, that i- opened a path for the Heat and the Dark to bust through. Meanwhile, um, and then yeah, and then also - Lem, as part of the pattern, turns a bunch of people into water, plays a song that *destroys [Keith laughs in the background]* the ancestral origin home of the orcs, and destroys everything. Um... the Stoneworks, yes, thank you, chat. *[short pause]* It was fucked up! Uh, then... *[slide: map of Throndir and Ephrim's battle with Arrell in the Winter in Hieron finale]* y'all uh go on to... confront Arrell, and Zhan Kurr, and there's another person whose name I *fully* don't remember, who's another Archivist person, and you recover the book. You recover the - the Book of Life that's what's important about that final sequence there - or maybe - I don't know that you're there, Fero, I think it might just be Ephrim and Throndir go?

KEITH: *[cross]* I'm still... I'm still imprisoned. Right?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh, you're right.

KEITH: So I'm not - I'm... I'm imprisoned until the moment Lem and Throndir switch.

AUSTIN: Okay. Right. Well then, you must be here at some point, right? Where did you go?

KEITH: *[cross]* But then - but then I left again 'cause I yelled -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh, you yelled! You - yes. Yeah.

KEITH: *[cross]* So I get - so - I'm - I'm dead, I'm pretending to be dead, to fool, um... *[Austin agrees]* what's the cop's name? Uh...

AUSTIN: Something van der Dawes. Uh, I forget his first name, but it's the - *[cross]* it's - Devar's dad, yeah.

KEITH: *[cross]* Uh, Devar's dad. I - I'm pretending to be dead to fool... him, and it works! And then all of a sudden, *[cross]* uh...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* The door opens.

KEITH: *[cross]* The door opens, and I'm down on the floor, still pretend - still feigning death, and they're... doin' the... story thing, and uh, Fero gets mad that no one cares that I'm dead and they're doing this whole thing and then the thing that they do, is they give - *they hand over* the thing that I was trying to *protect* this whole time by being, like, tortured?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

KEITH: And then I flip out. *[cross]* I flip out.

AUSTIN: You flip out, Lem switches places with Throndir, and then you leave with Uklan Tel to go investigate the starstuff and you meet that vulture. That smooth-ass vulture. *[Austin and Ali laugh]* Uh -

KEITH: See now, this I don't remember.

AUSTIN: Oh, you don't remember the sexy vulture? You don't remember that like...

KEITH: *[cross]* I don't remember the sexy vulture...

AUSTIN: He's *smooth*. He's like, down here somewhere...

KEITH: Maybe he just didn't - maybe he just didn't do it for - for me.

AUSTIN: No, you *loved* the smooth vulture, let me tell you. *[Ali giggles]* You loooove that smooth vulture.

KEITH: *[cross]* Alright! I believe you.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Uh, I'll have to find the episode and link you to it, 'cause I remember you being very happy with that vulture.

KEITH: I'm gonna - I'm gonna, I'm gon- I'm - I am listening through, *[cross]* to try to catch myself up -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah. Me too.

KEITH: But I'm - I'm way behind where you - 'cause I'm doing - I started with Spring.

[2:49:38]

AUSTIN: Right. But yeah, you go to study the Heat and the Dark and the starstuff. You go - and you know, you find that like, the starstuff has started not just being people, but turning into... like, buildings and things. Um... so... which is weird. Uh, meanwhile, Throndir and Ephrim... kill - or *[stammering]* win the fight against Kall Fer, who is one of the Collectors, and get the book back, convince them that like... "we need the book, we're the ones who - it's safe, it's us", uh... and then... um... *[short pause. Ali takes a breath]* Arrell. You confront Arrell. That's it. *[Ali: Yeah.]* That's the end of their thing. Right? Th-Throndir... you fight Arrell.

DRE: Mm-hm?

AUSTIN: How's that go.

DRE: *[cross]* And Ephrim.

AUSTIN: *[beat]* Wait, does Ephrim - wait. *[short pause]* Oh, you're saying Ephrim also fights with you. *[cross]* Not against. I thought you meant you fought Arrell, and also fought Ephrim.

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah yeah yeah. Oh, yeah, no, no no no no no. No. *[Ali giggles]*

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: Ephrim was - was right along there in that library.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes. Yes.

DRE: Um...

ALI: *[cross]* Why -

AUSTIN: And you miss with your Ordennan steel. Right? And the kill goes to Kodiak?

DRE: *[cross]* Well, no, I just - well, no, it was, so 'cause -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You just chose not to.

DRE: Me... as a person, forgot to? [Austin: Gotcha.] But I think, li- *[laughs]* like, me as a person forgot the mechanics of that, but - I think in character the way I rationalize it is that, they had just gotten Benjamin out of the bubble?

AUSTIN: Right, that was the trade, right? You'd made this trade.

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah. Uh -

AUSTIN: Or you'd started to ma- you - did you actually agree to the trade and then go back on it?

DRE: No. I don't think there ever was a trade.

AUSTIN: W- It was just like "yo, we're not even gonna *talk* until you bring Benjamin back."

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Um, and Benjamin was, rightfully so, freaked the fuck out, and... Throndir was like basically like, hugging Benjamin, and then Kodiak... killed, uh, or did the last mortal hit on Arrell. *[cross]* But then of course -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah... Yeah. You definitely shoot Arrell at some point. Or throw a sword, or something -

DRE: Well it was 'cause after... Kodiak quote-unquote "killed" him, and he got back up -

AUSTIN: Yeah.

DRE: I/Throndir was like "oh fuck, right, that's how this works in this world right now", and threw the sword at him, and he was just like, nope.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* He like - yes, staves it away, or whatever, and then Kodiak - fuckin' - snatches his throat, is what he does.

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah. And then it broke. I'm pretty sure he broke it. Yeah. *[Ali snorts]*

AUSTIN: You break the - you break the... staff earlier than that. You definitely break the staff during the Rosemerrow game, and that's what causes that big explosion. Um...

DRE: *[cross, from a distance]* Yeah yeah yeah.

AUSTIN: But...

DRE: *[cross]* No, he broke - *[normal volume]* He broke the Ordennan steel sword that - that Thrandir had.

AUSTIN: Ohhh, I see what you're saying. Damn. Um -

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah. 'Cause yeah, Kodiak - ripped his throat out, which killed him, but then... he came back, because of the curse.

AUSTIN: Right.

DRE: Thrandir freaked out, threw the sword at him, he just like, batted the sword away like it was nothing and then teleported.

AUSTIN: Right. Uh, according to Calibur in the chat, Thrandir agreed not to kill Arrell if he took Benjamin away from the paradise, and then he did it anyway.

DRE: Ah. Alright! I mean, that's - *[cross]* that sounds right.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* That explains - yeah.

KEITH: *[cross]* Okay - and - and that - you saying that reminded *me* of why *I* got... angry a second time.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Because then Fero comes back and is like, "you should have made that deal with Arrell". Because Arrell - the deal that Arrell was making was trying to offer you also was like, "I can make this cool bubble with the - with the Book of Life and the starstuff that will keep everybody safe, we can all move to the University and try to figure out another solution for the Heat and the Dark." And you were like "yo, fuck that, you suck, you killed my friend", which, fair, *[pause]* right?

DRE: Yeah. Yeah!

AUSTIN: Okay. Wanted to make sure that that was - that was - and *then* Fero explodes at Throndir, over that. And Rosana, like -

KEITH: *[cross]* It was partially - it was partially about Benjamin too, right? That was - I - that's what the part that I remember...

AUSTIN: I haven't heard that sequence again yet, so I'm not one hundred percent sure -

KEITH: *[cross]* I - I think it was like -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Hadrian, do you remember?

KEITH: I think it was like - he w- like, part of it was the, like, this - y'know, Arrell sucks, but, like, he's asking, and it sounds like an okay... way to maybe solve this. But then also it was like, "But you took Benjamin out? Of the safe place?"

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right. Yeah, I'll have to - I - that - might happen, I need to relisten to that. And then Rosana was like, "yo Throndir. Hmm. You shouldn't have done that without - like, chatting with some people." For sure.

ART: Wait why was she there?

AUSTIN: 'Cause she came with Alyosha. Remember Alyosha uh, uh, brought... everybody from Velas to Rosemerrow? And then again, from... Rosemerrow to the Archives, when the sand all disappeared. *[laughs]* Um... *[cross]* They're all - that huge -

ART: *[cross]* Oh right, I just remember you telling me I couldn't have Rosana come with us. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah... oh -

ALI: *[takes a deep breath]* *[cross]* Yeah, that was because - it was gonna end up being a weird mechanic thing *[laughs]* that - always gonna be in danger or whatever?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's like well then, is she in this sce- like I didn't want you to have - I didn't want there to be a woman on screen, whose entire focus was going to be... "I'm gonna put her in danger for Hadrian to save", and also, separately the other thing that happens, which literally immediately happens with Alyosha, was just forget that she is there, because I'm worried about like, what the enemy HP is, and I forget that she's there doing stuff? Um, and that would have been just bad, like, that would've just been really gross onscreen. We talked about that, behind the scenes for a while. Um, and instead, we were like, "well, the thing that she's been doing is basically being a lay leader of the Church of Samoths and the refugees of Velas", and so she

continues doing that, and as part of that duty, chides Thrandir for being kind of impulsive and not thinking about the bigger picture. Um, and so yeah, she - she kind of steps up as the leader of that whole group. Um... Especially with Alyosha gone. Like, Alyosha *leaves* that group in charge - or leaves her in charge of that group, basically.

Um, and then yeah, Fero, you also get into a big fight with Severeia and Galenica, but especially Severeia, they reveal that they've given - they're the ones who gave you your druidic gifts, and that they wanted you to help, like... build a new world! Not focused so much on there being old bad shit. Um... but also, they've never been around... they also revealed that they're part of - part of the Grand Tour, which... has been... *[sighs]* over time, gliding up and down - Grand Tour's this like, collection of thousands of... um, um, *[slide: map of northeastern Hieron]* horses, and chariots, and such? That magically restitch the world together, because what's revealed is, the eastern half of Hieron has been kind of torn to ribbons by the Heat and the Dark. Um, y'all have been living in the part that is not - where the Heat and the Dark hasn't spread as badly as it - as it was? And this is also part of why Ephrim was moved around so often as a kid. Was because the Heat and the Dark, in the east, had turned that world into like, a weird sword-and-sorcery, like, psychedelic nightmare zone. Um... so that's a big one. Uh...? *[short silence]* Karin wants to know what Fero's problem with Severeia was? And I think it was...

KEITH: Fuckin' rude as hell, man! What? *[cross]* They were...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* *(muttering)* That - that's - yeah. *[Ali and Dre start laughing]*

KEITH: "We made y- we *made* you, you gotta do this, you gotta do that", fuck off.

AUSTIN: Mm-hm...

KEITH: I had a *bad day*. *[Ali snorts]*

DRE: You did have a bad day.

AUSTIN: You did - you did have a bad day. Uh... *[flips through slides]* Alright. Um... Is there any other north stuff. Oh, and then at the end, the - of that group, y'all set off with a *bunch* of refugees, headed south, to the University, you keep the Book of Life, and... Uklan Tel, I think, is like "yeah, I can work with that book. I can figure out some stuff. Between that and the starstuff and the Heat and the Dark." You convince - by miss - a bad roll happens, Fero, where you convince Uklan Tel to start like, getting - Uklan Tel is - is... previously, like, a - a book-smart, like... Archivist who focuses on the research other people did? The field research other people did?

KEITH: *[cross]* Yeah. He's a nerd.

AUSTIN: He's a nerd. And you convince him to be like, an action nerd. And so he starts like, doing more experiments and going out into the field more, um, and... the last shot of him is like,

working with the starstuff directly. Um... oh right! And then yeah! Ephrim - this is - 'cause Sylvi's not here right now, [Keith: Gotcha...] Ephrim also kills - Maelothes, but - I guess let's pause on that so we can set up what the fuck that *is*, because *[slide: a map of southwest Hieron, with routes marked in cream, yellow, and purple]* meanwhile the - over in the other game, y'all go... into the - the strata and lamina, and... there's a whole thing with the rings, and the, there's like a runaway... couple, and like, they're being chased by the Cult of the Dark Sun, and there's lots of confusion around if the Dark Sun is the - same as the Creed of Samoths, right? *[beat]*

ALI: Yeah.

KEITH: Um, real quick, I have to run and do some more moving stuff -

AUSTIN: Okay. *[Ali chuckles]*

KEITH: *[cross]* Um... uh...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Last thing you did was go - northwest, back to the Mark of the Erasure.

KEITH: *[cross]* Right, I just saw this in the chat, I just wanted to let everyone know, yes, the last thing I did was walk by myself to the Mark of the Erasure, that's the very last bit.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right. And it's important you walked, because you were not transforming into things anymore. You did not fly there. *[flipping through slides]*

KEITH: Right. *[cross]* Yeah. I - I hadn't since the sand.

AUSTIN: ... Right. *[slide: map of southwestern Hieron]* Um, yeah, and we'll get to - I - we'll get to the Alyosha, Ephrim, like, Maelgwyn stuff, I just wanna set all that stuff up better. Alright Keith. *[cross]* Have a good night, good luck with moving.

KEITH: *[cross]* Um - alright. Later! Yeah. Thank you.

[2:58:25]

AUSTIN: Ali, Janine, Dre, and - and - Hadrian. Art. That's your name. *[Ali snorts]* Talk to me about - about *[Art laughs]* this side of things. *[pause]*

ART: Think I wanna talk about why everyone else gets a - gets a name.

AUSTIN: *[laughs]* Hadrian went through a lot, y'know?

ART: Sure.

AUSTIN: It's - first to mind. *[short pause]* Um, I guess the - the first, most important - the only important thing for me of like, the going through the threshold spaces, and like, walking through the trees and then like, the - fight with those other dudes, was that eventually, you get this ring from this lady. Right? That *is* a sun, also. And... that all culminates in this... sequence where Hadrian has a chance to destroy that ring? And that is what - Maelothes wants him to do. Right? *[beat]* Am I remembering that correctly?

ART: *[cross]* Yeah. I believe that's right, is -

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah.

ART: *[cross]* Yeah. Uh, New Samothes - *[silence as Art cuts out]* - break her -

AUSTIN: We lost- we lost you for a second, can you do that one more time?

ART: Uh, sure. It's gonna - *[cuts out]* - recording though, I'm - I'm *[cuts out]* *[cross]* Audacity, the whole time...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I know, but for me, 'cause I couldn't hear what you said.

ART: Um, yeah. That - that is what Maelothes wanted.

AUSTIN: Okay. Um... I guess this is also a sequence where what, Hella winds up in like, alternate dimension Nacre? Right? *[Ali bursts into laughter]* Or further down lamina Nacre? That's where you see the statue of Wander Aviz... Right?

ALI: *(like she's trying to keep it together)* Mhm...

AUSTIN: You like, float downwards?

ALI: *[exhales]* I failed *some* roll...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* For a while...

ALI: *[cross]* I think I was like, "Hella's sword is magic, and Hella thinks this whole, like, fucked-up world is magic, *[Austin hums]* so she like, just tried to cut into something to see what would happen, *[Austin: Yeah.]* and then just like, slips. *[laughing]* *[cross]* Falls down.

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, you slide down, and then you float back up. Or whatever. It's a lot. Um... *[short pause]*

JANINE: Didn't I like, tie a rope to Kodiak and then send Kodiak to get... is that what happened there? *[cross]* I have a vague memory of - okay.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Uh huh. I think that's right.

ALI: *[cross]* ... Yeah.

JANINE: *[cross]* Okay, alright.

AUSTIN: Um, there's a mo - there's a moment when... Hadrian throws a sword - er, throws a chain, throws a chain to see... how the - like how far down things are from this one floaty bridge, and it just rips into reality and reveals another deeper one, um...? Um... and then yeah. All that does culminate in that - the Hella/Hadrian stuff, *[Ali: Yeah.]* where Hella has the ring on, Hadrian has to decide whether or not to like, hurt you and destroy the ring, or... not do that. And decides not to do that. *[beat]* Hadrian, is that before or after the ladder? And... other stuff - stuff.

ALI: *[cross]* This is before. This is before.

ART: *[cross]* Probably before.

ALI: Yeah. This is before we get that deep.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Like, maybe like, maybe two re- two, three recordings before.

AUSTIN: Okay. Um, so yeah. You *[stutters]* the dwarf fight happens, and then you finally make it to the Buoy. *[slide: map of the Buoy]* I think this is the first time I've shown this map, at all. Also. Is that right? I think that's right. 'Cause I couldn't find it, fuckin' - *[cross]* any - oh -

ART: *[cross]* *(quietly)* I've seen this map...

AUSTIN: Yeah, Art, you play this *game*. *[Art and Ali laugh]*

ART: Yeah, well I mean you haven't *never* shown it...

AUSTIN: *[circling a part of the map onscreen with his mouse as a laser pointer]* ... Why is there a thing here that says "8-ball team" and there's a cherry bomb?

ALI: *[cross]* *[laughing]* 'Cause... *(singsong)* they're dangerous... *[Janine laughs]* remember when we all had like, different - we basically came here, we were just like, "Let's go fuck around". So... *[cross]* that's us...

AUSTIN: Right. 'Cause this was supposed to be another September situation of *[stammers]* - y'know, it actually was this time. Y'all actually did like, explore this whole space, basically. Right? *[cross]* Um...

ALI: Yeah. *[cross]* Um... we went to a bar, which was sick, there was a bunch of people fighting... it was pretty cool.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right, that was - that was like a Severea bar, and there was like a cool... bartender?

ALI: Uh, yeah. There's a cool bartender... Sunder is there, just like *[laughing]* smoking anxiously...

AUSTIN: Right, right. *[Ali laughs]* Right.

DRE: *[cross]* Oh, that's right. *[mumbling to himself as Austin continues]*

AUSTIN: Right, when you have to explain to Sunder what happened to Fantasma, and also that Fantasma was - what Fantasma was... *[cross]* Um, there was that weird tree tower, in the middle, remember that?

DRE: *[cross]* *(barely audible)* Wasn't there the...?

AUSTIN: The like, a - *[Ali hums]* it's like an upside-down pine tree that then, like, weirdly connects again? Yeah? *[Dre hums]* Um...

DRE: There was Weird Nervous Guy at the bar...

AUSTIN: There was a weird nervous guy at the bar, *[Ali hums]* he was good. Good job, Adaire. *[short pause]*

ALI: Um, w- we end up, like... I think we go to the church, just to be like, "What's the... fuckin' church like down here, *[laughs]* this is weird."

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes.

ALI: Um, and...

ART: *[cross]* And we kinda had a September moment there, right, 'cause we sort of like... skipped to the end.

AUSTIN: Well, that's not really the big skip. The big skip is the Samothres thing. Uh, or the Samol - sorry, the Samol thing, is really the big skip.

ART: *[cross]* Ohhh, yeah.

AUSTIN: But the... the church thing was like, y'all had dinner with people from the - like, the Dark Sun, and realized it's the same church, pretty much. *[beat]* Uh, and also that it's Son, s-o-n, uh, so... um, y'know, that stuff. Uh, Throndir goes to the - the Sonorous Academy, which is like the magic... music school? Um... I forget what that's - what you do there. Do you like research vampires there?

DRE: Yes, that - yep. Mhm?

AUSTIN: What do you learn?

DRE: I don't think I learned much? 'Cause I think it was like, Throndir was like, "Aw, this place has a library," and they were like "But we're a music school...?" *[Austin laughs]* So... like I think he found like, maybe some songs or something that were about vampires *[Austin hums]* or something like that? But... I think that's about it.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: I mean, that's like trying to learn about vampires in - in this world in consulting the Monster Mash, right? The...

AUSTIN: Right, yeah. But you find something, you know, the - the - *[cross]* you *should* be researching Jay-Z's verse, on Monster. That's where you get all the info you need.

ART: *[cross]* Hey, it was a graveyard smash! *[Dre laughs]*

DRE: *[cross]* First things first, *[indistinct crosstalk]*.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Um... who goes to the - the Duke of Halted Expectations and Unexpected Alliances? Was that Adaire?

JANINE: I think so, yeah, I think that was a - that was a deal-making occasion.

AUSTIN: What was that deal you made? Do you remember at all?

JANINE: Ummm... I think I - it was like a reconnaissance thing, that's why I got the cool lamina map? The like, layered... vellum kind of map... with all the different things, *[cross]* he keeps giving me maps.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Ohh, right, okay.

JANINE: Um, because we like, chatted.

AUSTIN: Um, and then someone else went to the ghosts, the, the Grand Temple, uh to the Ghosts of Past and Future -

ALI: *[cross]* Oh yeah...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Which was the... the like, um, halfling priestess, that kind of explained what pre-Samoths religion was like in halfling culture? Right?

ALI: ... Yeah, Hella specifically goes there to try to get information on like... that weird statue that she saw? Um, or Tristero... chat says Tristero, I think - it was also that. Um, and then she gets like a weird... vision about Hadrian, and then like flips out, *[cross]* and runs to the dock.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Wait, what's the Hadri- oh, that's the vision, *the vision*, that Hadrian is in trouble basically.

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um... right. Uh... people in chat are noting that "you got the monster map", Adaire?
[beat]

JANINE: I don't know what that *means*. *[Ali and Austin chuckle]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You gave someone the monster map?

JANINE: *[cross]* I'm pretty sure it was - I'm pretty sure... it was a map... that was like layered, and... relevant to this area -

ALI: *[cross]* (*singing to the tune of "Monster Mash"*) It was the map!

AUSTIN: *[cross]* *[snorts]* (*continuing the song*) It was the Monster Map!

DRE: *[cross]* (*very distantly, continuing the song*) The Monster Map!

JANINE: *[cross]* I don't remember it being a - *[dissolves into chuckles]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* (*amused musical mumbling*) It was a graveyard smash! Um...

JANINE: It was because - *[cross]* it was before she got the -

ART: *[cross]* (*still singing "Monster Mash"*) She got the map! *[Austin and Dre laugh in surprise for a few seconds. Ali snorts]*

DRE: Ohh, boy.

JANINE: The chat is right, it was a situation where Adaire was like “hey, I - I’ll... get people to trade, they just gotta know where to go and... etcetera.” It was that kinda thing. *[cross]* That was the thing.

AUSTIN: Gotcha. *[Art, very faintly, sings the howls in “Monster Mash”. Austin laughs]* Thank you, for singing in the background.

DRE: *[cross]* Oh, god...

AUSTIN: Um, so yeah. Trade. Uh... and then yeah, there were cool mosaics, if I remember, in the temple? *[Ali and Janine agree]* Um, and like, ancestor worship and... uh, and such - really, if people really wanna remember halfling... c- like, halfling religion - *[stammers]* One of the important things for me was like, the halflings that we saw in Rosemerrow... people are investigating the ones that they felt were the scummiest, because there was a murder? And it was time to investigate the scummiest ones? And... like, so, I *think* that this character, and - and the temple were originally just straight up in Rosemerrow, as a place you could have gone to, and I just like, transposed it down here. Because, y’know, lamina and strata! They could be an- there could be another one of those somewhere, sure! *[Ali, softly: Yeah!]* Um, and so you uh... that - that - I wanted to make sure there was a vision of halfling culture that was not *just*, like, scummy... Republican slash, like... um... uh, like British folk culture-worshipping bullshit. Um, and so, ‘m glad we got some of that in there. Um...? Lack House, was the other place that some of y’all went. Right? *[Ali hums]*

JANINE: *[cross]* Oh, Throndir and Adaire.

AUSTIN: Where it was - right. Right. Where the whole thing there was - what?

JANINE: *[cross]* I - there was two different halves... and I think one of them was like, a memory and the other one was - I cannot for the *life* of me remember what Adaire... saw in the Lack House and I’m *really* upset about it.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Really!

ALI: *[cross]* Oh, I remember!

JANINE: What was it?

ALI: *[chuckles]* So, it was either, you could either see a life... of yourself with whatever you were lacking, or if you... like had gotten rid of it, or something, and. Adaire went there and like... was with her family, I think? *[Austin hums in realization]* Does that sound right? *[short pause]*

JANINE: I don't know...

ALI: *[laughs]* Um... Throndir had like seen if he had like, taken revenge on the - the snow elves, if he still held anger towards them and like - *[cross]* realized he wasn't happy, and then Adaire was like, in this place that she had like, lost.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right. Mmhm. *[beat]*

ALI: Yeah.

JANINE: *[cross]* Oh, it was - I think it was just like, I think it was just like a moment where she was like, in her childhood home, and realized that like, her parents couldn't provide for her and the people around her wouldn't?

AUSTIN: Right.

JANINE: It was - that was the thing. For the -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* It was like the break of - of, of... society. Like she stopped believing that society would help people.

JANINE: Yeah...The "true connection" thing was the bar, that came up in the chat, that was - that wasn't the Lack House. That was the thing she says uh, to the bartender who asks what thing she is.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Ohhh... right. Okay. Cool. Um... I don't remember what Greenperch was, I don't think anybody went to Greenperch, I don't think anybody went to the Blocked Path, but. Hadrian, you do go to the House of First Light. *[short pause]*

ART: Sure do.

AUSTIN: How's that go? Talk me - talk to me about that.

ART: Um... It doesn't go great? *[silence. Ali makes sniffing noises]* *[cross]* Um -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Uh huh?

ART: Alyosha comes with... and - *[cross]* disappears.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Which, fair - right. You climb this - you climb this, first of all, people - I think people are like "don't go there", if I remember, right. Like you get a boat out there, and like "this isn't - okay. Sure." And then yeah, you climb the - the House of First Light, which is a, a, the -

the icon of it is a um... lighthouse, uh. I love that on this map, that I did, the icon for that lighthouse thing, one, I think it might just be the tower from Oblivion? *[Ali chuckles]* Two, uh, it has a shadow and the shadow just falls off of the side of this map *[Ali and Janine laugh]* into the air? I dunno, it's weird down here. That could happen. Um... Eamon Tee wants to know what I use for my little buildings. This is all just Roll20 stuff. This is just like, you can search Roll20, uh, you can just search the Internet for stuff and Roll20 has its own collection of stuff, so between those two things, I - that's where I get everything. *[cross]* On this stuff, anyway.

ART: *[cross]* Hold on, search the internet for *stuff*...

AUSTIN: For stuff, yeah. Mhm. Um... *[sniffles]* Yeah. Uh, and yeah, Alyosha gets pulled away, gets - gets zapped, gets - gets like, floated away, to *[flips through slides, stops on the map of southwestern Hieron and circles the Lighthouse]* the - again, this like lighthouse, question mark? So you climb that lighthouse, you wind up here, where it says "Lighthouse" on the map, and then, you... uh... see Alyosha go across this bay, and to the Dark Son, the forge of the Dark Son. Um. *[Art hums affirmatively]* And, you are given an offer, right, or is that later? Is the ladder - is the ladder... offer... now? *[cross]* Or is it -

ART: *[cross]* No, I think it's like right then, yeah.

AUSTIN: How's that go? *[long silence, with the sound of someone typing on a keyboard]*

ART: ... It's like... it's - it's, it's a choice to follow Alyosha or a ch - *[cuts out]*.

AUSTIN: Right.

ART: The forge, right?

AUSTIN: And you - and you choose the forge.

ART: Yeah. *[pause. Austin sighs]* It just really felt dramatically appropriate at that time.

AUSTIN: *(amused)* Yeah. I always wondered what would've happened, if you had fuckin'. Gone the other way.

ART: You're the one who would've had to *know*. *[Ali bursts into laughter]*

AUSTIN: I woulda - and I would've known then! 'Cause I - we would've done it, you know? That would've been... that would've been what would've happened. Um... Is that... the sequence... So from there... *[pause. Austin sighs]* How do they get you back? *[short pause]*

ART: Um... Samoths 2 is kind of a dick...

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, huge, right? *[Ali snorts]*

ART: He takes the cloak -

AUSTIN: He takes the cloak. *[cross]* Or do you give him the cloak?

ART: *[cross]* Which is what I was gonna -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* He *demand*s the cloak.

ART: *[cross]* He - he *demand*s it.

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: Um, I was gonna *[laughs]* use the, uh, the - the Arrested Development, the G.O.B. Bluth thing, where they like "they told you not to go", I was gonna do the like "*[scoffs]* yeah, like the guy in the cloak of a god is gonna"... uh... but - but yeah, he demands the cloak, he takes the cloak, I remember just being like, *horribly* uncomfortable, he - he - he *[cuts out]* the scary sword? The -

AUSTIN: Yes.

ART: To - to quote chat, the - the - the dark sword.

AUSTIN: Yeah. He breaks - you - you've had this golden sword, from - from the throne... room. From... season one. Forever. Right? It was like you lost your spear, which was your main real weapon, and you picked up this golden sword from like, the floor of the throne room? And... had it already broken? And he repaired it? Or did he - he break it and give it to - or just - *[cross]* dip it in the Dark...

ART: He... broke it.

AUSTIN: Okay.

ART: Um... he like took all of his dad's stuff... *[Ali snickers]*

AUSTIN: Is that - okay, yeah, that's - yeah, okay, sure.

ART: Um... and was like "this is mine now, here's a worse version of what you came here with. Goodbye forever." *[Austin laughs silently]* Hadrian to um... to - to Samol, right? To - he's like, I - I remember just... *[cuts out]* at the -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Were you just *there*? Or did you wash up. Because there was a whole *boat* situation.

ART: No, that - that was everyone *but* me.

AUSTIN: *[gesturing on the map]* Oh, so you just wind up there. *[slide: map of the Buoy]*

ART: Yeah I - they like go through this like, harrowing process and then it's just all - *[cuts out]*

AUSTIN: He like sends you there, specifically.

ALI, AUSTIN, & ART: *(simultaneously)* Yeah.

ALI: Hadrian just walks up, I tremendously fail a boat roll, even though *[laughing]* Hella's been around boats her whole life...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Her whole life, right.

ALI: *[cross]* And then we just... die.

AUSTIN: Um, there is - you can see it here, this little house was previously just in the middle of this sea, but once y'all land there *[laughs. Ali guffaws]* Samol like, u-unanchors it, and - is also being pursued by... so there's this little house in the middle of this - so. The Buoy, for people who aren't looking at this map, is like a... city, that's on the top of a giant weird tree trunk, that is, like, multi-layered, and... y'know. Angles are hard to draw, okay? *[Ali snorts]* Um, and there is a place called the Standing Sea, which is this like sea, that - or like lake, really - that splits the Buoy into a couple of different tiny islands, and then like kind of one big major one, and- and kind one of off in the corner, and then, it also is like a waterfall that just drops down into lower strata and lamina. And there's a little tiny house that was in the middle, that is where Hadrian shows up. The rest of you go to... get a boat, I think from the Calhoun Clean- Cleanblade Company? *[Ali hums in agreement]* Which has no reference, or is no real connection, this is not a bit, like there's not a - a lie, like, no connection to the Calhoun - to Calhoun Tristé, sometimes people just have the same name. Um, and you get on a boat, and... fuck up? Is that - what is the fuckup? How do you - how do you fuck up and still land on a - *oh*, 'cause you're going, you're trying to get to the - the House of First Light!

ALI: Yes.

AUSTIN: Right. And instead, you land on this island.

ALI: I get caught up in this like... whatever, and go down this little river.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yes, yes. Yes. Totally. Um? Totally.

JANINE: I wanna say it was some bullshit with the sail, like the sail... got... *[cross]* swung, and then broke, or. I think that's.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* That sounds right. That sounds right. *[sighs]*

ALI: Yeah, I think I specifically said that like, Hella was pulling on something too hard. *[dissolves into laughter as Janine hums in agreement]*

[3:14:50]

AUSTIN: Yeah. Um, uh... someone in the chat just - Juliet said "sure they do Austin". I'm serious! Like the - someone just asked this on Twitter recently, um, and I said that the thing that I'd learned as I'd gotten older was that, um, there are ways you can be haunted without ghosts, right, and like - it turn - meeting someone who has the same name as someone you loved once who is dead, is a thing that starts to happen to you, as you get older. And it's like, "fuck this. Well this sucks. *[laughing]* *[over Ali and Janine's pensive "yeah"s]* Like, I'm just trying to get a pizza right now! I don't need to be dealing with the fact that Robert is here!" or, whoever, right? In this case, Calhoun. So, that is all that is. There, I promise there is no twist to that. Um.

ALI: Yeah, it was just emotionally jarring. And we all moved past it. *[breaks into giggles]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah. And we all moved past it! Exactly.

JANINE: Spoiler, Calhoun is - is Arrell.

AUSTIN: That's right. Calhoun Arrell. Yeah. Exactly. You - *[Ali sighs]*

ART: *[cross]* There are *other* ways to be haunted without ghosts. Ghouls! *[Ali snorts and starts laughing]*

AUSTIN: Also ghouls! A hundred percent. *[slide: map of the island in the Buoy, which features a floorplan of Samol's mansion]* Uh, also, the cool ghost dog thing, that's on this map, currently. *[Ali groans in the background]*

JANINE: Barnabas? *[cross]* I think it's -

AUSTIN: There's a Barnabas? Is that the name? *[Ali hums doubtfully]* Jack and I were trying to figure this out recently. 'Cause there's *Barbelo*, who is somebody else.

JANINE: Oh... no, Barbelo is the dog.

AUSTIN: Is... Are they?

JANINE: Yes. Yes.

AUSTIN: You're sure.

ALI: *[cross]* Barbelo's -

JANINE: *[cross]* Uh-huh. I'm like - I'm like ninety-nine percent sure Barbelo is the dog. I can look at my notes, I'm on my iPad -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You're - okay. No, I believe you. Barbelo seems to be the dog.

JANINE: Okay. *[Ali chuckles silently]*

AUSTIN: Here's the thing I love, is on the wiki, it says "Barbelo's name may have come from the real-world dog - real-world dog Barbelo Patou de Gauja, nicknamed Barbi, a Great Pyrenees owned by a Latvian breeder", and. That's dope, I hope that's like, *[Ali wheezes]* I - *[Ali starts laughing]* lemme take a look at *this* dog.

JANINE: *[cross]* I thought you were gonna say "I hope that's true", it's the -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I - y'know, I - it *could be!* I don't fuckin' know, look at this cool dog! Let's bring this dog over here! *[drags a browser window into view, showing Barbi's profile page on the breeder's site]*

ALI: *(murmuring)* Wait, where's the dog.

AUSTIN: *[zooming in and scrolling around]* I put it up on the stream! *(admiringly)* Look at this good dog! *[huffing laugh]* "Great Pyrenees Mountain Dog"...

DRE: Oh, that's a - that *is* a good dog.

AUSTIN: *(still fascinated)* That's a good dog - *[snorting]* Look at all these dogs!

ALI: Okay... well there we go! *[starts giggling]*

AUSTIN: *[scrolling through a new page with other dogs on it]* Aw, these are good. Hell yeah. Aw, look at this one! *[clicks on another dog's profile]*

DRE: *(murmuring)* Aw, yeah. *(normal volume)* Great - Great Pyrenees are incredible. *[Austin sighs]*

ALI: Love the ear detail...

AUSTIN: Love it! Unbelievable! Alright, I'm gonna - I'm gonna close this, and definitely not click on Video, where I hope to see good dog videos.

ALI: *(quietly)* Wow...

AUSTIN: "great-pyrenees.lv". This isn't working. *[goes back to the slideshow] (embarrassed)* Alright, back over here. Um... *[Dre bursts into laughter.]* Uh... y'all land on Samol's island, and... get the Marielda story. I guess that's the other thing that happened. The other side of the game is, Uklan Tel gives the other - the other game... the Marielda story. Right? I guess that's - Thrandir. You get it from - you get from... Uklan Tel. *[cross]* Right?

DRE: *[cross]* Yeah. Because at that point I've been - I've been teleported and - switched with Lem. *[pause]* Right?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You're - You're - *[pause]* No, the other way, right? 'Cause you s- you're not switched *yet*. You switch *after* the story.

DRE: *[cross]* Ohh, yeah yeah yeah. Yes... *[hums doubtfully]*

AUSTIN: Right? I'm pretty sure. *[long pause]* 'Cause you're... oh, maybe you're right, maybe you're right. Maybe you're right.

ALI: I think it's when we arrived. *[cross]* I think it's when we first go to that garden. Um -

AUSTIN: *[cross]* It is when you arrived. You're right. Yeah.

ART: Yeah, because - because - we did a bad job of guessing what the groups were gonna be, *[laughing slightly]* during the Marielda intros.

DRE: Oh, that's right.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Because - No, we - we *double* fucked it, actually. Because - we double fucked up, because, not only - it's still wrong, because then there's a thing in the... in the... Autumn in Hieron, uh, outro, or in the - the, the, rehab - not the - rehab, Jesus, there's - recap! There we go, words are hard. *[Ali laughs silently]* Where I'm like, "make sure y- okay, Stornras, take this blade to... Lem in the mountains". Like well, fuckin', no one's at the mountains anymore! *[Ali and others giggle]* And Lem is in the - is *in* the sword! *[laughing]* So good luck! *[Art chuckles]* Sometimes you call a shot, and the shot doesn't work out. Uh, you know, sometimes it's like, uh, "maybe you won't be a pala-din anymore", I - I - it's just like, "I truly don't care", is like, the fun thing about it, is like okay, whatever, like I got it across the m- the thing in the moment, it's fine. If we ever do a... if we ever do like a - a movie, it will be the right words, instead of the wrong words. *[Ali chuckles]* Um... *[buffering noises]* What else. Okay. So y'all land here, you get the

Marielda story, from Samol, Samol's a cranky, depressed... dude who's dying. Um. There's like a talk with Adaire, about... her Lack, and about, like, friendship, right? *[short pause]*

JANINE: *[cross]* I mean, by "talking", it's mostly... it's - *[huffing laugh]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Connections? Lecture?

JANINE: "Talk" is, is like a... a, mm, it's - it's more like he tries to pry some info out and she's kind of just like, "shut up and let me look at the water", kind of? Like it's - it's not as much of a back and forth as maybe it could have been. Uh.

AUSTIN: Yeah. *[cross]* Yeah. Um...? Totally. Uhhh... *[beat]* Any other important stuff that happens here, before things blow up. *[beat]* We learn that the... *[stammers]* This is where we learn, that the... um. The Hitchcocks wound up here. And helped build all of... the Buoy. *[short pause]*

ALI: Yeah. Uh - *[cross]* So -

AUSTIN: Um... Anything else. *[pause]* You learn you're being pursued by Ordenna.

ALI: Yeah. *[cross]* Samol tries to - yeah.

ART: *[barely audible crosstalk]* And then Ordenna shows up.

AUSTIN: Wait, one more time?

ALI: Samol tries to explain some of the bloodline stuff to Hella, but mostly just tells her that she's an asshole...

AUSTIN: That - sounds right. Yeah. *[Janine and Ali laugh]* But we do get the bloodline stuff, b-between all of that stuff, and the intros and blah blah blah, which again is, Hella is descended from like, Wander Aviz, the Aviz family, who were a group of like, magically powerful people, um. Who - I think the thing we haven't - did we get to any sort of betrayal? We know there was a betrayal. Right? Or, a thing that was considered a betrayal. But I don't know that we've ever shown that onscreen. *[beat]*

ALI: *[cross]* Um... I'm not sure!

AUSTIN: Like, do you know why they were... why they became the Varal family instead of the Aviz family?

ALI: *[sighs]* Um... That's either, I think it was one - in one of the sword flashbacks? Or like, something she vaguely gets from Red Jack...? *[Austin hums]* Which is like, it was four different

houses of Ordenna or whatever, and they were trying to bring... they were trying to do spells again, essentially, and they were like, "nope".

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right. Right.

ALI: "Never doing that again, ever."

AUSTIN: Yeah. Yeah. Um. And yeah! Yeah yeah yeah! The Hitchcocks show up, that's, the Hitchcock swords are at... the, um... are at Samol's place. And he explains that they belonged to people who like, helped a bunch of people, in the long run, and helped build a community. And what he's gesturing towards is, is the Buoy. Is like, the beginning of - of the - the very first parts of like, this cross-section of different lamina and strata. Um, that people go to. 'Cause that's what the Buoy is. The Buoy is not just a place, in a different lamina, or is that, but it is also, it has become a crossroad for wharven culture, basically. Um... uh... *[pause. Austin makes buffering noises]* Tryin' to think if there's anything else there. Um, yeah. So then things go bad. Uh, the - the Ordennans show up - well, they did kind of go good, sort of - the Ordennans show up, *[beat]* um... and there's a big fight, and Lem is in the kitchen yelling about everything and breaking things, and trying to do patterns, and... the sword breaks? After - so, Adaire kills the Head... Ordennan, there's a bunch of really great fight scene things, um...

JANINE: *(exasperated)* It's fucking nonsense, is it - I - *[sighs and laughs]* Every time I think of it, that - it's just so silly that it actually happened the way it happened.

AUSTIN: What way? *[Ali says something indistinguishable]*

JANINE: Ah - it just, it just - *[pause]* on paper it seems so absurd that Adaire could kill *any* Ordennan at all ever. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yep, D&D is weird.

JANINE: Yeah. *[Ali wheezes]*

AUSTIN: Um... the... you fight the Fel anchor, which are anchors made of - it seems to be Iduna Fel? The woman who is thought to have been a traitor to the, or was being signaled out as being the killer of Lutz, even though she absolutely was not, and in fact was being targeted because she was like, a... um, another - it was like a rival of the leader of the - the Justiciar? Right? And then... you fight that ghost dog, you fight the - the blink dog, and you fight the blink dog's master, and you fight a bunch of other troops... how do you end up on the fuckin' boat? With a sword. *[pause]* *[Ali makes an "I don't know" sound]* Oh! Hadrian - Hadrian, you're told to destroy the sword, right?

ART: *[at the same time as Ali]* Yeah. *[cross]* That was -

AUSTIN: That's the specific thing that Samothres 2 tells you.

JANINE: And someone had taken the sword and was escaping with it. *[cross]* Right? And then that guy gets killed and then Hadrian's *[barely audible]* in the boat with the sword.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right. Is in the boat with that guy, with the - *[Ali gasps]* with the Heat and the Dark sword.

ALI: *(dramatic)* *There's a magnetic guy.* Remember the magnetic guy? *[laughing]*

AUSTIN: Is that not... one of the Fel anchors? That sounded like the special anchors?

ALI: Yeah, yeah yeah yeah...

AUSTIN: Okay. Yeah yeah yeah, they're rad.

ALI: Who like, takes our weapons, and then I guess Hadrian gets the Blade in the Dark somehow that way.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I think he gets back on the boat and is like "I'm gonna get out of here!" And then... yeah.

JANINE: Wait, I don't think they actually take our weapons, I think the whole thing was like, you like, fake surrender. Right? And then they take *your* weapons, Hella. And then you also just like flex out of the chains? Or does that happen later.

ALI: *[cross]* That also happens. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* That would happen now. Yeah, that would all have to - have to happen right in here.

JANINE: *[cross]* Yeah. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um. Apparently the - the - Barbelo stole the sword at some point. *[beat]*

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: *(approvingly)* Good dog. *[Janine agrees. Ali snorts]* Um... and then yeah, you - someone says you *punch* someone to death. Nice work! Um...

ALI: *[cross]* Could believe it!

AUSTIN: And then yeah, th-this all builds to this moment of... Hadrian raises this dar- the blade - this new dark blade, this new Dark Sun blade, to destroy the Blade in the Dark, and then - d'you roll Guidance? What do you roll to get - what move do you do to get... the vision of inside the blade?

ALI: Oh, I do a Heirloom roll. *[cross]* That's the only - yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* You do the Heirloom roll. Right. Right.

ALI: The only one I've ever succeeded at. *[laughs]*

AUSTIN: Nice work, 'cause we've been getting those all season, right? You got those all season and saw like, glimpses of this place, where it's green and beautiful, um. I think you can see Red Jack was in there at some point, right? They like tell you that? Or like you just get a vision of Red Jack in there at some point?

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um, you get, um... images of like... presumably of Samoths and the mages inside, and... slowly building up a society in there. After Samoths is really mad. Um... *[exhales]* And you get, uh - right. There it is, Tim Howes remembers this, great one. You don't need to be near the sword to do the Heirloom roll. That's a really good one. *[Ali: Yeah.]* Uh, and so... yeah. So the Heirloom roll fires, and Hadrian sees Samoths inside, with a star? And with one of the mages, playing chess. You'll be happy to know, and it hasn't come up in our new recordings yet, but I figured out how their game of chess works, it's very cool, *[Ali wheezes]* it's a - it's like Bridge chess, it's a whole thing, it's four-player chess, I'll get into it maybe one day. Um. And, uh... stops. And refuses to break the blade. Right? *[Ali and Art make assenting noises]* Okay. Good. *[beat]* And... brings it back. *[cross]* And then what -

ALI: *[starts to say something, but doesn't]* Yeah. *[cross]* Adaire's throwing rocks at Hadrian *[laughing]* while he's doing this, is *my* favorite detail of this episode, um...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Perfect. Good. Good. Um. How's the blade break? Is it from the bad - song? Is it from Lem? Lem breaks the blade, right? *[long pause]*

ALI: *[cross]* I think -

ART: *[cross]* I... don't remember.

ALI: It breaks partly, I think, I think the song fucks up the plumbing, mostly? It creates that big flood in the house, *[Austin hums]* um. But it starts to break it a little bit, and then there's the weird... magnetic guy, and then *[cross]* the fight, yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right, it's been breaking. It breaks throughout that fight, right? *[Ali and Janine agree]* Yeah, okay. Bit by bit by bit, um, and then, yeah, as - as Tim Howes again in the chat notes, it - it's your hand - it's Benjamin's hand on you that convinces you not to break the blade. *[Art hums]* Hadrian, which I'd forgotten about, yeah, totally. Totally. Um, and then... yeah, the violin snaps, the magnet breaks the blade, and the sword water joins the plumbing water, and the island starts to flood. Um. *[long pause]*

ALI: And then that's it! *[cross]* Right?

AUSTIN: I'm just making sure there's nothing else, is there any other weird shit. You all fall into the sword water. Adelaide grabs your hair, Hella.

ALI: Mhm. I pull her in.

AUSTIN: And...

ART: That's probably fine.

AUSTIN: Yeah, that's definitely okay. *[Ali chuckles]*

ART: Austin told me, in private.

AUSTIN: I said "yeah, don't worry about it, it's gonna be alright". Well, what I did say at the time, important things, one, I said that this will stop the Undead, from existing in Hieron, because - if you die now you just go right into the Heat and the Dark, there's no more person - on - on the kind of the throne of Tristero, um, uh. *[Ali hums]* Outside of a situation, like what we saw, where either... um, uh, uhh, s- you have a god in your presence? Like Samot saved Hadrian in Season One? Or, you have someone who is like looking for you as you begin to, um, fly towards the Heat and *[laughs]* the Dark? Which is what happened with Ephrim. Because, I dunno if you remember but there was a very important detail of the Ephrim thing. Which is that Ephrim... told Highwater, who was this cobbin spy who was sent to kill him? Um, convinced her not to kill him, and said "go back and tell your lord that I'm already dead. That you killed me". Um. And so... Samoths was already on the lookout, for Ephrim. At that point. Um, which is like a small detail, but I just relistened to it, I was like "oh yeah, that's - that's interesting." Um... and so... yeah.

So, as you guys go into the sword, y'all go into the sword, um. Pull Adelaide in with you. *[huffs. Ali hums]* Wash ashore, Hadrian, you make eye contact with Samoths, Samoths does the whole like, you - "he brought you back to me", referring to Samot. Meanwhile, halfway across the world, Ephrim rebuilds the blade that was given to... uh, that was supposed to be given to Maelgwyn, originally, by combining the hilt that Lem had with the crescent blade, which brings him immediately to the side of Samoths, who he kills. Um, doing that turn - makes this wound he has worse, so that he *[stutters]* Ephrim's had this weird, like, Heat-and-the-Dark-in-his-hand wound, and I don't remember where he gets that from, and they aren't here on the call anymore, so I don't know... I - Sylvi will have to explain where that came

from, or I'll have to finish the season in the next week or two, which I will be doing anyway, um, and I'll remember. Uh. But they have that wound. And then, that gets worse. But it doesn't - it's worse in that lower realm. Up here it's not as bad. Back up on Strata One, or Strata Zero, or whatever, it's not as bad. But all the way down near - the Heat and the Dark. Really bad. *[pause]* Really bad.

Um. And then, uh... Ephrim kills Cool Ranch... um. And. What is gestured at, or what is shown in the final moments of the season, is that Alyosha, who had not been killed, *[laughs]* when he had floated - down to the side of Samoths, um. Comes out and. Produces - I mean I guess you'd already - you'd *seen* him, right? Hadrian? Or - or or. Did Samoths just - Samoths like, basically said he has his uses or something, right?

ART: Yeah, Alyosha was not present in Hadrian's meeting with... Samoths.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Right. Um, and so we get - Alyosha back, and Alyosha picks up Samoths'... hammer, and begins to hammer away. On... a combination of like, Samoths' blood, that was - that - that came out of the... uh, out of his body after... he was killed with this special sword. Um. And begins to produce these new plants. *[beat]* Whoosh clank, et cetera. Um? *[pause]* Fesha in the chat says, "All Cool Ranch said was that 'Alyosha wasn't confident' and it sounded like he was dead". I kill a lot of people. I really do. But I - I - *[Ali wheezes]* still, never - kill a nice good person like Alyosha off-screen, without being like "and then he's dead". Um? Yeah...

ART: But you did *imply* it.

AUSTIN: Y- to be clear - sorry, sorry. Earlier I was saying "he", I was referring to - to... Ephrim, I was not - I - I promise I was not misgendering Sylvi. Sylvi is "they". I was saying that Ephrim, who uses he/him, uh... was. That - his wound. Yeah. Um... but yeah, I've never - I've never killed a character offscreen that I can think of, without being like "yeah they're fucking dead". Um. Yeah. What else? Uh... *[short pause as Austin makes buffering noises]* Yes, uh, people want to know about the Adelaide/Hella family tree thing. Uh, Wander Aviz was like, a magical, um... uhhh... uh, advisor? To the Triste family. And to the... the leaders of Tristero. Um. That is - that is, uh... where the kind of like, familial closeness comes from? Um. But not the... not the um. There's no like blood relation, between - between Hella and Adelaide.

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah...

AUSTIN: Um, and also Adelaide is just... a jerk. *[Ali chuckles]* Y'know? Um...

ALI: Um. She knows Hella doesn't know, and... *[cross]* I guess. *[chuckles quietly]*

AUSTIN: Yeah. There are not more than one of the gods, the gods are singular, because they exist on that other plane, basically? They are the things that can move between the lamina and strata and make them, or they could before, there's only one of them. For each thing. Which is

to say, Samoths is in the sword now, and Maelgwyn was in... the - I mean, Maelgwyn was literally at the very bottom layer. Like that is - where he was. Um? Alright.

ART: *(enthusiastically)* Alright.

AUSTIN: *[slide: map of Hieron, with a sword emoji and arrows depicting the migration of characters across Hieron after the finale of Winter in Hieron]* Uh, let me just look at the - the last - this last couple of things here... uh, people in the New Archives, went south *[laughing]* to the Last University, I should add a note here, that is Fero went west to the Mark of the Erasure, um. And y'all went from here, into this sword. *[chuckles]* So good job, with that. *[Ali snorts]* Uh, and here is the *monstrous* map, that is actually in our Roll20. *[slide: map of Hieron with different lines across the map and starstuff-encased Heat and the Dark centered on Rosemerrow and crawling across the western side of Hieron]* *(disgusted amusement)* Ughh. What a nightmare. This is a nightmare. Here is the Heat and the Dark, which blows up everywhere, the starstuff starts to move in, and it walls it off, so that there are these like, glowing white star arcs all throughout northwestern Hieron, uh, here is the flood, from - from. Uh. Lem... *[Ali wheezes softly in the background]* It's - a nightmare. It's a nightmare! And all of that's gone. Like all of that is just gone, at the beginning of Spring. Um? *[Ali sighs]* Ice Cream Jones says "where's Pikachu gone? Play to find out what happens." Agreed.

ALI: *(quietly)* And it's... kind of...

AUSTIN: Uhhh... and then there's this - this purple line, is to indicate where... on the lowest strata, or - or, y'know, yeah, basically on the lowest strata, where Maelgwyn... walked from, from way over here to way over here, and set up the Dark Son's, like, forge there. Um? *[pause]*

[3:34:28]

AUSTIN: *[cont'd]* I'm just gonna look back at those first questions, and then I'm gonna look at that list of NPCs, and see if there's anything left.

ALI: *[laughing]* Okay...

AUSTIN: And then we'll be fucking done.

ALI: *[cross]* Just a lightning round.

ART: *[cross]* I really can't imagine we missed anything...

AUSTIN: *[slide: list of Questions to Answer]* "What happened?" Got it. "Where and how are all the main characters?" So, it is... Hella, Lem, Adaire, Hadrian, all in the sword, Fero, walking to the Mark of the Erasure. Last time we saw Fero, uh, was, there was a dragon, or there was a shadow - like a shadow of a dragon passing over him, um. And... the rest of the crew, Throndir

and Ephrim went south with a *bunch* of refugees, to the, um, the Last University, they have the Book, that's what happened with that, Heat and the Dark, we've kinda hit that, right? It's the entropy, it is the universe, it is... it is... everything closing in, it is, um, a sort of... mindless fire, that... wants to consume everything. Or, that wants to - it wants to the way when I drop a - a - an apple, it wants to fall. Right? Um... So I think that is the Heat and the - that *is* the Heat and the Dark. There's no secret, there's no second - there's no, I'm not holding anything back about the Heat and the Dark, is a thing I can a *hundred* percent say, like I don't have a secret about the Heat and the Dark that I've written down, that is like "ah, and then they're gonna find out the truth about the Heat" - no, the Heat and the Dark is what there was before there was Hieron, there was nothing else before there was Hieron, Hieron was the first thing that existed in this universe, in this fictional world, uh, it is - Samol and Hieron, y'know, are the same thing, uh, and. And it... physically is - is collapsing in on Hieron as Samol ages. Um. And as Samol gives up on life, effectively. Um. Starstuff, I think we addressed? Basically, right? *[cross]* Samot - yeah.

ALI: *[cross]* Created by Samot... yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Cool. Um.

ALI: To build a new world, but that world does not include people.

AUSTIN: That world does not include - well, so there's - if - if Samot had finished the stars, maybe that world could've included people, or, if Samot had been able to... get peop- educate people about this, and convince them that it was cool, that like at least something would survive, then they would at least know about it, neither of those two things happened. Talked about Adelaide's curse... we talked about where Ord- Ordenna came from. We talked about Samoths, basically? And then yeah, I guess, the stakes for Spring... are the stakes for Spring. Um. The world is ending. The Yawhg is coming. *[Ali snorts quietly]* Right? Um. There are... a number of people who think they have solutions. Arrell wants to put people in bubbles, and that will give them some extra amount of time to try to devise... a solution. Those bubbles are... solitary confinement, but also the Matrix? They're worlds that you can fill with your own - with your own mind, and your own... desire, and everything... you could ever imagine, but also you can never speak to another real person, again? Um, until you figure out how to get out, or until Arrell brings you out, *[someone coughs]* um... *[sighs]* uhhh, what else.

Um... the stars... are built to create a new world, but not a world that - is life as we know it? Um, and we know that Alyosha is trying to - create all these new plants, that seem to grow into the purple of the Heat and the Dark. Uh, we have yet to see them onscreen, besides the very end, so I'm... not going to talk about that, but you can imagine that for me the idea is like, "hey, here are people who have ideas for how to survive the Heat and the Dark." None of them are a simple solution, right. None of them are just like "that's the cure", there's a cost for each of those things. And... part of the game is going to be how to minimize those costs, or if you *can* minimize those costs. Um. And where people decide, and where they're at. Um... what else. Uhhh, those are the big stakes. Uh - people are in a sword. Can you get out of that sword. *[chuckles]* Um... *[Ali giggles quietly]* Fero walked into the fucking Mark of the Erasure. What

happens there. That's a - those are stakes, obviously, but those are - those are smaller stakes in terms of... the time investment, I think, before we answer what's happening in those places. Um... *[beat]* other stuff. Uh? *[silence]* *[Ali: Uh...]* *[cuts Ali off]* Any other - oh yeah, there are no more Un- there are no more Undead being created, uh, Arrell is Undead, Arrell is the last of the Undead, um, that like, the - the timing on that was also very fun, um, y'know, Arrell gets killed, uh... realizes that he is now the undead wizard, which is great, um, and then moments later, Adelaide gets pulled into... into the sword. Um. Which - where she is *not* the Queen of Death, she is not in control of death there, and no one is in control of death anymore, uh, at - on Hieron, um? Any other stuff. *[silence]*

Katie wants to know, uh, Katie says "So wait Austin, Maelothes walked over to the forge? What's up with that?" Yeah, good question. *[Ali giggles]* Again, that's a - that's a. That's a thing that could come up, right? Or the thing that I've gestured to is, he was pinned to the bottom layer, of the world. Um, and his - his divinity was being drawn to kind of cancel out the divinity of the other - gods. So... he went over there. I - y'know, you tell me why he did that, I dunno. Um, yeah, he's definitely - there's definitely a - a lich situation with Arrell, um, alright! *[slide: a list of all the key NPCs and groups]* So, the last set here. I think we hit all these people, though. We don't rea- oh, oh. Here's one important one for Ordenna, is... *(reconsidering)* hmm, y'know what, no. I think that's a thing that will be - could be answered in play. Oh, the - one of the last things we see, is, we see Stornras and Sunder, together with the sword, with the Blade in the Dark, with Jerrod Shiraz, who is the Vicerine of Ordenna, who is the like, chill leader of Ordenna? The one who does not want to invade the world. That's one of the last things we see. Right? *[beat]* Um, so Sunder is there with Stornras, and with - and with Jerrod. Um?

ALI: Um, Sunder, I guess we didn't explain, was one of... Arr- Fantasma's students? *[cross]* Or...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I think they were peers more than students.

ALI: Okay.

AUSTIN: Yeah, they both - they both taught at the University.

ALI: Okay. They were like going to school at the same time, and then... they run into her... at the tower.

AUSTIN: ... Right. Correct. At the... at the Buoy. *[beat]*

ALI: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um, no clocks for this season, this isn't a clock season, clocks don't happen in Hieron. Um. Except for. Marielda, obviously. Uh, everybody else, I think we got. Um, again, I - *[beat]* like. I think here's one, is. The refugees, who went south to the University... are like, all - a lot of the people on this list who have not come up? Right? Um, the goblins and snow elves, Chatterchin and the gnolls, like, Rosana and Benjamin, the weavers and Rosette and... Red Jack and - and

the mothkin, Corsica Neue all that. Um. Uh...? *[short pause]* I think that that's - that's kind of the big stuff. And the little stuff, also. Emmanuel's fine, I would not kill Emmanuel off. *[Ali giggles]* Off-mic. Um, Weaver King... I don't know... w- I think Weaver King comes up in play, so. Wait. Wait and see, y'know, play to find out what happens on that one. Um, and Obelas, *[someone coughs]* we didn't see where Obelas went, but we do know that the starstuff is doing fine against the Heat and the Dark, it's just, it can't - the stars can't start making their other world until they kinda get the Heat and the Dark under control, basically, so. Um, alright! *[cross]* I think we're good -

ALI: *[cross]* Do you wanna just talk...

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ALI: *[cross]* So... *[chuckles]* I guess the first... um... this is probably gonna be this week's episode? *[Austin: Yeah.]* Um. If it doesn't go into the feed this week it'll definitely be by... next Tuesday? Because Spring is going to officially start... I feel - can we comfortably say this, on the 11th?

AUSTIN: Uhhh? Lemme see, what's - when is that at. Yeah, I think we can say that.

ALI: Okay. *[cross]* Okay.

AUSTIN: I can say that. I can get my parts of that - those intros and such done, yeah. *[cross]* Right.

ALI: I don't wanna speak for Jack, so *[laughs]* but I think the 11th is gonna be... *[short pause]* enough. *[short silence with keyboard tapping noises]*

AUSTIN: Um, uhhh.... anything else we wanna say. I guess - we'll use this as an opportunity to say like, broadly, I - I think this is going to be... a heavy season? I think what we've already recorded has had lots of joy in it, and lots of goofiness in it, but has also been very serious at moments? Um. This is going to be a season that we confront loss and death very - closely, and I don't mean that in terms of like, "the characters might die!" I mean, it's a season that has - it's a show that has been... peripherally at least about death, um, and about big picture failure and death, right, big picture the - the death of many, many people, um, I've talked about the Heat and the Dark as cancer, or as global warming, and so... it's like. Those things are going to come up a lot, and I - it can be weird to be like "oh, content warning for existential dread!", but like... I think we're going to get *near* that? I don't know that that's - I wanna be clear, I'm not going into it like. "Can't wait to fuck everybody up!" Um. *[Ali wheezes]* And I'm excited to see - what I'm excited for is to see people face that, and be like, "And this is why we're living. And this is why - this is what I care about in the face of all that." So far, a lot of what we've recorded, and, I think this is especially true for like, Thrandir, you can speak to this, has been about like, finding... community in the face of. Rough... situations, right?

DRE: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Um, so we're gonna do our best for that stuff, and - and, I guess I'll use this opportunity again, as just a general content warning, like, the game will continue to be violent, it's been weird going back to listening to s- to Winter, because coming from Twilight Mirage, which had - which *had* violence in it, a hundred percent, but was mostly super stylized violence, and violence - even - even post- post-the halfway point of... Twilight Mirage, when we started getting a little more, um, cinematic and, like, choreographed with - with the violence that showed up? Uh, it still was always very abstract and very like, it wasn't a bloody show. Right? But - Hieron... gets there. Hieron has some fuckin' *shit* in it. Um, and I think it's appropriate for the tone of that show, and so I - heads up for violence again, on that stuff, um... are there any other content warnings we should - *[cross]* we should go really quick.

ALI: *[cross]* Um, I - yeah, I just wanna say, um... the first couple of episodes, especially just 'cause of the system, but also probably going forward, there's more like... animal violence, animal resource sort of stuff, *[cross]* if you need... *[gets cut off by Austin]* Yeah... um.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah... I think that'll probably be contained in those first few episodes, right? I mean I can say - I-I'm happy to say that like, the opening stuff with Thrandir and Ephrim is them trying to establish... the University as a community, and based on the game that we play for that there's a rule for... animal slaughter? Which we don't linger on, or we don't describe in any detail? But that is a - that is a question that does come up, for sure.

ALI: Yep.

AUSTIN: Um.

ALI: Just be prepared for animals we talk - *[chuckling]* in that sort of... *[cross]* yeah. Yeah. Um.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Yeah, ex- in that way, yeah, totally. Um, any other big stuff. *[sighs]* Kodiak's - Kodiak is fine. I have not - we're - *[Ali starts giggling]*

DRE: *[cross]* Oh yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* I'm a hundred percent happy to spoil it, Kodiak is fine, no one's fucking - *(strained)* we're not making the show where you *eat Kodiak!* Ever in my *fucking* life! *[Janine and Ali laugh]* Are you *kidding me*. I'd quit the show first.

DRE: *[cross]* I would quit if anyone ever, like, even suggested that as a joke. Yeah.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Even joked it, yeah. Um...

DRE: Nope.

AUSTIN: Yeah.

ART: Really it's impossible to say, we've recorded 1% of the... *[Austin and Ali snort]* Really, realistically saying...

DRE: *[cross]* *(firmly)* No, I - I feel very confident saying we're never going to eat my dog.

JANINE: *[cross]* I think - *[cuts out]*

AUSTIN: *[cross]* *[snorts]* Hundred percent.

ART: *[cross]* No, that's not what I meant. *[everyone laughs]* The larger discussion -

JANINE: It's honestly so much more likely that - that we would... eat another player character, that's the wild thing.

DRE: *[cross]* *[snorts]* Yeah, a hundred percent.

JANINE: *[cross]* Like, I could see that situation coming up a w- like, way quicker than eating Kodiak.

AUSTIN: Fero could like turn into like a really delicious cow, y'know? Like... *[everyone makes noises in response. Ali's is distinctly appreciative and turns into a giggle]*

JANINE: A *huge* cow, too, and then we just need like a leg or something.

AUSTIN: You don't even need the whole animal at that point.

JANINE: *[cross]* You know? Yeah!

AUSTIN: Yeah...

JANINE: *[cross]* Just carve off the end of the butt!

ART: *[cross]* I don't think we're gonna end up... eating... anyone, really, I don't think that that kind of - granular resource management is what we're about.

JANINE: Never say never. *[Ali laughs]* *[cross]* Play to find out what happens.

DRE: *[cross]* Wait, did you just say "Fero's cow butt"? Is that what you said?

AUSTIN: NO!

ALI: *[cross]* It was leg. Leg.

JANINE: *[cross]* *[barely distinguishable]* Yeah...

DRE: *[cross]* Okay.

JANINE: *(insistent)* Play to find out what happens. Next.

AUSTIN: That's it, next, that's it. Uh, alright. Unless there's any other questions, here, I think we've explained all the stuff that needs to be explained. In some way? *[Ali and Dre both say "yeah"]* I'm so worried that I'm forgetting a big one, I'm so worried.

ART: I, it honestly doesn't matter.

AUSTIN: *[cross]* It does!

ALI: *[cross]* It's uh - if we knew - 'cause like - if we - if we remember it we'll. Explain it when it comes up in the show.

AUSTIN: We'll drop it in right here, right? Boom.

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah. This is us explaining all the things *[laughing]* we expect to come up in the show... in the next year, if we missed it, we'll talk about it. Um.

AUSTIN: God. Alright. *[slide: "Remember: tipsatthetable@gmail.com"]* Well, remember, if you have questions, you can send them to - I guess this should actually be - just general questions, friendsatthetable@gmail.com, but if you have questions that you wanna have us answer at the - on a Tips episode, tipsatthetable@gmail.com, *[slide: "friendsatthetable.cash"]* if you'd like to support the show, friendsatthetable.cash, once more - one more time I'll wanna note that you can... go buy any song on the soundtrack at notquitereal.bandcamp.com. Hoo! *[sighs]*

ALI: Um... One other notekeeping thing, *[Austin: Please.]* while we're talking to a majority of our audience, um. Our SHUX show is going to be Saturday from 2:30 to 4:30 in their... *[laughs]* Main Hall! So... See ya there! *[Janine laughs]*

AUSTIN: Yeah... I might - there's a ch- there's - there has increased to be a chance that I'll be coming straight off a plane to it. So... that's good. *[Ali makes a sympathetic pained noise and chuckles]*

ALI: *(joking)* Is it too late to say no?

AUSTIN: Yeah. *[cross]* It's fine, we'll be fine.

ALI: *[cross]* Is this the point that it's too late?

AUSTIN: *[cross]* Oh yeah, they - they printed stuff.

JANINE: *[cross]* We - we picked... we picked the, I think, a good game, for... even coming off of a plane, and just uh...

AUSTIN: *[cross]* An emergency situation, yeah... I hope so. *[Ali: Yeah...]* We should say what that game is. Do you wanna say what that game is? That's a fun thing to say.

ALI: Sure, yeah.

AUSTIN: We... are going to be playing another game - so in the last three episodes of the podcast, you have listened to us play, uh... Ross Cowman's, um... Fall of Magic? Uh, and so we are gonna be playing, uh, Ross Cowman's BFF! Oh - it's not just Ross Cowman, actually, it's fun! It's Ross Cowman and I think, Terri Cowman? Is the... uh, Terri Cohlene, who is Ross's mom? Which is the cutest thing? *[dragging the BFF trailer on Youtube onto the screen]* They made a version of... uh... um, BFF, uh - a - a version of - of, not a version of... Fall of Magic, but. *[trailer starts playing]* A game with like some similar rules, just about being, like, teenage girls hanging out in a town? *[Ali chuckles]* *[Austin is now talking over Terri and Ross speaking in the trailer]* Um, that seems to be sick, uh, and so we're gonna play that, at SHUX, which is super excited. Exciting.

ALI: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Um.

ALI: Again, this is gonna be on s- *[clears throat]* Shut Up and Sit Down's Youtube, at some point.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Totally. Um.

ALI: As soon as I have that link it'll be on the... Friends at the Table Twitter account.

AUSTIN: Absolutely. So I'm super excited about that, this seems like a dope game, y'all did a test run of it, it seemed like you had some fun with it, so. I'm excited to have fun with it too. Um? Alright! *[closes the trailer]* That's gonna do it for us. We should time.is.

DRE: Oh right, *that* website.

ALI: *[cross]* Yeah... *[giggles]*

AUSTIN: Yeah. *[pulls up time.is]*

DRE: God, I did not realize how late it was! *[cross]* Holy crap.

AUSTIN: Yeah, dog.

ALI: *[cross]* *(taken aback)* Yeah, we... *[Janine and Art hum in agreement]*

AUSTIN: We did a full episode! *[silence]* Um...

ALI: Ten seconds?

ART: *[cross]* Five after?

AUSTIN: Let's do ten. *[Ali whispers "s alright", then silence, as they wait, followed by scattered claps]* Mmm, I was - I was - *[cross]* on the ten, but the back half, for sure.

ALI: *[cross]* It's fine.

DRE: *[cross]* I think I was a little late too, yeah.

ALI: I'm only using the front claps, because two people left, I think... *[dissolves into giggles]*

AUSTIN: Fair, fair. *[Ali laughs]* Fair, fair. Alright, bye internet, thank you for hangin'!

ALI: *(quietly)* Byeee!

ART, AUSTIN, & DRE: *(simultaneously)*: Bye...

JANINE: Goodnight!

[3:50:17]