

Winter In Hieron 25: Twenty Two Brown Birds

Transcriber: Lu

AUSTIN (as Zhan Kurr): Tell, you won't believe who walked into our door.

AUSTIN: And before you know it the windows to this place have disappeared. And it's lit only by oil lamps.

AUSTIN (as Zhan Kurr): I recognize that fiddle.

JACK (as Lem): [chuckles nervously] yeah, uh-

AUSTIN (as Zhan Kurr): What do you need?

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): A friend of ours has been- captured, I guess would be the best word for it.

JACK (as Lem): Taken?

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Taken, yes. We've been led to believe that you can help us with this.

AUSTIN (as Uklan Tel): Where is he?

JACK (as Lem): We don't know. [Song "Inside" starts playing] Umh... he was- we have reason to believe that he was taken by the Department of Mental Acquisitions.

AUSTIN: Tell gives like a low laugh from his desk.

AUSTIN (as Tell): [laughs] Uh.

AUSTIN: and Zhan Kurr like, leans forward on his tippy toes- he's shorter than both of you- but like leans forward up and says

AUSTIN (as Zahn): [chuckles] The Untethered Annex. That's where your friend is.

AUSTIN: Fero, the door opens. It's raining outside the door. it's muddy and green and... dark. it's nighttime out there. And you can hear people shouting. Something's weird about the color of the green. it's.... you can't tell from this- from the side you're on, but it's not... it doesn't just look like grass. Something is weird about it.

[pause]

AUSTIN (as Kurr): The window for this is small but- I think we can do it. Or, *you* can do it. I'm giving you the pattern. You'll have to execute on it yourself. Here.

AUSTIN: And he gives you both an index card- two index cards. Uh.. it has a list of 5 things on it. The first one says "make the northern library smile". The second says "build a table of smolderwood, and sell it to-" and then there's like- a phrase that says like, "an armed collector of the past"? The third one is "gather the woes of 3 breathing and send them to the winds from the top of the lost lover"? "Flood the stoneworks". And then the fifth one is "twenty two brown birds must perch on the granite parish".

["Inside" STOPS PLAYING]

AUS: So, back in the Untethered Annex. You're in a boat still. And things are now- I think what actually happens is, it goes from being like- not laughable necessarily but like the sketched out version of this was comprehensible as being different, and being- not being different, it's being handmade or being uhm.... Being manufactured. Like "oh, okay. This is a manufactured space". Now that it look real the weird like looping gif thing of the final few moments is really creepy and weird, and it's just happening all around you.

KEITH: Yeah I don't like that.

AUSTIN: it's- it ain't great. Uhm-

KEITH: Umh. [pause] Hm... and so which part is- which part is looping?

AUSTIN: It's the final moment where hella decides to give calhoun away.

KEITH: I want to really quick- I still wanna interrupt this, I wanna try to- see if I can interrupt a memory. I don't know exactly how I can do that? But I can maybe figure out if I can figure out a way to do that.

AUSTIN: Sure... How are you figuring out how to figure it out?

KEITH: Uh... I guess I wanna try and see if I can- 'cause there's obviously scenes to this. Like this- this isn't just... like, there's- it's not just a one- like, a direct step of like "oh, I'm remembering something" like there's a lot of... it's very far removed from that.

AUSTIN: Wh- it's like- I mean, it does feel like an incredibly clear memory? Uhm- but youre right in that like you're not just seeing it from your position, right?

KEITH: Right

AUSTIN: It is like- it is structured from...- I mean yeah- [KEITH overalps]

KEITH: 'Cause I can move around. Like, I literally don't remember- you can't remember something from a different position from where you- I can go stand back to Hella-

AUSTIN: Totally

KEITH: -see what she's doing in this.

AUSTIN: Totally. If you- Depending on how you examine this space I can give you more about what you see and stuff like that.

KEITH: I rolled a 12 on Discern Realities.

AUSTIN: Nice. Okay so what are your questions?

KEITH: Uhm... uh, what here is not what it appears to be?

AUSTIN: Uh... the... [pause] I mean, everything around you is fake, right? Everything around you is- you're not really on a boat *obviously*, but also you are not really- you're still in the room in the Annex. like, you're still- it just- it moves with you. Right? Like it's updating with you? You notice that there's a table on the boat that was not on the boat before? But it's the interrogation table, right?

KEITH: Right, yeah

AUSTIN: like it just happens to so be there, so that shouldn't be there. Uhm...

KEITH: is it smolderwood?

AUSTIN: [laughs] It is not smolderwood. It's probably metal actually, it is probably a metal table

KEITH: Yeah, makes sense

AUSTIN: It is whatever I said it was last time, but that was weeks ago so so don't remember what the table is made of! Uhm...another question

KEITH: I just, for- I guess what I'm working towards *now*- I have another- I have a backup plan? But I- it- It's got to be... from- I think the Fero believes that it's gotta be *harder* to make a super realistic version of my recollections of things? Than it is to make a weird giffy "ah-ha" video sketch...thing?

AUSTIN: Umh... I guess- ask me another question and that's a thing that I could answer to.

KEITH: Yeah

AUSTIN: Based on one of this other questions.

KEITH: Hm. What here is useful or valuable to me?

AUSTIN: Uhm... You- I keep coming back to this this notion of like knowing where the spaces are limited? Uh, knowing that it's- the one thing that's valuable to you I guess is that... you know that this guy isn't gonna hurt you? Because he [KEITH overlaps] wants something from your mind.

KEITH: [overlapping] I've got something he needs...

AUSTIN: He- you have what he needs. Uh... or at least you don't *believe* he's going to hurt you. You like sincerely believe that 'cause he's had the opportunity to? it's important to know that he doesn't know *exactly* where the information is that he's looking for? Uh.. it's valuable that.... it's valuable because you can see *the past* again. That's valuable in- on itself, in some ways. Where- you have the the ability to use *him* to help direct... direct your mind somewhere, right?

KEITH: Yeah yeah

AUSTIN: Uhm... so that's valuable... *you are valuable* here. When you touched that last thing? You- it took from you. Uh, and was able to bring it closer in to reality. It's not costing him anything, you added to the pattern- you added *yourself* to the pattern when you did that.

KEITH: Uh-huh. [pause] Wait- sorry, when did I add myself to the pattern?

AUSTIN: When you tried to grab the thing's arm.

KEITH: Right, okay. Uh- and so that he had to change the pattern so that I wouldn't like, disrupt-

AUSTIN: No. No no no, it was good for the pattern, it stabilized the pattern when you did that.

KEITH: *Ohhh*

AUSTIN: He didn't have your- like, you interacting with things here? Only makes it firmer.

KEITH: Okay

AUSTIN: It- which is important to look out for and also is valuable to you.

KEITH: Got- yes. [pause] uh...

AUSTIN: Or is- sorry, is not what it appears to be and also is useful and valuable to you.

KEITH: Right. That- that was my next question though- what... should I be on the lookout for?

AUSTIN: [deep breath] Umh... you should be on the lookout for... like- a way out? But that's like a really broad thing, right? [pause] You sh- you should be on the lookout for being caught into this, and like forgetting that you're not a part of this? Like, as it becomes more and more realistic, you should not forget that you're in a memory. Uh, take- and again you can take +1 forward when acting on these answers? So- so that is how it's represented, it's just like. Keep your head straight, don't let this fool you. You're not back in this place? Umh... so that's a thing you should be on the lookout for- but then also like, I don't know, does Fero think he's going to be saved? Or does Fero think he has to save himself?

KEITH: I think I am confident that I will get out of here. I don't- I think that I-[pause] I think that in Fero's mind... like, what's gonna happen is I'm going to like burst open through the door that's gonna let me out and see Lem and Ephrim like, right there being like [mocking] "oh we were about to go save you" and I'm like [smug] "got it, sorry"

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Gotcha!

KEITH: So... I wanna mis- I wanna misremember things.

AUSTIN: How? Like, what's- what do you wanna misremember?

KEITH: I want to... I wanna take the- I want to mis- I want to remember the boat going to the tower that we were supposed to go to.

AUSTIN: Okay give me a Defy Danger, intelligence

KEITH: Alright...

AUSTIN: Do you- do you say anything about this or do you just like-

KEITH: No I'm - I think I'm trying to trick the guy. Or-

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally.

KEITH: Y'know, it's the- not so much tricking. [amused] If that happened, that would be great? Like I would love for this to trick the interrogator? But really what it is is like I just- I want him to *not* be able to see the stuff that he's looking for.

AUSTIN: yeah, I understand what your *goal* is, I just wanna know if you're communicating that you were- like I didn't know if there was-

KEITH: [overlapping] No, no no no

AUSTIN: Yeah, okay.

KEITH: Uhm...[pause] six.

AUSTIN: That's a six

KEITH: Oh that's- wait! +1 forward, seven

AUSTIN: Okay, sure. Umh... so, you will- I have to give you a- a hard bargain? Or a... “on a 7-9 you stumble, hesitate or flinch. the GM will offer you a worst outcome, hard bargain or ugly choice”? Uh, you can totally not go to Nacre, you can totally go to the other tower, which then you can totally describe? But he'll know. He'll know that you're deceiving him.

KEITH: Okay

AUSTIN: So do you do it?

KEITH: Uh... yes, yeah.

AUSTIN: Okay. Tell me what the... tell me what it looks like as you pull up to the other tower that you were supposed to go to. Gimme just like, the wide shot of the boat, sailing past Nacre, and to this other place.

KEITH: Uhm... I- I bet it looks a looot- it looks a lot like the first tower but in the way where you can tell that I don't really remember what the first tower looks like? Like, it's probably *waaay* taller? Like, it was already super tall, right? Like- but [AUSTIN overlaps] it's probably-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah, it's pretty tall.

KEITH: it's probably even bigger, and it probably has the same, sort of like- like “hey! There's a path and a cabin!” where like, the skeleton guy would live. But it's like- it's probably bigger and it's way more obviously placed? Cause like- oh, that's like, one of the 3 things I remember from that is like, the the book and the dishes, and the skeleton guy. So.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Okay so we see the boat kind of pulling into this fake tower. And his voice reverberates through the sky. And he goes

AUSTIN (as interrogator): *No!*

AUSTIN: And you hear the door slam, that had previously been opened. [pause] Lem and Ephrim. You got 3 more things to do on this list.

JACK: [sighs] Okay...

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): so... [huffs] I was thinking of a way I could handle the third one if you want to... handle the other one. Cause it's really- the main challenge I have here is just getting to the top of the Lost Lover. But otherwise I have a pretty good idea for gathering the woes of... 3 breathing... must be- that means 3 non-undead people?

AUSTIN: [amused] It's not what that means.

SYLVIA: No? Okay...

AUSTIN: Uh, I think Lem just knows this? From the conversation with Corsica. Breathing- so, living, breathing and being are the new categories of life? Up until a month ago- up until very recently, you were- there was a ban on categorizing sapient beings? Because they shouldn't be used in patterns? And the ban of using people in patterns still exists? But- or like, using this sort of like "oh, just three whatever!" is like- a person can include themselves in a pattern? But you can't just say "oh yeah you need three 'blank', you need three orcs, you need three elves" or whatever. Uhm- that has been forbidden for a *long time* for what it could mean? It was a cost too far? Uhm, and this deployment of this new categorization into living things- which are truly a liv- living things, *Breathing* things, which are undead things that remain sapient and have a material form, and *being* things, which are things that are alive but in a spirit form? Has been a big shift. [struggling with words] You don't- Lem doesn't know off the top of his head how many people have used this things- like, technically the ban is still in place, but then here is a pattern that just straight up says "gather the woes of 3 breathing", not 3 specific breathing, not even 3 breathing soldiers- like, it's very *non-specific*, and the less specific it is, the more prohibited it had been.

[quiet "uh-oh"]

JACK: Ummm, I'm gonna communicate that to Ephrim.

JACK (as Lem): Do you think you can still do it?

SYLVIA: It complicates things, because my original plan was to go to the church here and uh try and find 3 followers- basically my idea was to do this... presented as a ritual where Ephrim takes like a writing down of what is troubling them and burns it and scatters them to the wind in a way that is... more *symbolic* than anything, but he says it's like offering them up to Samothēs?

AUSTIN: Right

SYLVIA: That makes it more difficult, when I know it has to be... now that I know the distinction-

AUSTIN: Yeah...

SYLVIA: -and now that I know that there is a... probably a pretty good chance that these people-like, I *don't know* if they follow the church and are interested in... engaging in that at all.

[15:00 MINUTE MARK]

AUSTIN: Right. From your- from your brief talk with Amad- or Amed who is the priest of Hadrian- sorry, the priest of *Samoths* here. [amused] I've written down "Hadrian priest". That's- that a good Freudian slip. Uhm... the priest of Samoths here. You don't know that there are many undead who practice? And in fact, the church here...the church here ain't doing so good. [amused] The church here didn't have Ephrim like rockstar, like prince of Samoths Spreading the good word. So... still pretty early on in the adoption. That- it might work? Like, it's not that it could never work? But... it isn't great- it isn't an easy thing to do.

SYLVIA: Yeah...

AUSTIN: You also notice that most of the undead live in the kinda- the black region that I've marked off here? Under Corsica Neue, and the Unstill. That whole group is- she kinda invented the name Unstill in *response* to breathing and being? As if to say "no, this is what we are. This is my name for us, we don't subdivide ourselves. This is who we are".

JACK (as Lem): I think I can probably flood the Stoneworks?

AUSTIN: Stoneworks are just to the east a little bit, close to the mountain range. probably a few hours travel. Let's say an hour. An hour travel.

JACK (as Lem): I can make it there, I think.

AUSTIN: Yeah yeah yeah. There's no roll involved in that travel or anything.

JACK: Yeah.

AUSTIN: Just like trying to set thing here, like- This task will have taken you a like, a full 24 hours. Like you're going to be exhausted by the end of this, if you don't stop and sleep soon? Which is fine, I like that- I like that image of really pushing yourselves for this thing. *Which again...* y'know I feel like the false sun has begun to set and the light of the heat and the dark, the tower of the heat and the dark to the southwest is *very strange* cause it doesn't- it's almost like an aurora borealis? In that like, it spreads and bounces across the atmosphere? And then is kinda yanked downwards by the gravity of the white wall.

JACK: Huh.

AUSTIN: Is the white wall a Game of Thrones thing? If I say the white wall am I gonna get a note that says we're stealing from Game of Thrones?

JACK: I think it is... [sighs]

AUSTIN: I don't know, I haven't- I've watched like-

JACK: [overlapping] The wall is a thing, right?

ART: [talking over AUSTIN] The wall's a thing and-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] The white walkers!

SYLVIA: The white *walkers*

AUSTIN: Okay, okay. I don't know from game of thrones.[pause] This is a different sort of white. This is like this weird star white. Like angelic but inwards, instead of outwards.

JACK (as Lem): [sighs] If you think you can do it, Ephrim... I mean-

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): I'll give it a shot.

AUSTIN: Yeah

KEITH: "Whitewalls was the castle of house of Butterwell in the eastern Riverlands! [background chuckles] But it was built near the God's Eye, and was closer to Maiden Pool than to King's Landing!"

AUSTIN: Okay. Thanks- thanks, KEITH of Thrones.

KEITH: You're welcome!

AUSTIN: Big fan.

JACK: [laughs] Umh... right.

JACK (as Lem): I'm prepared to depart then if- [laughs] if we're gonna do it like this.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Umh... should we set up somewhere to meet...?

JACK (as Lem): Yes.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Just back at your-

JACK: No no no no, we should meet at- at the place. We should meet at Zhan's place, right? Cause we're gonna need to- oh wait, hold on, we need to get the- [SYLVIA overlaps]

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Yeah, we still have one more to do after this.

JACK (as Lem): Yeah, the birds... but we both need to be- [deep breath] meet me at Zhan's place, and I'll have worked out the birds.

AUSTIN: Great

SYLVIA: Alright!

AUSTIN: Who wants to go first? [pause] Let's do- let's gather the three breathing. So where are you headed?

SYLVIA: Uh.. I mean, I'm headed to the encampment in that area you marked on the map, right?

AUSTIN: Yes, yeah- there's basically three villages there that are connected to the New Archives that are kind of like, *independent*, but you know, it's- it's a mix of the living and the undead that live there, the unstill. And they are- as you move there, into the- as the sun sets, people there are moving into action in the same exact way as the people in the rest of the New Archives are? In fact, there's clearly lots of connections between the two.

SYLVIA: [murmuring] Okay...

AUSTIN: Like, they're not hostile...? There's [pause] there's always the notion that things could turn bad very quickly? But they are not fully ostracized quite yet. Archivists are very... archivists understand that they are things in the world, and that those things exist separate from the whims and desires of people. And so as a culture they are predisposed to being more curious about the unstill than afraid? Which still has its own whole bag of problems? But it seems like things- people here are getting ready to like, move to the south-west, you see people running around as like- like getting wagons filled with food and water. Like- You imagine corsica nue is getting ready to march

SYLVIA: Uh-huh...

AUSTIN: Who are you looking for? Or like, how are you going about this? You could be pretty abstract here

SYLVIA: Yeah... so I think- m trying to figure out a way of wording this so it doesn't sound... super like, predatory?

AUSTIN: [amused] Uh-huh?

SYLVIA: Uh... Ephrim's looking for people that are not doing well, basically. Umh, he's looking for someone who's either like clearly upset about something, or someone who's just like-

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Yeah you-

SYLVIA: -not in a good place.

AUSTIN: Right. You find... oh! Someone is like- you hear someone shouting directions, and like trying to get people to do things and no one is- no one is responding to him? It is Fentil, the kinda second in command of Corsica Neue? End he's just like, *so exasperated*. And like, it's not that he's never listened to, instead it's clear that whatever degree of authority he had four hours ago is wearing thin because he's wearing thin.

AUSTIN (as Fentil): C'mon people! We really- we really gotta move quick! Snap, snap to it! [long sigh]

SYLVIA: Ephrim, he approaches kinda- like, he makes his presence known before he goes right over to him. Like, he waves at him, to sorta get his attention a little? He doesn't wanna surprise the poor guy? I wanna use...

AUSTIN (as Fentil): it's, uh... Ephrim, right?

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Yeah, it was uh-

SYLVIA: [amused] Ephrim pauses for like a whole two seconds-

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): ...Fentil.

AUSTIN (as Fentil): Yeah. Yeah, Fentil.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Okay. We didn't get to talk much, uh... Are you doing okay? You seem-

AUSTIN (as Fentil): [overlapping] This is- I've never seen anything like this, and I've been around for a while.

SYLVIA (as Fentil): What's wrong?

AUSTIN (as Fentil): *What's wrong?*

AUSTIN: And then he like, turns and gestures to the huge weird white wall, that barely holding back the-

AUSTIN (as Fentil): [stutters] This is *cataclysmic*! This is- this is- [sigh] I'm just like a- I'm [sigh] I wasn't supposed to do anything like this... I was supposed to run a bar, or be a dentist, or... I don't know. And then- y'know, I got killed. And corsica found me and I don't know what she sees in me, I'm not a leader. I can barely- listen, I was just gonna say I can barely *keep my pants up*. That's not something a leader says! It doesn't mean anything!

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Listen, believe it or not, I kinda know how you feel. We sometimes don't get to choose what chooses us, and maybe you felt like you were supposed to just, run a bar somewhere, but clearly something- I mean as tragic as it was something led you to be here and... you have a purpose here.

AUSTIN (as Fentil): [quietly] Yeah... I just wish things were clearer. I wish I knew my purpose. [pause] Anyway, I really gotta see to this...logistics. I really gotta see if we can get the rations to... what's gonna be the front lines! To whatever the fuck this is!

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Fentil, I don't know how... What exactly your thoughts are on people like me or the church, but if you'd like I could [stutters] I could do a blessing for you, I can give you a blessing and hopefully that helps you on your way...

AUSTIN (as Fentil): Yeah, listen, I'll take whatever you got, alright?

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Alright.

SYLVIA: Uh... can I... just like- [laughing] Would adventuring gear have something I could write-something with?

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah, you totally could have like a sketchpad and a pencil or something, you know. Do you- do you write it down or do you let him write it down

SYLVIA: I have him write it down, and I tell him

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Write down what's worrying you and sign it, and I'll uh... I'll do the prayer soon, and hopefully it helps you.

AUSTIN: Alright, cool. Let's go to Lem. you made it to the Stoneworks. Uh.. what's it look like?

JACK: So it's a pre-erasure forge, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah, it's- I mean- you have moves about old places right? "When you encounter an important location of your call, you can ask the GM for one fact of the history of the location" and "When you first encounter an important creature, location, or item (your call) covered by your bardic lore you can ask the GM any one question about it; the GM will answer truthfully. The GM may then ask you what tale, song, or legend you heard that information from". So let's do your question first, then I'll also give you the extra piece of information.

JACK: Okay. Umh... What was this forge- it's kinda like- I can't really ask a two-part question but, what was this forge used to make?

AUSTIN: Uh... Orcs. this is where the orcs were born. The orcs were forged.

JACK: [laughing] What??

AUSTIN: Thousands and thousands of years ago. I mean, we set this forever ago but, pre-erasure Hieron looks like Tolkien fantasy.

JACK: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Orcs are industrial, they are built in vats, they are [struggling] made by something or someone. Uh... and, legends say at least, this is where that happened.

JACK: And we know. And like this is common knowledge.

AUSTIN: It's a thing- I mean you tell me, what story did you hear?

JACK: Oh god, umh. I think I heard it in like- Y'know, nobody... it's kind of a bad example for our show, but like, when did you learn what the sun was, Austin? Y'know, nobody pointed at it, it was just there. When you grew up you could see it out of the windows? And-

AUSTIN: And no one talked about it, because it was just a fact of life?

JACK: Yeah, you came to know- yeah, that's where the orcs come from. [pause] Umh. So Lem's probably been here before in the same way that you know, people go to a place nearby, like- and I assume knowing the archivists there's probably some people here...[laughs]

AUSTIN: Yeah!

JACK: -working or doing patterns, or collecting things, or moving around or looking at it...

AUSTIN: You know, I suspect- maybe this isn't true. I guess, here's the other fact from history that I'll give you before moving forward is that in the post-erasure timeline, there were all sorts of moments of what work the orcish relationship with this place was. There was a *really hard*

pushback, against it? There was a period of time in which they rejected the notion that this is where they came from. Because they were trying to find a different like, origin story, 'cause it's a really depressing one? That they were made for purpose, or that they were s- [stutters] something made them, not just they were, the way elves get to see that they were.

JACK: Yeah...

AUSTIN: Y'know "oh, we've been here since the beginning. We were the first ones to walk..." whatever bullshit elves say, right? Orcs didn't get to say that, and so there's a hard resistance against it? Then there was a period of the dark time, in which there were orcs who tried to make new orcs with the stoneworks? And then there was a sort of balanced period in the last hundred years or so, in which it became a thing that like- like the sun is there, you don't necessarily talk about a lot. You eventually take your astronomy class "huh, the sun's made of helium. Okay". "Oh yeah, the stoneworks. Weird. That's- okay. but what matters is now we know the pattern. That's the thing that matters now is, we have a pattern now and we are- that is who we are". You are yourself in the face of the fact that you were built by someone else in this forge? Not in a position to it but in relation to it. y'know like, yeah, that's part of my history in the same way that part of my history is "I was born in a certain hospital on a certain day", but what makes me is the pattern, what makes me is my history. And that's kinda of where the cultural feeling is about it right now.

JACK: God... I- you can answer this question as vaguely or directly as you want to, but like- what does an orc forge look like?

AUSTIN: Yeah I- you tell me. Is it even in working condition anymore

JACK: Oh god, I didn't think you could use it. I think it's gone. I think it's gone in the same way that you could go see the ruins of Pompeii?

AUSTIN: Right.

JACK: And, these aren't houses. Uh... I think they're like... [sigh] low buildings, round buildings, built of like- y'know the way mines are built without mortar? So it's just stones over stones, in these round buildings.

AUSTIN: Yeah, yeah...

JACK: And at the same time, very tall, victorian industrial chimneys... and, it's clear that there are holes in the stoneworks where metal once went? But the metal isn't there anymore, and you can go inside these rooms. Uh, where I live there are a lot of... barrows? Uh... old, old, *old* pre-christians burial sites, where old kings were buried- this is a real thing. And you can go in them? And they're just low earth structures that have gravel inside, they've been cleaned out by archeologists. But they're just these strange empty tombs, in the earth? And I think this feels like

that, in a lot of weird ways. [pause] But, lots of tight walkways and little bridges, and these round buildings.

AUSTIN: Yeah... how are you going to flood it?

JACK: I think Lem goes into it and...[pause] There's a river nearby? And there would've been-god I don't know what pre erasure tech is like. I guess Lem looks at it and thinks "ah, that's what the waterwheel was!" because you know, forges need waterwheels! But they might have not, pre-erasure? Who knows! Uhmm... but there's this river, and there are people kinda milling around. and then Lem kind of looks at the river, and the space, to try to work out how would you go about doing it? And then... I think he says... he invokes -uh I'm prepared to roll for this- but what I want to do is invoke... what's the name of it, Kall Fer, the collector curator?

AUSTIN: Yeah, Kall Fer is the head of the curators, the head of the collectors.

JACK: I'm gonna invoke his name, and say that uh...

JACK (as Lem): The Stoneworks is closed for the evening, following the events in Rosemerrow, and people need to return to the Archives.

AUSTIN: Uh... give me- you'll have to offer them- you'll have to parley here, which is like, you'll have to be showing them- the thing that you kind of have on them is this lie, which is that Kall Fer says so. And depending on your roll you might have to show them something to get them to believe you? So parley says "When you have leverage on a GM Character and manipulate them, roll+Cha. Leverage is something they need or want. On a hit, they ask you for something and do it if you make a promise first. On a 7-9, they need some concrete assurance of your promise, right now." in this case that promise will be that you're an agent of Kall Fer

JACK: Okay, uh...

AUSTIN: That is- that is the leverage that you are invoking here.

JACK: Sure.

AUSTIN: So go ahead and give me a charisma.

JACK: [laughing] Oh god I have so many roll20 windows open right now. [pause] that's an 8.

AUSTIN: Alright so they- there's like some [sigh] head scratching and then one of the archivists comes over to you and says

AUSTIN (as archivist): Hey uh... We have- we have all the certificates that we need to be here, everything's clear through the correctors... uh, y'know, already. We- were supposed to be here all night, it's very important work. [sigh] uh... is there some probLem?

AUSTIN: And they need some- something right now, to prove that you are who you say you are, basically. They need concrete assurance of your promise, which is “the wrath of Kall Fer”, right now.

JACK: Yeah. Umh...[sigh] I'm trying to think of what I have here, that I could invoke that with. Uh... [pause] oh god- ah, can i...? I could make them a compromise. Which I don't know if it would ameliorate things? But it might suggest to them that I'm acting from a position of authority, because somebody winging it would probably not make this compromise?

AUSTIN: Sure

JACK: Which is that... three of them can stay, and continue their work.

AUSTIN: [sigh] Yeah, I'll take it. That's *brutal*. Uh... this one nods to you. [pause] this one's name is- this is Den, Den Buray, and den is like

AUSTIN (as Den): Alright. I'll go tell the rest to head out. [pause] Thanks. I appreciate it.

JACK (as Lem): it's okay

AUSTIN: Den and two others stay behind, as the rest shake their heads like “alright, well go away!” and you hear them talking about the rumors about the tower in rosemerrow, as they leave. So what do you do now that there are only three people here?

JACK: I assume these three people are like, continuing their work. They're just walking around... and Lem is walking around too, he's looking at the- the stoneworks more closely [pause] and then he's looking at the river, and I think he comes to a decision, and what he does is he walks into the middle of the stoneworks, as a breeze picks up?

AUSTIN: [concerned noises]

JACK: And he sits down on the floor. And I wanna try to cast Illusion magic on the breeze.

AUSTIN: Okay... go ahead and give me... the- name of your arcane art, again

JACK: So this is guaranteed to succeed, right?

AUSTIN: No

JACK: It's just the effects, if it's a seven- oh if I hit below a 9, it will fail.

AUSTIN: No, if you pull below a 7 it's a failure. if you hit a 7-9 your spell still works, but you draw unwanted attention or your magic reverberates to other targets, affecting them as well, GMs choice.

JACK: Okay. [pause] Oh my god!

AUSTIN: [amused] That's a five

SYLVIA: [overlapping] You rolled a five...

AUSTIN: Mark- mark experience. Your charisma is good too, you have like a sixteen or something, right?

JACK: Yeah.

KEITH: [far from the mic] *This is so bad!*

[all laughing]

AUSTIN: Uh.. The breeze remains- remains a breeze [laughs] But the walls don't. And Den Buray does not, and the [KEITH overlaps] other people don't-

KEITH: [overlapping] Wait the walls don't remain...walls?

AUSTIN: No, they become- they become *water*

KEITH: Okay

AUSTIN: And they connect to the river, and this whole place begins to flood. Worse, the breeze picks up, and-

JACK: *Oh, god*

AUSTIN: -as the-- go ahead.

JACK: Lem was fundamentally assuming that this was going to a. succeed, and b. be an Illusion, so- he was sitting on the floor in the middle of the stoneworks.

AUSTIN: Yeah, uh-huh. But you failed.

JACK: Yeah! What I mean to say is I am at not a safe distance away from-

AUSTIN: You are not. The metalwork, the pipes, things that would've conveyed water in the old days, the towers you described before, *all of it*, the chimneys come breaking and flooding down, crashing all around you. What do you do?

JACK: Umh... first I close my eyes and tell myself that it's an Illusion. And then the water hit's me?

AUSTIN: [laughing] Yes...

JACK: And I'm gonna try and... I'm gonna kick off my boots, and my JACKet, and I'm gonna try and swim to- what? There's no shore. Wreckage?

AUSTIN: Yeah you're gonna try to swim away t-

JACK: Like, were in a *mountain*, the whole thing is coming down the mountain

AUSTIN: Yeah you're in a canyon that's not filling with water. That is now- sorry! That is now *becoming water*

JACK: Yes.

AUSTIN: And you like- the echo of your violin is also bouncing around, the note that you played (that set this off) bounces, and as it goes around more things become liquid. And some of them are like- as you get further away it's less clear that it's water and more like sludgy, rocky mush. it's terrible. And it's all coming in. [pause] uh, give me a Defy Danger+Dex, to swim away [JACK overlaps] Or run away. Or like a mesh of the two

JACK: [overlapping] Oh my- my worse stat.

AUSTIN: Is that true?

JACK: Yeah, my dex is a nine [laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh jeez.

JACK: [sigh] It's another five [KEITH overlaps]

KEITH: Did you ever consider the absurd amount of destruction we cause as side effects of tryin to do the stuff that we try to do?

AUSTIN: [laughs] You know, maybe they just should've left you on their fucking prison, I don't know. Umh... that's a five, my dude.

JACK: Yep. [pause] Lem is- Lem is... like, distraught? it's not clear whether or not he's making a sound, or the water in the canyon is...?

AUSTIN: You are pulled under the water, and your head slams against a piece of brick from one of the chimneys that fell. [typing noises] take six damage.

JACK: Okay...

KEITH: Wow, from just a piece of a brick! That's like a thenth's brick.

AUSTIN: Don't go- don't- it's hard to be [JACK overlaps] underground.

JACK: [overlapping] Oh my god

AUSTIN: Uh-huh?

JACK: A boat I was in cap-sized once and uh- it was *bad*

AUSTIN: Yeah... uh, where are you at on HP right now?

JACK: Uh, seven?

AUSTIN: Okay. You're continuing to try to swim away, and we're gonna go, speaking of swimming away, to Fero-

KEITH: Hello!

AUSTIN: -who's boat is now like, anchored outside of this tower. Tell me more about this tower and what you do, what's this fake memory that you're building for the interrogator?

KEITH: Uh... I guess I want to play out- I wanna play out what I thought was gonna happen. On the mission. Like, I thought we were gonna get in the tower, and then... it's like the fucking crew, plus Calhoun, and uh...- so you said the interrogator closed the door to the tower?

AUSTIN: No, to the room. So like- remember, the room had opened before.

KEITH: Right. Yeah, yeah.

AUSTIN: There had been an open door, that is now shut

KEITH: Right.

AUSTIN: There was just like a point- he was punctuating his shout.

KEITH: Right, okay. So I guess i- I met the dude we're looking for, right?

AUSTIN: Yeah. What do you mean the dude you were looking for? The dude [KEITH overlaps] this guy's looking for?

KEITH: [overlapping] The- the dude the interrogator is looking for, yeah. Uh... i- heres a thing. [laughing] I kinda don't remember that guy?

AUSTIN: Yeah that's fair

KEITH: Also. I also-

AUSTIN: Does Fero remember that guy?

KEITH: Fero probably also doesn't remember that guy!

AUSTIN: Uh-huh

KEITH: Fero doesn't remember people very well, / don't remember people very well! We're very similar! So I think uh... this guy knows that's fake

AUSTIN: He completely knows that you're deceiving him.

KEITH: He *completely knows* that it's fake. so-

AUSTIN: But it's not what he wants. So.

KEITH: But it's not- it's not what he wants. Uh... so I guess, for now, I'm just gonna go over the tower. it's - okay, here's a fun one. I'm gonna see if me and Hella can open up an identical version of the door that we couldn't open up before

AUSTIN: Okay. Umh. it's your memory, do you?

KEITH: Yeah

AUSTIN: What's inside?

KEITH: Totally. Umh... I think it's just a guy? I don't know, I just like ping a guy that I remember. And I go

KEITH (as Fero): Oh, it's Doce! You found him!

AUSTIN (as interrogator): Why do you work so well in your false memories with others, and not in reality?

KEITH (as Fero): Well 'cause I can make everything happen the good way, this time. There's no-

AUSTIN (as interrogator): Oh, this is the good way.

KEITH (as Fero): Uh, yeah! Like, there's no- there's not a door- if I'm imagining it, there's not a door that's too heavy, I can just imagine that I open it.

AUSTIN (as interrogator): But you can't remember a man you really met?

KEITH (as Fero): Uh...this isn't that guy?

AUSTIN (as interrogator): *No*

KEITH (as Fero): Is it this guy?

[JACK chuckles]

KEITH: And then I like snap my fingers and it's a new guy.

AUSTIN (as interrogator): *No*.

KEITH: How much control does it feel like I have over what I'm seeing?

AUSTIN: Uh, I'll let the previous-

KEITH: [overlapping] Or what we're both seeing

AUSTIN: I'll let the previous roll stand, in terms of, you already did a discern realities here and asked.. y'know, "what is not what it appears to be?" you have... a long leash, but you're still on a leash.

KEITH: Okay

AUSTIN: Y'know he said much earlier "this would be easier if you helped me do it"? Which is to say, he is letting you run forward at this point, because he believes he can get what he needs, wherever you wanna take him? But if you wanted to, he could pull that leash.

KEITH: Okay... I- the the next guy that it is is the interrogator.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. What does he look like?

KEITH: *Uh...* I think he reminds me of Fantasma. I don't think he looks like Fantasma, [AUSTIN overlaps] more like he looks like a guy that looks like Fantasma

AUSTIN: [overlapping] Okay, but- does Fero remember what he looks like?

KEITH: Sorry, the interrogator?

AUSTIN: Yeah

KEITH: Yeah!

AUSTIN: Okay

KEITH: I'm sure it's wrong, like- it's wrong in ways by accident? 'Cause it's like, I don't know, I spent a few minutes, or even longer with a person, but it's hard to recreate... a person from memory?

AUSTIN: Totally

KEITH: But also I think it's wrong in some places like, unflatteringly?

AUSTIN: Yeah, sure. What's he doing, when you reveal him?

KEITH: Uh...[laughs] he's- he's doing like a cartoon "pull your cheeks and stick you tongue out: bleeeeh!"

AUSTIN: [chuckles] You feel a hand on your shoulder

KEITH: What's the hand?

AUSTIN: Uh... it's a hand. it's the hand of this orc.

KEITH: Oh, okay.

AUSTIN (as interrogator): Fero. No more games. Take to Doce and we'll be done.

KEITH (as Fero): [exasperated] *Oh my god*, I don't remember Doce!

AUSTIN (as interrogator): Take me to Nacre then. I'll help you remember.

KEITH (as Fero): What do you want?? let's parley, (I'm gonna parley). I have my pipe weed, do you want some?

AUSTIN (as interrogator): No.

KEITH: I offered this guy some already, he declined it, I remember now.

AUSTIN: He did, yes

KEITH (as Fero): Uh... what do you- like, you guys are, first of all, rude. Second of all, really aggressive, third of all, what do you want? I don't trust you guys, you brought me to a weird room! This is a very-

AUSTIN (as interrogator): [overlapping] We arrested you stealing information from-

KEITH (as Fero): That's not true, I was trying to get out, you know that.

AUSTIN (as interrogator): You weren't

KEITH (as Fero): I was stuck in that room!

AUSTIN (as interrogator): That's not true, you could've left at any time.

KEITH (as Fero): *That's* not true, the door was locked.

AUSTIN: That's not true at all. He found you in an open room, Lem and Ephrim left that room. They left you behind.

KEITH: *Oh*, yeah that's true. Uh... oh, no, the door was *stuck*!

AUSTIN: It wasn't, the door was open when they left it. They left with the door- the door was open. They didn't like, lock it, they didn't have the key to lock it.

KEITH (as Fero): No, but it was like a weird door, you had to open it a specific way!

AUSTIN: [amused] This guy's not buying that

KEITH (as Fero): It's not like I could- I couldn't- alright. well, it's true, the door was stuck. I can't read any of that shit anyway!

AUSTIN (as interrogator): Take me to Doce.

KEITH: I show him a version of- my memory of that room? That implies that what I'm saying is true.

AUSTIN: He squeezes your shoulder. What do you do?

KEITH: I keep- I show him- Oh, by the way, I'm also not fabricating the- I'm not making up a fake memory.

AUSTIN: No, I understand

KEITH: 'Cause there was- yeah. So, I just show him the memory, I don't stop doing it.

AUSTIN: Alright, take three damage. Your shoulders missing. When he pulls his hand away, there's just a gash there. it's like you-

KEITH: [overlapping] What, like a bloody gash, or-?

AUSTIN: No, it's just gone. Your flesh just dips in there? Your shirt is even fitted for it

KEITH: Uh- weird!

AUSTIN (as interrogator): This is my place, Fero.

KEITH (as Fero): Ugh. Well then what- my point is, what are- first of all, this is- I'm horrified. But I'm keeping it under control

AUSTIN (as interrogator): [sigh] Take me to Nacre. We don't have-

KEITH (as Fero): How come?

AUSTIN (as interrogator): We don't have memory of that place. You do. We need to find the librarian of Nacre.

KEITH (as Fero): Hmmm [pause]

AUSTIN (as interrogator): The world is not so hard, it is not in opposition to you. When someone asks for a thing, you can give it to them, and we can all move on. You're not the lead, you are part of a pattern

KEITH (as Fero): Ugh, you guys are so weird about that shit. Everybody thinks it's bizarre, and severe!

AUSTIN (as interrogator): We are everybody here. And everywhere else? You've left behind, so don't speak for them

KEITH (as Fero): Still wanna know why you want me to- wanna see this guy

AUSTIN (as interrogator): I've told you, he is the librarian of Nacre.

KEITH (as Fero): Uh-huh

AUSTIN (as interrogator): We don't have anyone who's been to Nacre. We are archivists. He has information that we need.

KEITH (as Fero): What kind?

AUSTIN (as interrogator): It's not my job to know what kind, Fero!

KEITH (as Fero): [mocking] Ohhh, you don't even know what kind? That's funny!

AUSTIN: He puts a hand on your throat.

AUSTIN (as interrogator): Your throat is not like your shoulder, Fero!

AUSTIN: He squeezes hard enough that you can't talk, but not harder. What do you do?

KEITH: Uh... I going to turn into...sand. Like, around his hand.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Oh, you can't. There's no sand anymore.

KEITH: I can't even be sand??

AUSTIN: No, there's- you destroyed the sand. The only reason wolves are around is 'cause Samot is.

KEITH: Goddammit.

AUSTIN: You can study different sand. once you study different sand, you can turn into that sand.

KEITH: That's true, but that doesn't help me with a hand on my throat.

AUSTIN: No...

KEITH: Can I pretend- can I like, make it look like he took a chunk out of my throat and fall to the ground?

AUSTIN: How? No, it's-

KEITH: It's all- it's a fake play.

AUSTIN: Oh, I see what you're saying! You're- it's like a trick

KEITH: Yeah yeah, it's a trick

AUSTIN: Like, you're building a fake memory, an Illusion of yourself without-

KEITH: Yes! Yeah

AUSTIN: That's- give me a weird roll for that- that's like intelligence. That's also defy danger+int

KEITH: Okay.. it's not wisdom?

AUSTIN: No. all of this is intelligence cause you're crafting it with your mind

KEITH: Yeah

AUSTIN: So 2d6 plus-

KEITH: Twelve!

AUSTIN: Boom! Yeah!

KEITH: Perfect roll, I have plus cero intelligence [laughs]

AUSTIN: Umh... the Illusion collapses around him, because he thinks he's killed you.

KEITH: Oh, that's great.

AUSTIN: And you are back in the room. [pause, long sigh] and then he sighs, and goes over to the bookshelf, and starts moving books back around into a different configuration

KEITH: Mh-hm. Is the- when the Illusion collapse, did my trick collapse also?

AUSTIN: Yeah, but [KEITH overlaps] it happens quick enough that-

KEITH: [overlapping] Or does he still-

AUSTIN: Yeah, he thinks you're dead.

KEITH: Okay.

AUSTIN: It happened well enough- quick enough that it's like "ohhh shit, I just killed that guy. whoops"

KEITH: Yeah. Oh, I guess the- taking a chunk out of my shoulder and neck were illusions of him actually causing serious harm to me?

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah yeah yeah- [KEITH overlaps]

KEITH: I would be dead even if-

AUSTIN: Your shoulder is in- yes. You would've died if he had squeezed your throat. Or you would've taken a lot of damage, I don't know what the roll would've been

KEITH: But even if he'd taken a chunk out of my throat- my real physical body, outside the illusion- it would just be a dead body, not a dead throatless body?

AUSTIN: Correct

KEITH: So me having a throat is not throwing him off.

AUSTIN: Correct, exactly.

KEITH: Got it, yeah.

AUSTIN: Umh... let's jump back to... Ephrim. Given your success on the first try, I'm gonna say the second person that you get another thing from is totally doable? But before you can find a third, you come across Corsica Neue, who rides up to you on that horse of hers that you've heard so much about. Or that you may remember we had a whole discussion about.

AUSTIN as corsica: prince. What is your game?

SYLVIA: Austin, just- really quick, did she have a title? Cause I wanna be respectful to her [laughs]

AUSTIN: Oh yeah, yeah she had a title. She is the Sovereigness of the Unstill, she is the.... Let me look for all her titles cause she has a bunch. The Cavalier Queen of Death and The Baroness of Broken Branches And Undelivered Resignations.

SYLVIA: Alright. I'll go with uh... Sovereigness I think is the title?

AUSTIN: Yeah, that'll work

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Sovereigness, uh... there's no game here, I just wanted to get to know more of your people.

AUSTIN: She like, paces around you.

AUSTIN (as Corsica): you've spoken to two of my men. Not twelve, not twenty, not two hundred.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): I've met them, on the way here.

AUSTIN (as Corsica): If you wanted to get to know them you would hold service. You would... work, in the mess. *What is your game?* Do not lie to me.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): I'm just trying to help. Some people here are stressed, and I'm trying to help relay some of that stress. Fentil in particular is working incredibly hard, and he just needed someone to talk to-

AUSTIN (as Corsica): I know what Fentil's doing. He's a good man.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Glad we can agree on that!

AUSTIN (as Corsica): But I do not appreciate whatever it is you're doing.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): I don't... [AUSTIN overlaps] have-

AUSTIN (as Corsica): [overlapping, strict] These are dangerous times for people like mine. I have no problem with the priest in the mountains. I have no problem with the exarchs, who travel these lands and deliver their sermons.[threateningly] But when a prince acts like a mouse, and sneaks through my camp, whispering and gathering information. In the same day that a thing like *that*

AUSTIN: And she turns and looks at the pillar in the distance.

AUSTIN (as Corsica): when a thing like *that* comes into being. Something is amiss.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Sovereigness, when a thing like that comes into being, things suddenly become confusing for a lot of people, myself included. And I'll be honest, I have a lot more in common with some of the people that you have here in your encampment here than I do with the archivists. So forgive me for trying to have some resemblance of normality in my life, by talking to people who aren't obsessed with [stuttering] some *bizzare* pattern. I assure you that

there's no ill will or [pause] ulterior motive going on here, and I will leave if that's what you want me to do but... I promise I'm just trying to help people with the stress of having whatever going on in the west happen.

AUSTIN: She pats the horses head and lifts one leg over the other, and stands eye to eye with you. You see the flesh around one of her eyes is rotted, gray. The other's missing entirely, but again, most of her face is covered in that wrap. She pulls out her blade and sticks it in the ground, and leans in it. It's Ordennan steel.

AUSTIN (as Corsica): Ephrim, look me in the eye, and tell me you have no ulterior motive here. And I will believe you. But if I sense for a second that you deceive me, I have no time for you. Not today. And I will end you.

SYLVIA: I guess Ephrim just says there's no-

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): I have no ulterior motive here

AUSTIN: Gimme a...charisma. A defy danger charisma

SYLVIA: [sigh] That's a nine.

JACK: Oh, *thank god*.

AUSTIN: Okay..

JACK: Probably not a great idea to lie to her though.

SYLVIA: [nervous chuckle] Meh.

AUSTIN: No... I mean, y'know. it's the thing it is. Let me...hm. [mumbling] "stutter, hesitate or flinch, worse outcome, hard outcome or ugly choice..." hmm... let me look at your sheet real quick. [pause] She nods her head, and says

AUSTIN (as Corsica): Alright. You stay, but for as long as you're in the archives, I hold that.

AUSTIN: And she points to the case, with the blade in it

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): And I can come get that back, whenever I'm leaving the Archives

AUSTIN: She nods.

AUSTIN (as Corsica): I'm a woman of my word.

SYLVIA: Alright! [pause] It is a good like, ten seconds of Ephrim holding the case before he hands it to her? And then he like offers his hand out for her to shake it.

AUSTIN: She shakes it, and takes the blade.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Where can I find you, where do you stay here? For when I need to retrieve that.

AUSTIN: She points to a tent that's like among a group of a couple dozen tents?

AUSTIN (as Corsica): Uh... There. That's mine. If I'm not there I'll be in the mess, or at the war table. If I'm at neither, then I'm at the front lines, and if that happens then, I'll have left the case with one of my men and given them instructions to return it to you. They will not disobey me.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Alright.

SYLVIA: And, uh... [amused] I guess Ephrim goes to leave, but before he- right when he's walking away, he says

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): I hope sooner rather than later, we can come to be more trusting of each other.

AUSTIN (as Corsica): Trust is an earned thing.

AUSTIN: And she gets back on her horse, and tosses the blade like over her shoulder, with the strap around her back.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Take care, Sovereigness.

AUSTIN (as Corsica): Prince.

AUSTIN: And you're able to get the third one. Not hers, which I thought you might go for, but that was probably-

SYLVIA: No...

AUSTIN: -a little much.

SYLVIA: [amused] He was not... Whoof. [pause, laughing] Don't wanna die again!

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-huh! [everyone laughs] [unintelligible] it's already pretty bad! Good roll, good charisma roll there.

SYLVIA: Thank you!

AUSTIN: Do you find your way back to... oh, I guess- no, sorry. Lem, uh. UHH... [SYLVIA laughs] you're still being washed away. Down to- through this canyon, that is filled with.. The stoneworks. I think you hit like an outcropping of stone that- like, you're able to pull yourself up on? [amused] But you're like, in the mountains somewhere now [JACK laughs] at like- you where- I'm just gonna add another river here, right. [pause] you'd been here, originally? And now you're like here. You've gone down river [JACK overlaps] towards the sea, and like-

JACK: [overlapping] God I'm going down the- [laughing] it's completely the wrong direction.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh...

JACK: Oh, god

AUSTIN: Uh... it's not good. And you've managed to grab on to a piece of wood or something, but you're here now.

JACK: Is the violin fine?

AUSTIN: Uh- define fine. It's water, it had water all over it, it was waterlogged, right? Like, all your stuff is wet. Umh.

JACK: God... the plant is back in my room, the plant did not. Cause it would've died, Austin.

AUSTIN: Oh, yeah, the plant would be completely dead.

JACK: [laughing] Just obliterated.

AUSTIN: Yes.

JACK: Uh, I think strings are broken on it. Like-

AUSTIN: Totally.

JACK: But I mean, it's not like-

AUSTIN: At least.

JACK: Again, it's not a magic instrument. If it plays is- y'know. It needs- yeah. Uhm... do I know where I am?

AUSTIN: How well do you know these mountains?

JACK: Not well!

AUSTIN: Then not particularly well? Like, you know... we know where north is, cause you know the direction the river is flowing. So that means you're able to "okay, west is that way" but then there's a mountain.

JACK: Can I- can I see the Lost Lover from here?

AUSTIN: Uh, no. That's like- it's like down to the left here.

JACK: So it's just behind a bunch of mountains.

AUSTIN: Yeah, you're just like in a river canyon now.

[1 HOUR MARK]

JACK: God, I'm gonna try and.... I guess retrace my steps up the river? Which I assume is just like [AUSTIN overlaps] banks, a swamp and then just... debris.

AUSTIN: Yeah it's- yeah, and there are bit's where like "oh no, it's just river here". Like, there isn't walking place here. You'll have to climb or-

JACK: Like wade through, against the current up to my waist...

AUSTIN: Right, or go out the ocean and around, or something?

JACK: I'm tryna push south, basically where I know the archives are gonna be. Ugh, god... this is one of the rough things about like- if you ever get lost in a wood, you know that like-

AUSTIN: It sucks

JACK: *It sucks so bad!* And it sucks mostly where you need to be going. Like- you know the trees break in that direction, but you don't know if your heading I the right direction, or how you are from it?

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh... give me a Defy Danger strength, 'cause it sound like you're just trying to force your way through with your strength. You're kinda just wading through, and climbing, busting your way through like...y'know, a bush and stuff like that. Alright, eight. Okay...I think you can totally do this, but you will need to- you'll need to carry your backpack above your head at points? And it's too heavy, it's *just too heavy*. And you need to leave three weight behind.
[pause] Four weight behind.

JACK: Oh, god. Luckily most of the stuff in my pack is weightless

AUSTIN: [chuckles] Yeah

JACK: [laughing] 'Cause it's just papers and stuff. Uh.. I'm gonna leave behind my machete, my sword... so that's gone

AUSTIN: Uh-huh, yep

JACK: And I'm gonna leave behind... oh, I could leave behind- so I could leave behind two adventuring gear which weights two, but it's way more narratively interesting to me to leave behind my armor?

AUSTIN: Yeah

JACK: And also... yeah I'm gonna leave behind my armor and one adventuring gear, with the thinking that- y'know, with the adventuring gear like- I know what lives in the mountains, the adventuring gear is probably more useful than the armor is right now.

AUSTIN: Yeah, totally. [JACK overlaps] yeah, I just like the notion-

JACK: [overlapping] But I assume-

AUSTIN: -that, you just have to take the armor off, cause it's just- it's soaked, and wet, and leather, and it's gross.

JACK: And I lost a bunch of it in the actual- like, when I took off my boots, and my JACKet I assume are there somewhere.

AUSTIN: Alright, cool.

JACK: I also like the image of [laughing] Lem arriving- oh I don't know if I get there- like, Lem moving through this mountains just like this bedraggled thing? Uhm, surrounded by debris.

AUSTIN: Uh, you get there. You manage to get back to the archives. And you've done now... you've done all but the final one, right?

JACK: Oh, god. Yeah.

AUSTIN: Uh, I guess Ephrim, you make it to the lost lever, and- that's not that hard, there's a pathway to the Lost Lover.

SYLVIA: Okay

AUSTIN: And you set fire to the prayers, and send them into the wind.

SYLVIA: Yeah, Ephrim does say like, a prayer over them and everything too-

AUSTIN: Uh, you are caught by a remarkably strong wind, and dragged west, towards the pillar, towards the white wall.

SYLVIA: Alright. And then I guess Ephrim heads back to... was it Zhan Kurr, was that the name?

AUSTIN: Yeah, Zhan kurr. it's really- it's *really* Uklan tell and Sunder Havilton's like secret office? That Zhan Kurr had directions to in his apartment? and is working there with them on this thing, but-

SYLVIA: Okay.

AUSTIN: -it's not really...

SYLVIA: Well Ephrim- Ephrim just heads back there cause that's where he assumes that Lems done his job [laughs]

AUSTIN: Right. Umh- and, Lem, you make it back too. Soaking wet. I guess it's been slowly drying in- in the like, evening wind? it's probably shitty? And Zhan Kurr and Ukland Tell are there.

KEITH: Does the fake sun give off like a drying heat? it's that-

AUSTIN: No, it's not that warm. And also, the fake sun has gone down now

KEITH: Oh, okay

AUSTIN: It's weird. Like, it literally lowered to the ground- like, it lowered to the ground in the horizon, in this big plains area, to the west of the New Archives?

KEITH: Uh-huh

AUSTIN: And you- again, it's like a lamp that's been turned off. Or like it's on it's dimmest setting. It's like an internaly setting sun, but not gone all the way, you can still see the actual, physical looking thing, is weird. And as you go further west, it still on the horizon to the west, Like- it never- it at once feels like a physical object and also feels like it's always fleeing, further to the west. [pause] And you're in the room.

AUSTIN (as Zhan): [sigh] How'd it go? Are you ready to open the door?

JACK (as Lem): I just need to do the birds- just the birds.

AUSTIN (as Zhan: What uh-

AUSTIN: He gives like a [SYLVIA overlaps] look-

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): [overlapping] What happened?

JACK (as Lem): I- I just have to do the birds

AUSTIN: Uklan Tell shakes his head.

AUSTIN (as Uklan): The birds... the birds will be there or they won't be there. it's a pattern

JACK (as Lem): Well but- it was number five- I assumed- we could've- we could've made sure that they'd be there, you know

AUSTIN (as Uklan): Sure, if you had known ahead of time, you could've gone to barons gate and released the birds, or you could've ordered an entire shipment from Velas a few months ago, at which point they would have been send out, or- I want-

JACK (as Lem): [overlapping, exasperated] Then why write it on the list? Why write it on the list if it was just gonna happen or not happen?

AUSTIN (as Uklan): It's the pattern, King. Somethings happen or they don't. We move around it. We do our best. And when we do our best, and things line up *just* so, we do incredible things. Now watch the hill, and hope.

AUSTIN: And... there's- the telescope is set up to look at the Granite Perish. There are a number of birds on it right now, but- y'know. A dozen, fifteen, sixteen, something like that. I don't know if you're a bird watcher, I don't know how hard it is to count birds. [pause] Zhan kurr says

AUSTIN (as Zhan): Y'know, I could go there, we could uh... they don't *have to* be brown birds, they can be whatever birds, I mean...

JACK (as Lem): Get it- I mean... ugh.

AUSTIN: Uklan Tell says

AUSTIN (as Uklan): *No*. Patterns like this, they're too important.

JACK (as Lem): What? What do you mean too important?

AUSTIN (as Uklan): [sigh] The stuff that Kurr does, it's... not tested. You can't - it's the *Untethered Annex*. don't take risks, it's important.

AUSTIN: And a bird lands, then another. And it's hard to make out their colors in the dark night. Fero, what are you doing?

KEITH: Oh I'm DEAD.

AUSTIN: Okay, you're just laying dead on the floor?

KEITH: Yeah! Like- I mean, I guess I could get up and fucking kill this guy, maybe, but then they like- *for real* have me on a crime! [AUSTIN laughs] like I feel like- in my head, I imagine like- if I got out of here? They'd just be like "ah, well, he got out" so, y'know, good for him. But if I start murdering-

AUSTIN: That would be bad

KEITH: -interrogators, that would be like, *way bad*.

AUSTIN: Yeah. Uh-

KEITH: How- how much attention is- like, you say he's rearranging books.

AUSTIN: Yeah, he's basically- he's producing a pattern in the room. You don't know what he's doing, but his attention is on that. For this moment, anyway

KEITH: Yeah I- I don't... trust- like, my instinct is like, fucking turn into a mouse, scurry away. I don't think that would get past these guys

AUSTIN: Right, right

KEITH: So I don't think I can- I don't think that this is the time yet, to move.

AUSTIN: Uh-huh. Another bird lands, there are seventeen birds.

AUSTIN (as Zhan): alright, well... if we're not gonna do-[stuttering] *time!*

AUSTIN: and Kurr gestures towards the tower.

AUSTIN (as Zhan): This whole pattern could fall apart if we don't... [sigh] by the time the sun rises, there need to twenty two brown birds on Granite Perish, or we'll need to start over, it'll be a different pattern.

AUSTIN (as Uklan): Do not. King, I don't know you, but I know your work. I understand that you're a man of integrity and curiosity, and I understand how those things can come into conflict. That is not what we do. Not yet anyway.

AUSTIN: Eighteen, an eighteenth bird has landed

JACK (as Lem): If the pattern... is gonna break because there was an Illusion- i've done stuff today that like, seven birds won't change. I don't k.now if this is an opportunity to.. Redeem myself, archivist tell, but I don't think what I did today can, or should be, redeemed... with birds? So why not just do it, right? Seven birds. If it fails, it failed earlier, it failed long ago

AUSTIN (as Uklan): What if twenty two come, and you've turned another seven brown?

AUSTIN: He like stands up from his desk, and removes his glasses, these little half frame glasses

JACK (as Lem): Well then I- I make another adjustment.

AUSTIN (as Uklan): What if you mess up that time? what if you mess up the time when you adjust the adjustment, or the adjustment of the adjustment? This is why we do what we do, because it recognizes that there are limitations, and that every attempt is a risk.

JACK (as Lem): What if we messed up a thousand years ago? What if we made the first move in the pattern and messed up? And only in being-

AUSTIN (as Uklan): We didn't make the first move in the pattern, and that [sigh] is what all of this is about, Lem King.

AUSTIN: Zhan Kurr goes like

AUSTIN (as Zhan): [stutters] Don't... He's not- he doesn't need to know [whispering] what we're doing...

JACK (as Lem): Who made the first move?

AUSTIN (as Uklan): Oh, it's a long story. I'll tell you once we do this, but trust me. Wait. i've studied the pattern, there will be twenty two birds today. And then I'll tell you about the first pattern, and how we're trying to find it.

JACK (as Lem): Can you promise me this?

AUSTIN (as Uklan): No. I can say that I've studied the pattern, and there will be twenty two brown birds. That's all I can do. No promises, nothing is promised.

JACK (as Lem): Give me the telescope.

JACK: And then I'm gonna sit and watch... the Granite Perish..

SYLVIA: I- I think Ephrim is pacing, while this is happening? he's clearly really frustrated, by having to wait

AUSTIN: Twenty.

AUSTIN (as Zhan): Prince, what is it they tell you faith is, in your church?

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): [sigh] It isn't a laundry list of inane chores. I can tell you that, at least

AUSTIN (as Zhan): What's mornings service like? Walk me through it.

SYLVIA: [longer sigh]

AUSTIN: Eighteen, one leaves. Nineteen

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): [angry] We have- there's a way that you can do this so you are in control of what happens, and you are choosing not to do it! I don't understand any of this.

JACK (as Lem): He said he studied the pattern. That's all we can do.

AUSTIN: Twenty.

AUSTIN (a Zhan): How do you invoke the flame of your lord? Isn't there ritual, isn't there movement? Aren't there words you say?

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): It's natural.

AUSTIN (as Zhan): *It isn't.*

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): This isn't- this isn't some... ritual or some rite that you have to do, this was given to me. This is *me*. My powers are not something that I have to beg or plead for. Or wait around for some idiot birds for.

AUSTIN: Twenty one

AUSTIN (as Uklan): What if Samoths was gone?

AUSTIN: Asks Uklan Tell.

AUSTIN (as Uklan): Would you still have your power? Or are you a referent of his? Are you in a pattern with him?

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): [sigh] What if Samoths was gone... I don't know about you, but I don't think we've seen him for a very long time. And I'm still here, while he's-

AUSTIN (as Uklan): [murmuring] -let me tell you. About your god.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): And I'd love to- oh *I'd love* to hear that. [chuckles]

AUSTIN: Twenty. One leaves. Zhan kurr is like

AUSTIN (as Zhan): I could get more tea- I could... uh, y'know... some more gingersnaps!

SYLVIA: Ephrim is just staring at Uklan tell

AUSTIN: Uklan moves and walks over to a side, like a desk, a table thing that has some lamps over it. And on the table there are a set of stalks coming out of a long glass, like case of dirt. And on the stalks are little seedlings, dandelions. A hundred of them, two hundred of them, they're weeds. And he starts counting them, one and then another.

AUSTIN (as Uklan): We're working on something very important, Ephrim.

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): Please, enlighten me.

AUSTIN (as Uklan): It is a very complex pattern. In the old days, people like Samoths, like Samot, like Samol... they could address the pattern like it were... a pet. They could bend it, they could ask it to turn for them. And then... something changed. And they lost that power. I have a book, somewhere, on it.

AUSTIN: Twenty one.

AUSTIN (as Uklan): [sigh] The first pattern is sick. it's dying. It is the prime referent, everything else is in relation to the original pattern. We need to attend to Samol.

AUSTIN: Twenty. One leaves. You think there's a twenty-first, but... you can't be sure of the color.

AUSTIN (as Uklan): The sort of pattern you did today is... truly among the most complicated. The Untethered Annex is not like any other place, but compared to what we do now? It is... so much different. So much easier. Today's pattern is much more difficult. We tried with Sunder, but we did not have everything we needed. Yes, we had the speaking sands of Rosemerrow. Yes, we had the- second sun in the sky, lukewarm. But then the tower, and- that changes so much, now- [sigh]

AUSTIN: And he begins to relay what the new pattern is he needs to send someone to save Samol. He needs the second face of the bright boy. He needs the cooling embers of a god's verse. He needs a tower of tomorrow's light. Which he has, off on the horizon. He needs a new archive of broken whole mirrors. And a stolen fiddle, in its home.

AUSTIN: Twenty one, for sure this time. You're certain- you're certain that that's the twenty first, and you see another one, hovering above [pause]

AUSTIN (as Uklan): Lem?

JACK: Lem sits up from the telescope? And it's just like... I don't even know if he's been able to see through for the last minutes, y'know? When you look through a telescope and your eye goes- [pause]

JACK (as Lem): Yeah?

AUSTIN (as Uklan): You are going to do amazing things.

AUSTIN: Twenty two. And...inside the room, the men who- the interrogator opens the door out. [laughs] and he looks out into the room that you are in.

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: And Uklan Tell kneels and begins to blow the dandelions. And they just dust up all over

AUSTIN: Fero.

KEITH: Hi...

AUSTIN: The door opens. Ephrim is there, Lem is there, there's a bunch of other people.

KEITH: [smiling] I pretend to be dead for a little while longer.

AUSTIN: Okay...

[JACK laughs]

KEITH: I was- I thought- see, when I first saw them there, I was like “oh I'm gonna stand up and do a “hi guys!””, that'd be fun!”. Uh... but instead I'm just going to see what happens.

SYLVIA: Can we see dead Fero?

AUSTIN: yeah, you can see dead Fero through the dust- like, all of these dandelion seeds are in the air right now, and they're catching the light in a way that makes them look like prisms. The-Zhan Kurr says

AUSTIN (as Zhan): The pattern worked! King, empty your bag. Hurry!

JACK (as Lem): My bag?

AUSTIN (as Zhan): Your bag.

JACK (as Lem): Uhh... uh, okay

JACK: And... I open my bag.

JACK (as Lem): What- what's in it? My- my actual bag?

AUSTIN (as Zhan): Yeah!

JACK (as Lem): What am I- all of it?

AUSTIN (as Zhan): All of it.

JACK: Okay! Do you want me to go through what I'm losing here?

AUSTIN: Yeah, just tell me what's on the- what you empty out on to a desk.

JACK: One adventuring gear, five weeks of rations, an orcish communications box, aa book on gnoll etymology, a map of the plans of Nacre, a map of the old empire of Nacre, a book of tristeros poetry-

AUSTIN: He grabs it.

AUSTIN (as Zhan): [alarmed] Why is this wet? Ohh, shit. Keep going

AUSTIN: And he like, runs into the kitchen.

JACK: Two hundred and sixty three gold, [laughs] an engraved mask from the tower.

AUSTIN (as Zhan): Put it on. Quickly!

JACK (as Lem): What- really?

AUSTIN (as Zhan): Yes

JACK (as Lem): Okay... the last time I put this on it went badly.

AUSTIN (as Zhan): You don't have the crown now, don't worry

JACK: Okay I'm gonna put it on.

AUSTIN: [amused] Oh, you should've worried. That- ohhh boy. You see... uhhh [JACK laughs]
For a brief moment you see Samot, looking over- like you're just behind him, looking over his shoulder, and he's looking at a map of hieron. And it reflects the weird new tower to the west, and he's like

AUSTIN (as Samot): [quietly] It's too soon... [sigh] where is hadrian?

JACK: Oh, god! Umh... can I step forward towards him?

AUSTIN: Yeah.

JACK: And... Call out I think?

AUSTIN: He turns to look at you?

AUSTIN (as Samot): You're- [pause] Hm...

AUSTIN: On the map behind him you can see that he's shifted some little figurines from the east to the west. There's like a horse and a carriage that he's shifted from one to the other, and there are two big pins that he's pinned to the eastern side of the map. You're not sure what any of that means.

AUSTIN (as Samot): You know Fantasma, right?

JACK: Oh, god

AUSTIN (as Samot): And Hadrian?

JACK (as Lem): Yes

AUSTIN (as Samot): Why do you wear my mask?

JACK (as Lem): Uh...

AUSTIN (as Samot): You have to deliver a message to them, this is- I need to see them both.

JACK (as Lem): Me?

AUSTIN: Ye- Of course.

JACK (as Lem): W- what do you want me to tell them?

AUSTIN: He like, sits down in a chair and slumps. And he reaches for a goblet of wine, and drops it.

AUSTIN (as Samot): [whispering] This isn't real...

AUSTIN: And you're zipped back to the room.

JACK (as Lem): Ohhh no, that was a mistake!

[KEITH laughs]

AUSTIN (as Zhan): [JACK overlaps] It's fine, it's fine, it's fine-

JACK (as Lem): [overlapping] That was such a fucking mistake...

AUSTIN (as Zhan): It's fine- you're back, it's fine.

JACK (as Lem): I saw Samot.

AUSTIN (as Zhan): I know.

SYLVIA: W- what's going on with the... interrogator?

AUSTIN: He's like-

AUSTIN (as interrogator): [stuttering] W- wait. You had the book!

[JACK laughs]

AUSTIN: And Zhan Kurr comes back with the book of poetry that- that Ventaro Doce gave you. And- and tears out a page and says

AUSTIN (as Zhan): I think this one is dry enough!

AUSTIN: And puts down on the ground- or, not on the ground, on a table. And begins to flint on steel, to try to set it on fire.

JACK (as Lem): W- you're burning it??

AUSTIN (as Zhan): Just the one page, it just needs to be one verse, one divine verse!

JACK (as Lem): Uh- [stuttering] Who are you??

JACK: [amused] Lem says to the interrogator

AUSTIN (as interrogator): Gan Tell. My name is Gan Tell? Who- uh- sorry, I apologize, this is-

KEITH: [interrupts] THIS FUCKING GUY, [everyone laughs] had me locked up!

AUSTIN: He shakes your hand and he says

AUSTIN (as Gan): Gan Tell, Gantel Lor van der Dawes.

KEITH (as Fero): [shouting] No! Hold on! This piece of shit motherfucker-

SYLVIA: Wait-

[JACK laughs]

KEITH (as Fero): -had me locked up, took some of my shoulder, was- he- well maybe-

JACK (as Lem): Wait-

KEITH (as Fero): YEAH, HI. I'm mad at every, single, person, in here!

JACK (as Lem): Fero-

[SYLVIA overlaps]

KEITH (as Fero): What? What??

AUSTIN: [amused] What's up, Ephrim?

SYLVIA: Uh- jus- van der Dawes? That's a name we know, right?

AUSTIN: He nods. Yeah.

JACK: Uh...

SYLVIA: Oh, sorry. That was me out of character. Ephrim right now is just staring at Fero.

AUSTIN: Oh, yes. Alonzo Victor Devareaux van der Dawes. Devar's father.

KEITH: I don't care if his name's Vender-

JACK (as Lem): [overlapping] No, Fero- this-

AUSTIN: is Fero up, by the way? Or is he like- [laughs] That's really good.

KEITH: Yeah! I'm up! I'm dusting myself off-!

JACK (as Lem): Lor, wait, you're with these people? Are you-

AUSTIN (as Uklan): There's always more than one way.

AUSTIN: And the page turns to fire, from the flint and steel. But it's not quite- it can't- it's just a little too damp.

KEITH: GOOD!

SYLVIA (as Ephrim): I... may-

KEITH (as Fero): GOOD- NO! I'M STILL... TIRADING! I'M STILL- I'm mad- first of all- I was there, on the ground-

AUSTIN (as Uklan): [talking over Fero] Ephrim. If you could.

KEITH (as Fero): -I WAS DEAD! AND EVERYBODY WAS JUST LIKE-

JACK (as Lem): [talking over Fero] Burn the paper.

KEITH (as Fero): [mocking] "NUH, WE'RE WORRIED ABOUT A BOOK, WE'RE WORRIED ABOUT A MASK!"

JACK: [chuckles] Oh, Jesus...

KEITH (as Fero): Second of all-

AUSTIN: [talking over KEITH] Gimme a roll.

KEITH (as Fero): -THIS GUY!

SYLVIA: Can it just be burning brand?

AUSTIN: Yeah it's burning brand.

SYLVIA: Okay... it's a thirteen.

AUSTIN: Uh- wow. Damn.

SYLVIA: [laughs] Yeah.

AUSTIN: All those fails all day from everybody and this one's not so much! Uh- which fire do you use? Regular fire or heat and dark fire?

SYLVIA: I think... I'm using the regular fire, for now.

AUSTIN: That- that's fair-

KEITH (as Fero): Hold on! What are you setting on fire?

AUSTIN: And the words go up in flame. What's the poem about, Lem? Which one did he happen to pull from the book of Tristero?

JACK: Well, he called it a divine verse, right? But I think that it's divine mostly because it was written by Tristero rather than because of any particular subject.

AUSTIN: Yeah. I'm just curious- like, what was the poem about.

JACK: Oh, it's a poem about- just like, a beautiful fish seller in the market? [AUSTIN laughs]
Who Tristero saw while walking? Y'know, in the vein of like, byronesque, sort of romantic poetry [laughs]

KEITH (as Fero): [overlapping] Hi! Hey!

JACK: -Y'know, sort of like "His lusty hair" etcetera. Uh... and like, in the context of the rest of the book it's probably not much, but it's... on fire.

AUSTIN (as Gan): If you had told me that your friend had the book, we could've been done hours ago!

KEITH (as Fero): [yelling] IF YOU HAD STOPPED TORTURING ME, AND TOLD ME YOU WERE LOOKING FOR A BOOK TO SET ON FIRE, MAYBE I WOULD'VE GIVEN IT TO YOU! [silence] YOU GODDAMN- YOU FUCKING- every single person in here is a motherfucker!

AUSTIN (as Gan): Fero-

KEITH (as Fero): [yelling] You guys- I was lying on the ground! You guys were "oh the mask, oh the book"! I WAS BEING TORTURED IN THERE.

JACK (as Lem): Fero!

KEITH (as Fero): What do you want??

AUSTIN: What does it look like, the last time you see Lem King?

KEITH: Uh... I-

AUSTIN: What's the expression the two of you have, when you look at each other?

KEITH: I'm *furious*. And Lem is like [mocking] "stop it".

AUSTIN: Lem? [amused] Are you like "stop it"?

JACK: I think Lem is- his hair is still wet? And like, his cuffs are still wet? And I think the look that Lem is giving Fero could definitely be interpreted as "stop it", but Lem isn't really looking at anything. I think he's looking at the wall behind Fero, or the middle-distance.

AUSTIN: The last part of the pattern is two lodestars, both which carry the banner of the Queen of Death, one which sees the old world, and one which has destroyed some of it. And in a moment, you become untethered the way that Sunder did before. And the mirror that had only cracked before, shatters. And you fall through it. And something else falls out. It's actually two things. First of all, the room takes on like a very strange... cold, for a moment? Everyone take one damage. 'Cause there's a vampire in the room now. Throndir is here, with Kodiak.

[SONG "Inside" STARTS PLAYING]

AUSTIN (as Throndir): *Wh- what the hell?*

AUSTIN: Lem. There's an old man with a guitar in front of you. And you're standing among friends. Hella and Hadrian. Adaire, you don't really know that well, but... there's something very familiar about this old man with a guitar. And he's gonna tell you a story.

AUSTIN: Back in the Archives, as Fero yells, Uklan Tel shakes his head and says,

AUSTIN (as Uklan): Alright. I'll bring everybody up to speed.

AUSTIN: And... he finds a copy of his own book about Marielda.

["Inside" CONTINUES TILL THE END]